

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION
AT RICHMOND, JANUARY 16, 2024

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APPLICATION OF

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VIRGINIA ELECTRIC AND POWER COMPANY

CASE NO. PUR-2023-00088

For approval and certification of electric transmission facilities: 230 kV Finneywood-Jeffress Lines and Jeffress Switching Station Conversion

FINAL ORDER

On May 24, 2023, Virginia Electric and Power Company ("Dominion" or the "Company") filed with the State Corporation Commission ("Commission") an application ("Application") for approval and certification of electric transmission facilities in Mecklenburg County, Virginia.¹ Dominion filed its Application pursuant to § 56-46.1 of the Code of Virginia ("Code"), and the Utility Facilities Act, Code § 56-265.1 *et seq.*²

Through its Application, the Company proposes to complete the following, which is collectively referred to as the "Project:"

- Construct two new approximately 18.3-mile 230 kilovolt ("kV") single circuit lines on new right-of-way from the future 500-230 kV Finneywood Switching Station (the "Finneywood Station")³ to the newly converted Jeffress 230 kV Switching Station, resulting in 230 kV Finneywood-Jeffress Line #2299 and 230 kV Finneywood-Jeffress Line #2302 (the "Finneywood-Jeffress Lines"). The Finneywood-Jeffress Lines will be constructed on new permanent 120-foot-wide right-of-way supported primarily by two side-by-side single circuit weathering steel monopoles. The Finneywood-Jeffress Lines will be constructed utilizing three-phase twin-bundled 768.2 ACSS/TW type conductor with a summer transfer capability of 1,573 MVA.

¹ Ex. 3 (Application) at 1-2.

² *Id.* at 1.

³ The Commission approved the construction of the Finneywood Station on May 31, 2023. *See Application of Virginia Electric and Power Company, for approval and certification of electric transmission facilities: Butler Farm to Clover 230 kV Line, Butler Farm to Finneywood 230 kV Line and Related Projects*, Case No. PUR-2022-00175, Doc Con. Cen. No. 230500138, Final Order (May 31, 2023).

- Convert the Company's future Jeffress 115 kV Switching Station ("Jeffress 115 kV Station") located adjacent to Occoneechee State Park south of Highway 58 near Clarksville, Virginia, in Mecklenburg County to 230 kV operation ("Jeffress 230 kV Station").
- Perform minor station-related work at the future Finneywood Station to terminate the new Finneywood-Jeffress Lines.⁴

On July 12, 2023, the Commission issued an Order for Notice and Hearing that, among other things, docketed the Application; established a procedural schedule; directed Dominion to provide notice of its Application to the public; provided interested persons an opportunity to comment on the Application or participate in the proceeding as a respondent by filing a notice of participation; scheduled public witness and evidentiary hearings; directed the Staff of the Commission ("Staff") to investigate the Application and file testimony and exhibits containing its findings and recommendations thereon; and appointed a Hearing Examiner to conduct all further proceedings in this matter and to file a final report.

Staff requested that the Department of Environmental Quality ("DEQ") coordinate an environmental review of the Project by the appropriate agencies and to provide a report on the review.⁵ On August 9, 2023, DEQ filed its report on Dominion's Application ("DEQ Report"), which includes the Wetland Impact Consultation provided by DEQ's Office of Wetlands and Stream Protection. The Virginia Marine Resources Commission also submitted a letter dated August 4, 2023, containing additional comments.

⁴ Ex. 3 (Application) at 2-3.

⁵ Letter from Staff Counsel, State Corporation Commission, dated May 31, 2023, to David L. Davis, Department of Environmental Quality, filed in Case No. PUR-2023-00088; Letter from Staff Counsel, State Corporation Commission, dated May 31, 2023, to Bettina Rayfield, Department of Environmental Quality, filed in Case No. PUR-2023-00088.

On September 11, 2023, Lauren D. Johnson ("Ms. Johnson") filed a notice of participation. On September 26, 2023, Ms. Johnson filed the direct testimony of Brent Johnson. Also on September 26, 2023, Staff filed testimony along with an attached report summarizing the results of its investigation of Dominion's Application. On October 10, 2023, the Company filed rebuttal testimony.

Three public comments were filed in this case. Two public witnesses signed up to testify, and the telephonic public witness hearing was convened on October 18, 2023, with all parties present in the Commission's courtroom. Following the receipt of public witness testimony, the Senior Hearing Examiner convened the evidentiary portion of the hearing in the Commission's courtroom. Dominion, Staff, and Ms. Johnson participated at the hearing. At the hearing, Dominion presented a modification to its proposed transmission line route ("Proposed Route with the McBride/Johnson Segment").⁶ At the direction of the Senior Hearing Examiner, on October 19, 2023, Dominion submitted a map of the modification as a late-filed exhibit.⁷

On November 8, 2023, the Senior Hearing Examiner issued the Report of A. Ann Berkebile, Senior Hearing Examiner ("Report"). In the Report, the Senior Hearing Examiner made the following findings:⁸

- (1) The Company established the need for the Project consisting of constructing two new approximately 18.3-mile 230 kV single circuit lines on new right-of-way from the future Finneywood Station to the newly converted Jeffress 230 kV Switching Station, converting the Company's future Jeffress 115 kV Station to 230 kV operation, and performing minor station-related work at the future Finneywood Station;

⁶ Tr. 10-12.

