



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

NOTICE OF FILING AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

D.P.U. 17-103

May 1, 2017

Joint Petition of Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company d/b/a Unitil, Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company d/b/a National Grid, and NSTAR Electric Company and Western Massachusetts Electric Company, each d/b/a Eversource Energy, for approval of a proposed timetable and method for the solicitation and execution of long-term contracts for offshore wind energy generation, pursuant to Section 83C of An Act Relative to Green Communities, St. 2008, c. 169, as amended by St. 2016, c. 188, § 12.

On April 28, 2017, Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company d/b/a Unitil (“Unitil”), Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company d/b/a National Grid (“National Grid”), and NSTAR Electric Company and Western Massachusetts Electric Company, each d/b/a Eversource Energy (“Eversource Energy”) (together, “electric distribution companies”), jointly filed a petition with the Department of Public Utilities (“Department”) for approval of a proposed timetable and method for the solicitation and execution of long-term contracts for offshore wind energy generation resources, pursuant to Section 83C of An Act Relative to Green Communities, St. 2008, c. 169, as amended by St. 2016, c. 188, § 12 (“Section 83C”).

Section 83C provides that the electric distribution companies are required to jointly and competitively solicit proposals for offshore wind energy generation not later than June 30, 2017; and, provided that reasonable proposals have been received, shall enter into cost-effective long-term contracts for offshore wind energy generation for an annual amount of electricity equal to approximately 1,600 megawatts (“MW”) of nameplate capacity by June 30, 2027. St. 2016, c. 188, § 12; 220 C.M.R. § 23.00 et seq. In developing the provisions of long-term contracts, the electric distribution companies shall consider long-term contracts for renewable energy certificates (“RECs”) for energy and for a combination of both RECs and energy. St. 2016, c. 188, § 12; 220 C.M.R. § 23.00 et seq. The electric distribution companies, in coordination with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (“DOER”), shall consult with the Attorney General of the Commonwealth (“Attorney General”) regarding the choice of solicitation methods. St. 2016, c. 188, § 12; 220 C.M.R. § 23.00 et seq. The electric distribution companies and DOER shall jointly propose a

timetable and method for the solicitation and execution of long-term contracts. St. 2016, c. 188, § 12; 220 C.M.R. § 23.00 et seq. The timetable and method for the solicitation and execution of such contracts is subject to review and approval by the Department. St. 2016, c. 188, § 12; 220 C.M.R. § 23.00 et seq.

The solicitation filed in this docket represents the first solicitation conducted under Section 83C. The electric distribution companies may conduct one or more competitive solicitations through a staggered procurement schedule developed by the electric distribution companies and DOER. St. 2016, c. 188, § 12; 220 C.M.R. § 23.00 et seq. The electric distribution companies shall, in any filing with the Department regarding the timetable and methods for soliciting and contracting consented to by DOER and the Attorney General, describe the proposed methods reviewed and selected, and a solicitation may be coordinated and issued jointly with other New England states or entities designated by those states. St. 2016, c. 188, § 12; 220 C.M.R. § 23.00 et seq.

This solicitation seeks bids for a total of 400 MW of offshore wind energy generation. This solicitation also allows bidders to offer proposals for up to approximately 800 MW for the electric distribution companies' consideration, if the Evaluation Team determines that a larger-scaled proposal is both superior to other proposals submitted in response to this request for proposals ("RFP") and is likely to produce significantly more economic net benefits to ratepayers based on the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP. To support development of the offshore wind energy market, the electric distribution companies are seeking proposals that include expandable, nondiscriminatory, open-access offshore transmission facilities for the efficient delivery of their power to the onshore transmission system. An electric distribution company may, subject to Department approval, decline to consider proposals having terms and conditions that it determines would require the long-term contract obligation to place an unreasonable burden on a company's balance sheet. If an electric distribution company deems all proposals to be unreasonable, it may submit a filing to the Department supporting its decision to decline all proposals, which shall be subject to Department approval. Additionally, if DOER, in consultation with the electric distribution companies and the independent evaluator, determines that reasonable proposals were not received pursuant to a solicitation, DOER may terminate the solicitation, and may require additional solicitations to fulfill the requirements of Section 83C.

The Department will accept written comments, not to exceed 20 pages, regarding the proposed timetable and method for the solicitation on or before the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on **Monday, May 15, 2017**. Reply comments, not to exceed 15 pages, will be due no later than the close of business on **Monday, May 22, 2017**. Page limitations do not apply to the Independent Evaluator. An original of all written comments should be filed with Mark D. Marini, Secretary, Department of Public Utilities, and one copy should be filed with the hearing officer, Elizabeth Lydon. The original and copy should be delivered to Mark D. Marini, Secretary, Department of Public Utilities, One South Station, 5th Floor, Boston,

Massachusetts 02110. One copy of all written comments should also be sent to the service list for this proceeding, available on the Department's website, <http://www.mass.gov/dpu>.

All documents should also be submitted to the Department in electronic format using one of the following methods: (1) by e-mail attachment to dpu.efiling@state.ma.us and the hearing officer, elizabeth.lydon@state.ma.us; or (2) on CD-ROM. The text of the e-mail or CD-ROM label must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (D.P.U. 17-103); (2) the name of the person or company submitting the filing; and (3) a brief descriptive title of the document. The electronic filing should also include the name, title, and telephone number of a person to contact in the event of questions about the filing. All documents submitted in electronic format will be posted on the Department's website, <http://www.mass.gov/dpu>.

In addition, all written comments should be distributed electronically to the service lists in Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company, D.P.U. 13-146, Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, D.P.U. 13-147, NSTAR Electric Company, D.P.U. 13-148, and Western Massachusetts Electric Company, D.P.U. 13-149, Long-Term Contracts for Renewable Energy, D.P.U. 15-84, Long-Term Contracts for Renewable Energy, D.P.U. 16-191, and Long-Term Contracts for Renewable Energy, D.P.U. 17-32, available on the Department's website, <http://www.mass.gov/dpu>.

A copy of the electric distribution companies' filing is available for public viewing at the Department's offices, One South Station, Boston, Massachusetts during business hours. Any person desiring further information regarding the electric distribution companies' petition should contact: William D. Hewitt, Esq., at 207-747-4870 (counsel for Unitil); Laura Bickel, Esq., at 781-907-1846 and John K. Habib, Esq., at 617-951-1400 (counsel for National Grid); Danielle Winter, Esq. and Jessica Buno Ralston, Esq., at 617-951-1400 (counsel for Eversource Energy). Any person desiring further information regarding this notice should contact Elizabeth Lydon, Hearing Officer, Department of Public Utilities at (617) 305-3604.