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UTAH DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Division of Public Utilities

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Action Request Response

To: Public Service Commission of Utah

From: Utah Division of Public Utilities

Chris Parker, Director
Artie Powell, Manager
Brenda Salter, Utility Technical Consultant Supervisor
Paul Hicken, Technical Consultant

Date: December 13, 2022

Re: **Docket No. 22-035-53**, In the Matter of Rocky Mountain Power's 2023 Strategic Communications and Outreach Action Plan and Budget for Demand Side Management (DSM).

Recommendation (Approval)

The Division of Public Utilities (DPU or Division) recommends that the Public Service Commission (PSC or Commission) approve Rocky Mountain Power's (Company) 2023 Strategic Communications and Outreach Action Plan and Budget for Demand Side Management.

Issue

On December 1, 2022, the Company filed with the Commission its Annual Strategic Communications and Outreach and Action Plan and Budget for Demand Side Management for January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, (2023 Plan). The Company proposes a \$1.5 million budget, and the expenses associated with the 2023 Plan were included in the Company's forecast of expenses in the DSM Forecast Report filed November 1, 2022, in Docket No. 22-035-37. The Company requests an order approving the 2023 Plan with an effective date of January 3, 2023.

Division of Public Utilities

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Background

On June 11, 2009, in Docket No. 09-035-36, the Commission issued an Order approving the implementation of an outreach and communications program in Utah for the Company's energy efficiency and peak management programs (Campaign) for a period of three years.¹ The intent of the Campaign was to increase awareness and participation in the Company's energy efficiency and peak reduction programs. Since that time, the Company has sought and received approval from the Commission for outreach and communications plans on an annual basis in separate dockets.

The Commission issued an Action Request to the Division on December 1, 2022, to review the filing and make recommendations to the Commission by December 15, 2022. In addition, the Commission issued a Notice of Filing and Comment Period on December 1, 2022, requesting interested parties submit comments by December 15, 2022. This memorandum is the Division's response to the Commission's Action Request and Notice of Filing and Comment Period.

Discussion

Rocky Mountain Power's marketing and communication outreach efforts are making a positive impact on both residential and business customers. The 2022 customer surveys conducted by Escalent, an independent third-party marketing firm, showed 62% of residential and 59% of business customers recalled seeing communication on energy efficiency from the Company. The Home Energy Savings, and Wattsmart Business programs received customer satisfaction ratings of 8.4/10 and 8.7/10 respectively for 2022. Additionally, 92% of residential and 93% of business customers felt it was important for the Company to offer energy conservation programs. Customers continue to look to the Company as a credible source for energy efficiency information.

The 2023 Campaign strategy is to use research to continually approve awareness efforts for energy efficiency to support Wattsmart programs and energy conservation in general. Specifically, the Company identifies the strategy going forward is as follows:

¹ Utah PSC, Docket No. 035-36, Order Approving Program with Conditions. June 11, 2009.

- Continue to promote Wattsmart choices to support Rocky Mountain Power's "Powering Your Greatness" brand essence that empowers customers with options to save energy and money.
- Maintain targeted media channels with adjustments for trends, cost, and impact.
- Engage customers online, through direct email, and with in-person events.
- Continue outreach to the next generation of energy savers with engaging energy efficiency education.
- Address current economic impacts on our customers.
- Refresh business creative to continue to inform customers about their energy usage and solutions to help lower their bills.
- Utilize new data/research tools through Qualtrics in 2023 that will our customers insights and give us actionable information to help us more effectively reach customers.
- Implement and optimize Responsys, the new communication tool from Oracle, to enable the Company to communicate on a quick and personalized level with customers.²

The proposed budget for 2023 of \$1.5 million is consistent with past Campaign budgets and is also in compliance with the budget amount of \$1.5 million set in the 09-035-36 docket of June 11, 2009. The Division notes that the 2023 Campaign is comparable to previous years with a slight increase to the Wattsmart School Curriculum program and a slight decrease to Creative/Production/Planning programs. The budget forecasts seem to be effectively accomplishing the goals of the program.

² Rocky Mountain Power's Strategic Communications and Outreach Plan and Budget for 2023, p.2.

Conclusion

Based on its review of the Company's filing, the Division concludes that the Company's 2023 Strategic Communications and Outreach Plan and Budget for DSM complies with the Commission's order in Docket No. 09-035-36, to promote energy saving programs and encourage participation through various media campaigns. The Division recommends approval of the filing.

cc: Michael Snow, Rocky Mountain Power.
Michele Beck, Office of Consumer Services.
Service List.