⁷ Tr. 123-124; Ex. 19.

⁸ Report at 27.

- (2) The Project will assure reliable electric power delivery, thereby supporting economic development in the Project area, including positive economic impacts associated with [Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative's] data center customer's development of its planned Lakeside Campus.
- (3) The [Proposed Route with the McBride/Johnson Segment] constitutes the preferred routing alternative for the transmission line component of the Project;
- (4) The Company reasonably demonstrated the Project avoids or reasonably minimizes impacts on scenic, historic, and environmental resources to the greatest extent practicable, provided that the Company is required to comply with the conditions specified herein;
- (5) The Company reasonably considered the requirements of the [Virginia Environmental Justice Act] in its Application;
- (6) The Project does not represent a hazard to public health or safety;
- (7) The uncontested recommendations in the DEQ Summary of Findings and Recommendations should be adopted by the Commission as conditions of the Project's approval; and
- (8) As additional conditions of approval, the Commission should require the Company to: (a) coordinate with [the Department of Wildlife Resources] and DEQ if instream work becomes necessary during the Project's construction and to comply with threatened and endangered species requirements through the permitting process; and (b) consult with [the Department of Historic Resources] in the development of a mitigation plan relative to the Mistletoe/Mistletoe Castle historic resource.

On November 29, 2023, Dominion, Ms. Johnson, and Staff filed comments on the Report.

NOW THE COMMISSION, upon consideration of this matter, is of the opinion and finds as follows.

Senior Hearing Examiner's Report

After analyzing the law and weighing the evidence – and providing a thorough and detailed analysis thereof – the Senior Hearing Examiner recommended the Commission enter an order:⁹

- (1) *ADOPTING* the findings in [the] Report;
- (2) *GRANTING* the Company's Application to construct the proposed project as specified above;
- (3) *APPROVING* the Company's request for a [certificate of public convenience and necessity ("CPCN")] to authorize construction of the proposed Project as specified; and
- (4) *DISMISSING* this case from the Commission's docket of active cases.

Upon consideration of this matter, the Commission concludes that the Senior Hearing Examiner's findings and recommendations are supported by law and evidence, have a rational basis, and are adopted herein. The Commission finds that the public convenience and necessity requires the construction of the Project and that a CPCN authorizing the Project should be issued subject to the recommended findings and conditions contained in the Report.

Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

- (1) The Commission adopts the Senior Hearing Examiner's findings and recommendations.
- (2) The Senior Hearing Examiner's recommendations, set forth herein, are hereby ordered.
- (3) Dominion is authorized to construct and operate the Project as proposed in its Application, subject to the findings and conditions imposed herein.

⁹ *Id.* at 27-28.

(4) Pursuant to §§ 56-46.1, 56-265.2, and related provisions of Title 56 of the Code, the Company's request for approval of the necessary CPCN to construct and operate the Project is granted as provided for herein.

(5) Pursuant to the Utility Facilities Act, § 56-265.1 *et seq.* of the Code, the Commission issues the following CPCN to Dominion:

Certificate No. ET-DEV-MEC-2024-A, which authorizes Virginia Electric and Power Company under the Utility Facilities Act to operate certificated transmission lines and facilities in Mecklenburg County, all as shown on the map attached to the certificate, and to construct and operate facilities as authorized in Case No. PUR-2023-00088, cancels Certificate No. ET-DEV-MEC-2023-B, issued to Virginia Electric and Power Company in Case No. PUR-2022-00167 on June 14, 2023.

(6) Within thirty (30) days from the date of this Final Order, the Company shall provide to the Commission's Division of Public Utility Regulation an electronic map for the Certificate Number that shows the routing of the Project approved herein. Maps shall be submitted to Michael Cizenski, Deputy Director, Division of Public Utility Regulation, mike.cizenski@scc.virginia.gov.

(7) Upon receiving the maps directed in Ordering Paragraph (6), the Commission's Division of Public Utility Regulation forthwith shall provide the Company copies of the CPCN issued in Ordering Paragraph (5) with the maps attached.

(8) The Project approved herein must be constructed and in service by July 1, 2026. No later than ninety (90) days before the in-service date approved herein, for good cause shown, the Company is granted leave to apply, and to provide the basis, for any extension requested.

(9) This matter is dismissed.

Commissioner James C. Dimitri participated in this matter.

A COPY hereof shall be sent electronically by the Clerk of the Commission to all persons on the official Service List in this matter. The Service List is available from the Clerk of the Commission.