Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Bill Agan and members of the Richland Hills City Council

From: Linda Cantu, City Secretary

Date: May 13, 2014

Subject: Resolution Denying Rate Increase - ATMOS

City Council Action Requested:

Consider Resolution 429-14, Denying Rate Increase

Background Information:

Attachment - Resolution

Board/Citizen Input:

N/A

Financial Impact:

N/A

Staff Contacts:

Linda Cantu, City Secretary
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RESOLUTION NO. 429-14

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS, DENYING THE RATE INCREASE REQUESTED BY ATMOS ENERGY CORP., MID-TEX DIVISION UNDER THE COMPANY'S 2014 ANNUAL RATE REVIEW MECHANISM FILING IN ALL CITIES EXERCISING ORIGINAL JURISDICTION; REQUIRING THE COMPANY TO REIMBURSE CITIES' REASONABLE RATEMAKING EXPENSES PERTAINING TO REVIEW OF THE RRM; AUTHORIZING THE CITY'S PARTICIPATION WITH ATMOS CITIES STEERING COMMITTEE IN ANY APPEAL FILED AT THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS BY THE COMPANY; REQUIRING THE COMPANY TO REIMBURSE CITIES' REASONABLE RATEMAKING EXPENSES IN ANY SUCH APPEAL TO THE RAILROAD COMMISSION; DETERMINING THAT THIS RESOLUTION WAS PASSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE TEXAS OPEN MEETINGS ACT; ADOPTING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; AND REQUIRING DELIVERY OF THIS RESOLUTION TO THE COMPANY AND THE STEERING COMMITTEE'S LEGAL COUNSEL.

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Hills, Texas ("City") is a gas utility customer of Atmos Energy Corp., Mid-Tex Division ("Atmos Mid-Tex" or "Company"), and a regulatory authority with an interest in the rates and charges of Atmos Mid-Tex; and

WHEREAS, the City is a member of the Atmos Cities Steering Committee ("ACSC"), a coalition of approximately 164 similarly situated cities served by Atmos Mid-Tex that have joined together to facilitate the review of and response to natural gas issues affecting rates charged in the Atmos Mid-Tex service area; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the terms of the agreement settling the Company's 2007 Statement of Intent to increase rates, ACSC Cities and the Company worked collaboratively to develop a Rate Review Mechanism ("RRM") tariff that allows for an expedited rate review

process controlled in a three-year experiment by ACSC Cities as a substitute to the current Gas Reliability Infrastructure Program ("GRIP") process instituted by the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the City took action in 2008 to approve a Settlement Agreement with Atmos Mid-Tex resolving the Company's 2007 rate case and authorizing the RRM tariff; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, ACSC and the Company negotiated a renewal of the RRM tariff process for an additional five years; and

WHEREAS, the City passed an ordinance renewing the RRM tariff process for the City for an additional five years; and

WHEREAS, the RRM renewal tariff contemplates reimbursement of ACSC Cities' reasonable expenses associated with RRM applications; and

WHEREAS, on or about February 28, 2014, the Company filed with the City its second annual RRM filing under the renewed RRM tariff, requesting to increase natural gas base rates by $45.7 million; and

WHEREAS, ACSC coordinated its review of Atmos Mid-Tex's RRM filing through its Executive Committee, assisted by ACSC attorneys and consultants, to investigate issues identified by ACSC in the Company's RRM filing; and

WHEREAS, ACSC attorneys and consultants have concluded that the Company is unable to justify a rate increase of the magnitude requested in the RRM filing; and

WHEREAS, ACSC's consultants determined the Company is only entitled to a $19 million increase, approximately 42% of the Company's request under the 2014 RRM filing; and

WHEREAS, the Company would only be entitled to approximately $31 million if it had a GRIP case; and

WHEREAS, the Company's levels of operating and maintenance expense have dramatically risen without sufficient justification; and

WHEREAS, the Company has awarded its executives and upper management increasing and unreasonable levels of incentives and bonuses, expenses which should be borne by shareholders who received a 23% total return on investment in 2013; and

WHEREAS, the Company requested a drastically high level of medical expense that is unreasonable and speculatively based upon estimates; and

WHEREAS, ACSC and the Company were unable to reach a compromise on the amount of additional revenues that the Company should recover under the 2014 RRM filing; and

WHEREAS, the ACSC Executive Committee, as well as ACSC's counsel and consultants, recommend that ACSC Cities deny the requested rate increase; and

WHEREAS, the Company's current rates are determined to be just, reasonable, and in the public interest.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS:

Section 1. That the findings set forth in this Resolution are hereby in all things approved.

Section 2. That the City Council finds that Atmos Mid-Tex was unable to justify the appropriateness or the need for the increased revenues requested in the 2014 RRM filing, and that existing rates for natural gas service provided by Atmos Mid-Tex are just and reasonable.

Section 3. That Atmos Mid-Tex shall reimburse the reasonable ratemaking expenses of the ACSC Cities in processing the Company's RRM application.

Section 4. That in the event the Company files an appeal of this denial of rate increase to the Railroad Commission of Texas, the City is hereby authorized to intervene in such appeal, and

shall participate in such appeal in conjunction with the ACSC membership. Further, in such event Atmos Mid-Tex shall reimburse the reasonable expenses of the ACSC Cities in participating in the appeal of this and other ACSC City rate actions resulting from the 2014 RRM filing.

Section 5. That the meeting at which this Resolution was approved was in all things conducted in strict compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551.

Section 6. That if any one or more sections or clauses of this Resolution is adjudged to be unconstitutional or invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remaining provisions of this Resolution and the remaining provisions of the Resolution shall be interpreted as if the offending section or clause never existed.

Section 7. That a copy of this Resolution shall be sent to Atmos Mid-Tex, care of Chris Felan, Manager of Rates and Regulatory Affairs, at Atmos Energy Corporation, 5420 LBJ Freeway, Suite 1862, Dallas, Texas 75240, and to Geoffrey Gay, General Counsel to ACSC, at Lloyd Gosselink Rochelle & Townsend, P.C., P.O. Box 1725, Austin, Texas 78767-1725.

RESOLVED this 20TH day of MAY, 2014.

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Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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City Secretary

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City Attorney