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Request from: Office of Consumer Counsel

Question:

(Poles) Please summarize the process by which a wireline communication attacher gets to attach its facilities to a utility pole, from the pole attachment permit application, to engineering, make-ready and actual attachment. In each step of the process, please state Eversource's role as SPA.

Response:

Throughout the pole attachment process, Eversource, in its capacity as the Single Pole Administrator ("SPA"), serves as the central administrative coordinator, facilitating the progression of attachment requests from application through licensing while coordinating with engineering organizations, pole owners, attachers, the Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier ("ILEC"), contractors, and other stakeholders to support compliance with PURA's established procedures and timelines.

The pole attachment process generally consists of the following phases:

1. Application Submission - A prospective wireline communications attacher submits a pole attachment application through Alden One. The SPA's role is to receive the application, review it for administrative completeness, request additional information as necessary, and initiate the attachment process.

2. Application Review and Engineering Coordination - Following receipt of a complete application and applicable fees, the application progresses through the required engineering review and field survey process conducted by Eversource and the ILEC, if attachers are applying for attachment on joint owned poles. The SPA's role is to administer the application workflow, coordinate the progression of the application through the required review stages, and facilitate communication among the responsible parties.

3. Engineering Review and Make Ready – Eversource and the ILEC Engineering personnel evaluate the proposed attachment and determine whether make-ready work is required to accommodate the requested attachment while maintaining applicable safety and engineering standards. The SPA's role is to coordinate the engineering and make-ready process, communicate engineering outcomes, administer applicable billing associated with make-ready work, and monitor the application's progression.

4. Make-Ready Construction - Required make-ready work is performed by the appropriate utility, communications entity, or contractor, as applicable. The SPA's role is to coordinate the administrative progression of the attachment request, facilitate communication among the responsible parties, and monitor completion of required process milestones.

5. Attachment and Licensing - Following completion of all required make-ready activities and satisfaction of applicable requirements, the attacher installs its facilities and the attachment process is completed. The SPA's role is to verify that all required process milestones have been satisfied, administer the licensing process, complete any required administrative closeout activities, and maintain the associated records.