



Agenda Date: 9/30/14
Agenda Item: I1K

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Avenue, 9th Floor
Post Office Box 350
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350
www.nj.gov/bpu/

ENERGY

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF SOUTH)
JERSEY GAS COMPANY FOR APPROVAL OF A)
MUNICIPAL CONSENT IN THE TOWNSHIP OF)
HARRISON, GLOUCESTER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY)

DECISION AND ORDER

DOCKET NO. GE14050502

Parties of Record:

Stacy A. Mitchell, Esq., Cozen O'Connor, P.C. on behalf of Petitioner, South Jersey Gas Company
Stefanie A. Brand, Esq., Director, Division of Rate Counsel

BY THE BOARD:

South Jersey Gas Company ("SJG" or "Company"), a regulated utility subject to the jurisdiction of the Board of Public Utilities ("Board"), is a corporation duly organized under the laws of the State of New Jersey engaged in the business of transmission and distribution of natural gas to approximately 360,000 customers within its service territory.

SJG currently provides natural gas service within the Township of Harrison ("Township") to approximately 3,758 residential and 185 commercial customers. The Company's consent to use the streets within the Township for the provision of gas service expired on November 3, 1997.¹ On April 7, 2014, the Township adopted Ordinance No. 07-2014, by which it renewed its consent and granted SJG continued permission to lay and construct its pipes and mains and related appurtenances and facilities within the streets, alleys, squares and public places within the Township for a period of fifty (50) years. By letter dated May 19, 2014, the Company accepted and agreed to the terms of the consent. Copies of the Ordinance and the letter of acceptance are attached to this Order as Exhibits "A" and "B," respectively.

On May 28, 2014, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:2-14 and N.J.A.C. 14:1-5.5, SJG filed a petition requesting that this Board give its approval to the consent adopted by the Township. As required by law and after notice, a hearing in this matter was held on June 26, 2014, before

¹ The Board notes that municipal consents often expire some time prior to their renewal even when the Company initiates the renewal process prior to the expiration of the previous term. This is primarily the result of the time necessary for a municipality to fulfill the legal requirements that attend to all formal actions it must take along with the additional time for hearing and Board approval as required by law. The Board has been assured that pending review of its petition, SJG has continued to provide service to its customers within the Township in an uninterrupted manner.

William Agee, Esq., the Board's duly appointed Hearing Examiner. Appearances were made on behalf of the Company, the Division of Rate Counsel ("Rate Counsel") and Board Staff. No other party participated in the hearing or filed any written submission with the Board related to this proceeding.

At hearing, the Company relied on its petition and exhibits filed with the Board and presented the testimony of Joseph Schneider, its General Manager of System Engineering and Planning. According to Mr. Schneider's testimony, SJG anticipates growth in its defined service territory to be approximately one (1) percent annually for the next 3 to 5 years. According to the Company, it has the capacity to ensure continuation of its natural gas service and does not foresee any concerns regarding its ability to meet the existing and future demands of the Township.

Rate Counsel, in its written comments to the petition dated August 11, 2014, indicated that it does not object to the Company's petition, and noted that the term of the municipal consent related to the use of streets is limited to fifty (50) years. However, Rate Counsel requests that approval of the petition include certain restrictions which are incorporated into this order.

Following its receipt of Rate Counsel's comments, SJG filed correspondence with the Board on August 12, 2014 indicating that it had no additional comments.

After a full review of the entire record, the Board **HEREBY FINDS** that the municipal consent for use of the streets, which is the subject of this matter, is necessary and proper for the public convenience and properly conserves the public interest, and that SJG has the ability to provide safe, adequate and proper service. The Board **FURTHER FINDS** that the Company has the necessary experience, financial capability, capacity and facilities in the Township to continue to provide adequate and appropriate service to its existing customers as well as expected future customers, and that the fifty (50) year duration of the municipal consent to use the streets is consistent with N.J.S.A. 48:3-15. Accordingly, the Board, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:2-14, **HEREBY APPROVES** the consent granted to SJG by the Township for the continued use of its public streets for a period of fifty (50) years for the provision of gas service in the Township.

The approval granted hereinabove shall be subject to the following provisions:

1. This Order shall not be construed as directly or indirectly fixing for any purposes whatsoever the value of any tangible or intangible assets now owned or hereafter to be owned by SJG.
2. This Order shall not effect nor in any way limit the exercise of the authority of this Board of the State in any future petition or in any proceedings with respect to rates, franchises, services, financing, accounting, capitalization, depreciation, or in any other matters affecting SJG.
3. In an appropriate subsequent proceeding, SJG shall have the burden of demonstrating whether, and to what extent, any of the costs associated with this petition shall be allocated to ratepayers.
4. The rates for service to the Company's customers in the Township shall continue to be those set out in the Company's current tariff approved by and on file with the Board. These rates shall remain in effect until otherwise approved by the Board.

