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Office of Consumer Services

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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To: The Public Service Commission of Utah
From: The Office of Consumer Services
Michele Beck, Director
Alex Ware, Utility Analyst

Date: December 13, 2023

Subject: Docket 23-035-49

In the Matter of: Request of Rocky Mountain Power for Approval of its 2024 Strategic Communications and Outreach Action Plan and Budget for Demand Side Management

INTRODUCTION

On November 7 2023, Rocky Mountain Power (RMP or Company) filed with the Public Service Commission of Utah (PSC) an application seeking approval of its 2024 Strategic Communications and Outreach Action Plan and Budget for Demand Side Management (Plan). On November 13, 2023, the PSC issued a Notice of Filing and Comment Period establishing that interested parties may submit comments on RMP's filing on or before December 13. The Office of Consumer Services (OCS) provides the following comments pursuant to that schedule.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of RMP's communications and outreach plan is to increase awareness and participation in the Company's energy efficiency and peak reduction programs. Following the PSC order issued on June 11, 2009 in Docket No. 09-035-36, RMP files its Plan with the Commission annually.

OCS REVIEW OF THE 2024 COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH PLAN

In its filing, RMP presents a Plan budget of \$1.5 million, which is unchanged from the 2023 Plan. The expenses associated with the Plan were included in RMP's demand side management (DSM) forecast report pending approval before the PSC in Docket No. 23-

035-31. On page 2 of its application, RMP presents the following table containing the breakdown of the Plan budget into its operational areas for 2024:

2024 Forecasted Budget (January 2024 – December 2024)

Tactic	Budget
Media	\$650,000
Creative/Production/Planning	\$215,946
Wattsmart Business events and sponsorships	\$90,000
General PR and public affairs support	\$32,000
Wattsmart School Curriculum Program	\$283,054
Research	\$29,000
Customer Energy Insights Reports	\$200,000
Total	\$1,500,000

RMP also reports in this filing that it contracted with a third party to conduct customer surveys to measure the levels of awareness of the Company’s DSM programs and self-reported efforts toward energy conservation. A total of 1,967 residential surveys and 336 business surveys were completed in 2023. RMP reports the following findings from the surveys:

- *Program Satisfaction.* Like the prior year, residential customers generally are satisfied with the Home Energy Savings Program; giving it a score of 8.6/10. Similarly, business customers score the Wattsmart Business Program at 8.8/10.
- *Awareness of Energy Efficiency Communication.* Consistent with 2022 awareness levels (which were an improvement from 2021), RMP reports 62% of its residential customers and 64% of its business customers recall seeing communication from the Company in the past six months.
- *Importance of Energy Conservation.* RMP reports customer opinions regarding the importance of energy conservation efforts remain high. 90% of residential customers believe conservation programs are important while 89% of business customers indicate the same. The percentage of customers reporting they implemented conservation measures in 2023 is consistent with the prior year.

RMP states its 2024 communication and outreach plan will continue to advertise and promote Wattsmart program offerings to customers as ways to save energy and money. The Company reports it created new media content in 2023 focusing on customer success stories and this messaging will continue in 2024. RMP also plans to increase its email communications with customers in 2024 – focusing more on messaging personalization. All other detailed aspects of the Plan appear to generally remain the

same for 2024. The OCS notes that for the outcome reporting for 2023, RMP added prior year data for comparison which we believe is a good practice in annual reporting efforts.

RECOMMENDATION

The OCS believes RMP's 2024 Strategic Communications and Outreach plan is reasonable and we recommend that the PSC approve it.

cc:

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