



The PSC Pulse

Commission Elects Stan Wise as Chairman for 2017 and 2018

The Commission November 17, 2016 unanimously elected **Commissioner Stan Wise** to a two-year term as the Commission Chairman. Wise takes over the reins of leadership from **Commissioner Chuck Eaton** who has served as chairman for the past four years. Wise previously served as Commission Chairman in 1999, 2006 and 2011.



Stan Wise, Chairman

Senate Bill 483, passed in March 2012, gave the Commissioners the right to select their own leadership. The law changed the Chairman’s term from one to two years for greater continuity and stability with the opportunity for an additional two-year term.

Commissioner Wise expressed his thanks and said, “This is a very effective Commission and I appreciate my colleagues’ confidence.” Commissioner Wise is serving his fourth six-year term

on the Georgia Public Service Commission. He was first elected in 1994 and re-elected in 2000, 2006 and 2012. He chairs the Natural Gas Committee of NARUC, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, and is president of SEARUC, the Southeastern Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners.



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Assembly is Underway
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- Fort Stewart
- New Hire and Announcements

**2017 GEORGIA
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY IS
UNDERWAY**



The Georgia General Assembly opened its 2017 session on Monday January 9, 2017 at the State Capitol with ceremonial fanfare and the election of the officers of each chamber. The House, as expected, again elected Representative David Ralston as Speaker for the 2017-2018 sessions while the Senate elected Senator David Shafer as President Pro Tem.

On Wednesday January 11, 2017 the Governor delivered his annual State of the State address to a Joint Session of the Legislature with **Commissioners Chuck Eaton, Tim Echols and Lauren “Bubba” McDonald** in attendance. In his address, the Governor noted the economic progress the state has made during the past six years of his administration and proposed a two percent merit raise for state workers and teachers.

Under the state constitution the session is limited to 40 legislative days. We expect the legislators to adjourn sometime by the end of March.

**COMMISSIONER MCDONALD GOES TO WASHINGTON
(DC)**

Having been the first and only state-wide elected official for months on the Trump campaign in Georgia, **Commissioner Lauren “Bubba” McDonald** and his wife Shelley attended the Presidential



Inauguration of Donald J. Trump on January 20, 2017 in Washington, D.C. McDonald said, “It was a great event and the opportunity of a lifetime. We were blessed to be able to attend.”

McDonald also attended the

Georgia State Gala and other inaugural events.

Commissioner McDonald continued his stay in the nation’s capitol to work with his Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition team. They had meetings with several members of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House to discuss Nuclear Waste disposal issues. The key areas discussed were:

- ◆ Yucca Mountain
- ◆ Consolidated Interim Storage
- ◆ Transportation infrastructure for the movement of nuclear waste.



L-R Bubba McDonald (GA PSC, Sarah Hofmann (VT PSB), Julie Brown (FL PSC), Bob Capstick(3 Yankee Companies) , David Wright (former SC PSC) and Katrina McMurrian (NWSC Exec Dir and former FL PSC)

Georgia ratepayers alone have contributed approximately \$1.8 billion to the Nuclear Waste Fund (NWF), including interest. This places Georgia among the top 10 states in terms of NWF contributions. In addition to Georgia Contributions to the NWF, nuclear facilities in Georgia have safely stored approximately 3,000 metric tons of used or spent nuclear fuel (SNF) in compliance with the safety regulations of the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission at the expense of its ratepayers due to failure of the federal government to take possession in accordance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

COMMISSIONER TIM ECHOLS SWORN IN FOR SECOND TERM ON THE GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



Governor Nathan Deal Thursday, December 16, 2016 administered the oath of office to Commissioner Tim Echols. Echols started his second six-year term on the Georgia Public Service Commission on January 1, 2017 and is serving as Vice-Chair. Echols took the oath as his wife Windy held the Bible in the Governor's Office at the State Capitol. Echols won re-election in November 2016 and received the highest vote total of any candidate on the ballot with more than 2.3 million

COMMISSION HOLDS HEARINGS ON GEORGIA POWER COMPANY'S FIFTEENTH PLANT VOGTLE CONSTRUCTION MONITORING REPORT

The Commission held hearings on November 3, 2016 and on December 8, 2016 on the Georgia Power Company's Fifteenth (15th) Vogtle Plant Construction Monitoring (VCM) Report in Docket 29849. Georgia Power Company is asking the Commission to verify and approve \$141 million in expenditures on the Vogtle Construction Project for the six-month period ending June 30, 2016.