5. Approval of this municipal consent does not constitute Board approval of any costs or expenses associated with this petition. Any determination as to the appropriateness or reasonableness of the costs and expenses related to the franchise, including but not limited to, cost of construction, contributions in aid of construction, depreciation on contributed plant, the cost of connection, or any related capital improvements, and the allocation of such costs and expenses, shall be made in an appropriate subsequent proceeding.
6. The term of the municipal consent as to the right to provide service is not limited by this Order and shall be effective as previously granted by the Township.

This Order shall be effective as of October 10, 2014.

DATED: 9/30/14

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
BY:


DIANNE SOLOMON
PRESIDENT



JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO
COMMISSIONER


MARY-ANNA HOLDEN
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

KRISTI IZZO
SECRETARY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the within
document is a true copy of the original
in the files of the Board of Public
Utilities



IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF SOUTH JERSEY GAS COMPANY FOR APPROVAL
OF A MUNICIPAL CONSENT IN THE TOWNSHIP OF HARRISON, GLOUCESTER COUNTY,
NEW JERSEY - DOCKET NO. GE14050502

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Exhibit A

ORDINANCE NO. 07-2014

AN ORDINANCE GRANTING RENEWED CONSENT AND PERMISSION TO SOUTH JERSEY GAS COMPANY TO USE THE PUBLIC STREETS TO FURNISH GAS FOR LIGHT, HEAT AND POWER IN THE TOWNSHIP OF HARRISON

WHEREAS, South Jersey Gas Company now seeks, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:3-15, the consent of Harrison Township to amend Ordinance 01-1947 applicable to the use of the streets in Harrison Township by adopting the following Ordinance:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Committee of the Township of Harrison, County of Gloucester and State of New Jersey as follows:

Section 1. That exclusive consent and permission is hereby renewed and granted to South Jersey Gas Company to lay and construct its pipes and mains and related appurtenances and facilities within the streets, alleys, squares, and public places within the Township of Harrison in the manner prescribed by N.J.S.A. 48:9-21, and subject to reasonable regulations imposed by ordinance or resolution with respect to the opening of streets in public places, subject to approval of such consent and permission by the Board of Public Utilities.

Section 2. This Consent is granted to the entire geographical area of the Township of Harrison and extended to the boundaries of the Township of Harrison and shall remain in effect for a period of fifty (50) years from the date of final adoption of this Ordinance.

Section 3. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held by any Court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon posting, publication, final passage in the manner prescribed by law, and acceptance by South Jersey Gas Company.

TOWNSHIP OF HARRISON

BY: 

LOUIS F. MANZO, MAYOR


ATTEST:


DIANE L. MALLOY, Municipal Clerk

ROLL CALL VOTE				
COMMITTEE MEMBER	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Almro	✓			
Chimney	✓			
Duggons				✓
Helm	✓			
Shearer	✓			

NOTICE

The Ordinance published herein was introduced and passed upon first reading at a meeting of the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Harrison, in the County of Gloucester and State of New Jersey, held on March 5, 2014. It will be further considered for final passage, after public hearing hereon, at a meeting of said Mayor and Committee to be held in the Township's Municipal Building, 114 Bridgeton Pike, Mollie Hill, New Jersey 08062, in the Township, on April 7, 2014 at 7:30 P.M. During the week prior and up to and including the date of such meeting, copies of said Ordinance will be made available at the Clerk's office at the Municipal Building, 114 Bridgeton Pike, in the Township, to the members of the general public who shall request the same.


 DIANE L. MALLOY
 Municipal Clerk

INTRODUCED: 3/5/14
 ADOPTED: 4/2/14

Exhibit B



Gina Merritt-Epps, Esq.
Office of General Counsel and Corporate Secretary
General Counsel and Corporate Secretary

May 19, 2014

(Via email: amalloy@harrisonwp.us)

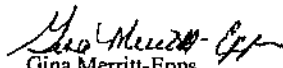
Diane L. Malloy, RMC, CMR
Township of Harrison
114 Bridgeton Pike
Mullica Hill NJ 08062

Re: Acceptance of Ordinance No. 07-2014 Granting Municipal Consent to South Jersey Gas Company to Use the Streets for the Provision of Natural Gas Service

Dear Ms. Malloy:

I am writing on behalf of South Jersey Gas Company ("SJG") to advise that we received a fully executed copy of Ordinance No. 07-2014 (copy attached) granting municipal consent for SJG to provide gas and lay its mains and pipes in the Township of Harrison. Pursuant to the requirements of N.J.S.A. 48:3-16, SJG hereby accepts Ordinance No. 07-2014, as passed.

Very truly yours,


Gina Merritt-Epps
gmerritt@sjindustries.com

Enclosure

cc: John Stanziola, Director, Regulatory Affairs
Sherri Ramos, Supervisor, Revenue Analyst Permits
Abbey Greenberg, Public Affairs Specialist
Stacy A. Mitchell, Esq.