

MANITOBA) Order No. 133/02
)
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD ACT) July 30, 2002

BEFORE: G. D. Forrest, Chairman
M. Santos, Member
M. Girouard, Member

**APPLICATION BY THE GLADSTONE AUSTIN NATURAL
GAS CO-OP LTD. FOR AN AWARD OF COSTS WITH
REFERENCE TO PARTICIPATING IN THE MATTER OF
CENTRA GAS MANITOBA INC. 2002/03 COST OF GAS
APPLICATION**

The Public Utilities Board (the "Board") held a Hearing on June 17, 2002 on the matter of a 2002/03 Cost of Gas Application filed on March 14, 2002 by Centra Gas Manitoba Inc.'s ("Centra"). By way of letters received July 2 and 16, 2002 Gladstone Austin Natural Gas Co-op Ltd. (the "Applicant") made application for costs.

The Applicant

The Applicant filed the appropriate hearing and summary sheets. The total claim for costs is \$1,145.96, comprised of professional fees of \$1,100.00 and disbursements of \$45.96.

The Applicant submitted that they have met the four criteria set out under section IV of the Board's Rules. Specifically, they noted that their questions revealed inadequacies of the Stone and Webster report. The Applicant also noted that they worked to reduce costs by making a common presentation with the North Cypress Energy Co-op. The Applicant further noted that neither they nor the North Cypress Energy Co-op have the financial resources to absorb their consultants costs but felt that it was an important issue that could not be addressed without expert consultation. The Applicant also noted that both parties have maintained a strong interest over the last few years in getting gas to their rural location without duplicating infrastructure.

Centra, by way of letter dated July 25, 2002 indicated that it had no comments with respect to the Applicant's request.

BOARD COMMENTS

The Applicant is well known to the Board as an interested party in providing gas to the rural community. The Board notes that the Applicant has been pursuing the matter of an inter-utility rate since 1998 and is satisfied that it represents a substantial interest in the outcome of this particular issue. The Board notes the co-operation of the Applicant with the North Cypress Energy Co-op. The Board notes that the issue addressed by this Applicant is one that affects all other gas utilities and Gas Co-ops in Manitoba and is of the opinion that the Applicant should not have to carry the full burden of addressing and resolving the issue.

The Board recognizes the contribution made by this Intervenor to the process and will allow the request in full as submitted in the amount of \$1,145.96.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

1. The Gladstone Austin Natural Gas Co-op Ltd.'s application for an award of costs be allowed in the amount of \$1,145.96.
2. The costs shall be payable by Centra Gas Manitoba Inc. within 30 days of the date of this Order.

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD

"G. D. FORREST" _____

Chairman

"H. M. SINGH" _____

Acting Secretary

Certified a true copy of Order
No. 133/02 issued by The Public
Utilities Board

Acting Secretary