The Commission is expected to issue a decision on this request at its February 21, 2017 Administrative Session.



Commission witnesses Bill Jacobs and Steve Roetger testify

COMMISSIONER EATON STEPS DOWN AS COMMISSION CHAIRMAN



Commissioner Chuck Eaton is stepping down after four years as Chairman. During his tenure the Commission oversaw continued work at the massive Plant Vogtle Nuclear Power Construction Project and finally received increased funding for the Commission's budget. The Commission also decided a Georgia Power rate case and approved the acquisition of AGL Resources by the Southern Company which owns Georgia Power.

Eaton was the first Chairman elected as Chairman by his fellow Commissioners following the 2012 revision of the 1991 law on method of electing the chairman. The statute sets the Chairman's term at two years and limits the chairman to one additional two-year term.

Next Issue:

April 2017

Don't forget to send us news as you get it!

PLANT VOGTLE UNIT 3

Construction workers set the Unit 3 Reactor Vessel in the nuclear island on Wednesday, November 23, 2016. This marks a significant milestone on the Plant Vogtle project.



Construction contractors Westinghouse and Fluor Corp. lifted the 306-ton reactor vessel into its permanent location inside the AP1000 unit's nuclear island. The vessel, fabricated by Doosan Heavy Industries in South Korea was shipped to the construction site from the Port of Savannah on a specialized rail car.

Workers on November 21 also completed placement of the 1,000-ton CA01 module for Unit 4. The CA01 module stands 70 feet tall, 95 feet wide, and 80 feet long. It was assembled on-site at the project's 12-story module assembly building.

COMMISSION APPROVES AGREEMENT ON PLANT VOGTLE REVIEW



Georgia Power ratepayers will benefit immediately as a result of the Commission unanimous approval December 20, 2016 of an agreement in the Commission directed review of the construction costs of Georgia Power Company's Nuclear Plant Vogtle Construction Project in Docket 29849. Current customers will see a reduction of approximately \$325 million in rates over the next four years as a result of : 1. Reductions in Georgia Power's

allowed Return on Equity (ROE) associated with its Nuclear Construction Cost Recovery (NCCR) tariff; and; 2. Deferring the cash recovery of certain other related financing costs. The impact of reducing the allowed ROE on project financing costs reduces shareholder earnings by

approximately \$115 million over the same period. If the project is not in commercial operation by December 31, 2020, additional reductions in ROE are provided for in the settlement agreement.

The Commission also approved a motion by **Commissioner McDonald** to require Georgia Power to show the estimated amount customers will save in a message box on future bills beginning in the first quarter of 2017.

128TH NARUC ANNUAL MEETING

As members of the NARUC Gas Sub-Committee, **Janey Chauvet** and **Tara Surratt of the Natural Gas Unit** attended the 2016 NARUC annual meeting in November 2016. The theme of the meeting was



(Solar Grid. Photo courtesy of Tara Surratt of Georgia PSC)

“Effective Markets, Effective Regulation.”

Topics during this event included multi-rate plans, pricing, technology, federal activity and the media portrayal of natural gas pipelines.

Presentations to the Gas Sub-Committee detailed industry-related news and up-

dates including an explanation of cathodic protection and “Managing Price Volatility in the Competitive Retail Natural Gas Market. The Gas Sub-Committee closed with a presentation regarding energy conservation standards for residential furnaces. Staff members were able to participate in two events sponsored by Edison Electric Institute, the Electric Car show and a tour of the Devers Grid Operations Center.

