



**ORDER NUMBER
E-20-21**

IN THE MATTER OF
the *Utilities Commission Act*, RSBC 1996, Chapter 473

and

FortisBC Energy Inc.
Section 71 Filing of Biomethane Purchase Agreement between FortisBC Energy Inc.
and Assai Energy, LLC

BEFORE:

R. I. Mason, Panel Chair
E. B. Lockhart, Commissioner

on July 23, 2021

ORDER

WHEREAS:

- A. On June 30, 2021, pursuant to section 71 of *Utilities Commission Act* (UCA) and the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) Rules for Natural Gas Energy Supply Contracts (Rules), FortisBC Energy Inc. (FEI) applied to the BCUC seeking acceptance for a Biomethane Purchase Agreement (BPA) between FEI and Assai Energy, LLC (Assai) (Application);
- B. Section 18(1) of the *Clean Energy Act* (CEA) defines a prescribed undertaking as "...a project, program, contract or expenditure that is in a class of projects, programs, contracts or expenditures prescribed for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia";
- C. Section 18(3) of the CEA states that "the commission must not exercise a power under the UCA in a way that would directly or indirectly prevent a public utility...from carrying out a prescribed undertaking";
- D. On May 25, 2021, the Lieutenant Governor in Council, by Order in Council (OIC) 306/2021, approved an amendment to the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Clean Energy) Regulation* (GGRR), which among other things, repealed and replaced section 2 (3.8) to state:

(3.8) The public utility acquires renewable natural gas

(a) at costs that meet the following criteria, as applicable:

(i) if the public utility acquires renewable natural gas by purchasing it, the price of the renewable natural gas does not exceed the maximum amount, determined in accordance with section 9, in effect in the fiscal year in which the contract for purchase is signed;

(ii) if the public utility acquires renewable natural gas by producing it, the levelized cost of production reasonably expected by the public utility does not exceed the maximum amount, determined in accordance with section 9, in effect in the fiscal year in which the public utility decides to construct or purchase the production facility, and,

(b) that, in a calendar year, does not exceed 15% of the total amount, in GJ, of natural gas provided by the public utility to its non-bypass customers in 2019, subject to subsection (3.9) and section 10;

- E. Under the BPA, Assai will supply biomethane, which is a type of renewable natural gas (RNG), processed from a landfill located in the USA, which will be acquired by FEI and delivered from the injection point to FEI at Huntingdon in BC;
- F. The BCUC has not reviewed the Application from a public interest perspective as the BPA is a prescribed undertaking under section 18(1) of the CEA;
- G. FEI requests that the redacted portions of the Application and certain appendices be kept confidential due to their commercially sensitive nature; and
- H. The BCUC has reviewed the Application and considers the following determinations to be warranted.

NOW THEREFORE pursuant to section 71 of the UCA, the Rules, section 18 of the CEA and the GGRR, the BCUC orders as follows:

- 1. The BCUC accepts for filing the BPA between FEI and Assai.
- 2. The BCUC will keep the redacted portions of the Application and certain appendices confidential as requested by FEI as they contain commercially sensitive information.

DATED at the City of Vancouver, in the Province of British Columbia, this 23rd day of July 2021.

BY ORDER

Original signed by:

R. I. Mason
Commissioner