

October 29, 2021
Cobourg, ON –

Lakefront Electricity Proposed Rate Increase Challenged *Intervenors, including the CTA, successfully reduced 2022 rate increase by 35%*

In Ontario, the rates that electricity distributors such as Lakefront Utilities can charge are set by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) every five years. This rate review is conducted by the OEB and intervenors representing various affected groups.

Directors Dennis Nabieszko, Bryan Lambert, and Ken Strauss from the Cobourg Taxpayers Association (CTA) participated as intervenors in the hearings.

Director Bryan Lambert said the proposed 6.76% per month increase was reduced to 4.43% per month for the typical residential customer, a 35% reduction.

“This is a saving of about \$280,000 per year in Lakefront’s electricity delivery charge for Cobourg customers.”

Lakefront also wanted to charge \$2 per month for printed bills and \$15 for duplicate bills.

“The impact to seniors and low-income users would have been significant and we were successful in having Lakefront withdraw these surcharges,” said Lambert.

Director Ken Strauss said that a Lakefront billing error resulted in customers being underbilled for their electricity usage totaling over \$1,000,000.

Lakefront proposed recovering this underbilling plus interest from its Cobourg customers over a two-year period. The Intervenors objected and revised recovery terms were negotiated.

“The underbilling will be recovered from customers over a five-year period and interest will not be charged. This helps reduce the hardship of this underbilling recovery on lower income residents,” said Strauss.

Further, Lakefront also agreed to increase funding for the Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) from \$6,247 to \$10,000 per year. This program is aimed at helping low-income users with the higher costs of electricity.

Lakefront’s proposal for a standby charge for customers who install solar panels or other power sources to reduce carbon dioxide will not be implemented.

Strauss said, “it makes no sense to penalize users who are trying to reduce the impact of climate change.”

Volunteers from the CTA have worked many hours to help ensure that Cobourg’s electricity users get the lowest possible rates consistent with a reliable service.