ALBANY GEORGIA, HOME OF COMMISSIONER DOUG EVERETT



On January 2, Albany was hit with a 100 mile hurricane-force straight line winds causing power outages, downed trees and massive destruction. More than 30,000 people were without power for days. Now, 20 days later (January 22) and still having not recovered from the previous storm, the above tornado left a trail of devastation and destruction reaching a death toll of 16 across South Georgia and four in Dougherty County. **Commissioner Doug Everett** met Governor Deal and others when they toured Albany to get a personal look at the damage the tornado had left behind. "The tornado was one mile from my house. We lost power for a couple of days but other than 1-2 downed trees our property remained intact. So sad to see the devastation in the city," said Everett.

FINANCE CORNER

The W-2's were received and distributed the third week of January 2017 for the 2016 earnings. As I mentioned previously, the total Personal Services for our Staff is 85.9% of the PSC's entire Budget. This is a large percentage but only 52.3% of our Budget goes to satisfy Staff Salaries.

You might wonder what happened to the 33.6% difference (85.9% and 52.3%) in the two calculations. This third of our Budget covers the benefits the State provides employees for Retirement (24.3 %), Health Insurance (30.5%), and Social Security/Medicare (7.2%) for a total of 62%.

In other words, your Salary times 1.62% is what your compensation cost the State. But wait, there is more: everyone earns Annual Leave (AL) and Sick Leave (SL) which is not included in the 62%. Also things such as Building Rent and Utilities averages \$8,000 for each PSC Staff member. So add it up and see what your compensation comes out to be?

It is tax time to start your 2016 Tax returns and begin planning for your 2017 Taxes.

Terry Pritchett
Chief Financial Officer



Terry Pritchett

COMMISSIONER MCDONALD PARTICIPATES IN SOLAR FACILITY RIBBON CUTTING AT FORT STEWART



Commissioner Lauren "Bubba" McDonald took part in the ribbon cutting of the 250 acre solar facility at Fort Stewart, Georgia on December 9, 2016. McDonald joined Department of the Army officials, local elected officials and Georgia Power executives to celebrate the opening of the facility. The Fort Stewart facility will provide 40 megawatts of renewable energy to the surrounding grid and to Fort Stewart. The facility is one of five renewable solar facilities constructed on Georgia military bases by Georgia Power.

Georgia Power owns, operates and maintains the facility. Fort Stewart is the largest Army installation east of the Mississippi River with 279,271 acres of land.

WELCOME NEW HIRE!



Doug Cheshire

Doug was hired in January 2017 and works in the Internal Consultants unit on the Vogtle project. He earned his Bachelors Degree in Political Science from Georgia State University and Masters in Public Administration from the University of Georgia. He is a “rescue dad” to his dog Boz and loves to travel and watch football (Go Steelers!). Though he was raised in Florida, Doug has lived in Atlanta since 1990.

GOOD TIME HAD BY ALL AT THE 2016 HOLIDAY



U.S. TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY FOXX APPOINTS 24 MEMBERS TO THE NEW PIPELINE SAFETY VOLUNTARY INFORMATION-SHARING SYSTEM WORKING GROUP

Our very own **Michelle Thebert, Director of Facilities Protection** has recently been appointed as one of 24 members to the NEW Pipeline Safety Voluntary Information-Sharing System Working Group (PHMSA).

This newly created advisory committee will provide the Secretary of Transportation with advice and recommendations related to pipeline safety, including whether an information-sharing system for pipeline owners and operators is needed, ways to encourage the exchange of pipeline inspection information, and best practices for protecting proprietary and security-sensitive information.

Congratulations Michelle and thank you for representing the GA PSC so well.

SHEREE KERNIZAN APPOINTED TO NERC



Sheree Kernizan, Director of the Electric unit, was nominated by the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) and approved by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) Board of Trustees for an appointment to the NERC Compliance and Certification Committee (CCC). She will serve a three year term. The CCC will engage, support and advise the NERC board and NERC regarding all facets of the NERC Compliance and Enforcement program, Registration Program and Certification Program. We are so glad you are on our PSC team. Congratulations!

ERICA WILSON PRESENTED AT H.E.A.T. LUNCHEON

Erica Wilson, Administrator for the Consumer Affairs unit presented to an audience of community-wide contributors on who the Commissioners are and what utilities they regulate. “H.E.A.T. is essential in helping consumers that call us and are in need of assistance” said Erica. Other PSC staff attending included **Karen**



Lynn Page, Erica Wilson, Lisa Jensen, and Karen Howell

Howell, Lisa Jensen and Lynn Page. H.E.A.T. funds assist households experiencing a potential loss of energy service or getting service restored. The group contributes over a \$1 million annually to those in need.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



20 YEARS

Cathy Nesbitt (1/13)
Facilities Protection

Earnest Whatley (7/1)
Internal Consultants

10 YEARS

Chuck Eaton (1/1)
Commissioner

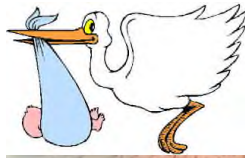
FAREWELL

John McCarter of the Pipeline Safety unit retired at the end of 2016 after 24 years of faithful service.

Michael Small of the Pipeline Safety unit is transferring to Augusta College on February 1, 2017 to pursue his career as a Welding instructor.

CONDOLENCES

Former Commission Executive Secretary **Hugh S. Jordan** passed away on December 30, 2016. Jordan served as Commission Executive Secretary from 1978-1984.



Shemetha Jones in the Internal Consultants unit gave birth to **Baby Kaylee Priscilla Jones** at 11:21am on November 21. She weighed in at 7 lbs. 7 oz. and 20.5 inches long. Welcome to the world baby Kaylee!



A big thank you to the **Natural Gas unit** for making our holidays festive by providing the PSC staff the **Winter Café** during the holiday season. Natural Gas staff and others brought in homemade goodies daily for the whole month of December which were enjoyed by all.



Irma Ormeno in the Natural Gas unit gave birth to little Gabriella on December 14 weighing in at 6 lbs., 14 ounces and 20 inches long. Precious!



WEIGHT LOSS CHALLENGE

Ann McCullough of the Electric Unit declared the winner! The PSC Weight Loss Challenge was a 40 day event that 14 employees joined. The incentive at the end of the challenge was \$140 and a healthier you. The last weigh-in was Monday November 14.

COMMISSION CALENDAR

February 2017

- 2— Committee Meetings
- 2— Hearing: Docket #29849 GPC 15th Semi-Annual Vogtle Construction Monitoring Report
- 7— Administrative Session, Legislative Affairs Meeting
- 12-15— NARUC, Washington D.C.
- 16— Committee Meetings
- 21— Administrative Session, Legislative Affairs Meetings

March 2017

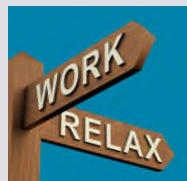
- 2 —Committee Meetings
- 7— Administrative Session, Legislative Affairs Meeting
- 16— Committee Meetings
- 21— Administrative Session, Legislative Affairs Meeting
- 30— Committee Meetings

April 2017

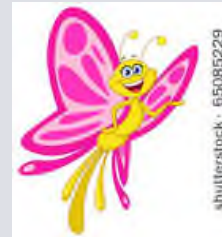
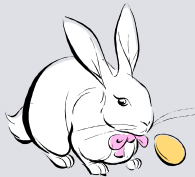
- 4— Administrative Session, Legislative Affairs Meeting
- 13— Committee Meetings
- 18— Administrative Session
- 24— Holiday
- 27— Committee Meetings



HOLIDAYS COMING UP!



Monday, April 24th



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Doug Everett
Chuck Eaton

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