Grant Thornton
An instinct for growth™

Grant Thornton LLP
Suite 300
15 International Place
St. John's, NL
A1A 0L4

T +1 709 778 8800
F +1 709 722 7892

Ms. Cheryl Blundon
Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities
120 Torbay Road
Prince Charles Building
St. John's, NL A1A 5B2

September 9, 2020

Dear Ms. Blundon,

Re: Newfoundland Power Inc.
2021 Capital Budget Application

We have completed our review as requested in your letter August 11, 2020 relating to Newfoundland Power Inc.'s (the "Company's") 2021 Capital Budget Application as it pertains to the calculation of the 2019 actual average rate base and the calculations of the 2020 and 2021 forecast rate base additions, deductions and allowances.

The procedures undertaken in the course of our financial analysis do not constitute an audit of the Company's financial information and consequently, we do not express an opinion on the financial information.

The results of our review for each required task are noted below:

2019 AVERAGE RATE BASE CALCULATION

Pursuant to Order No. P.U. 32 (2007), the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities (the "Board") approved the Company's proposal to complete its transition to the Asset Rate Base Method ("ARBM") commencing January 1, 2008. The actual average rate base for 2019 as calculated by the Company under the ARBM and provided in Schedule D of its Application is $1,153,556,000 which is an increase of $36,215,000 (3.2%) over the average rate base for 2018 of $1,117,341,000.

The net change in the Company's average rate base from 2018 to 2019 can be summarized as follows:

(000's)	2019	2018
Average rate base - opening balance	$ 1,117,341	$ 1,092,254
Change in average deferred charges and deferred regulatory costs	1,332	139
Average change in:		
Plant in service	75,078	61,539
Accumulated depreciation	(32,558)	(29,045)
Contributions in aid of construction	(3,122)	(1,241)
Weather normalization reserve	442	(102)
Other post-employment benefits	(4,604)	(5,515)
Future income taxes	(3,087)	(1,351)
Rate base allowances	1,982	110
Customer Finance Programs	499	559
Demand Management Incentive Acct	196	-
Other rate base components (net)	57	(6)
Average rate base - ending balance	$ 1,153,556	$ 1,117,341

Our procedures with respect to verifying the calculation of the average rate base were directed towards the verification of the data incorporated in the calculations and the methodology used by the Company. Specifically, the procedures which we performed included the following:

- agreed all carry-forward data to supporting documentation including audited financial statements and internal accounting records, where applicable;
- agreed component data (capital expenditures; depreciation; etc.) to supporting documentation as noted under each section;
- checked the clerical accuracy of the continuity of the rate base for 2019; and
- agreed the methodology used in the calculation of the average rate base to the Public Utilities Act to ensure it is in accordance with Board Orders and established policy and procedure.

Based upon the results of the above procedures we did not note any discrepancies in the calculation of the 2019 average rate base, and therefore conclude that the 2019 average rate base included in Schedule D of the Company's Application is in accordance with established practice and Board Orders.

RATE BASE ADDITIONS, DEDUCTIONS AND ALLOWANCES

In compliance with Order No. P.U. 19 (2003), the Company has filed evidence with the Board pertaining to its forecast deferred charges, including pension costs, to be included in the calculation of the forecast average rate base for 2020 and 2021 in its 2021 Capital Budget application. The report also provides a comprehensive review of all additions, deductions and allowances included in the rate base, with the exception of plant investment. The 2020 and 2021 forecast rate base additions, deductions and allowances are consistent with the calculation of the Company's 2020 and 2021 forecast average rate base reflected by the most recent forecast and estimates presented with year-end data. This is consistent with past evidence in compliance with Order No. P.U. 19 (2003). Each, in turn, is reviewed below.

RATE BASE ADDITIONS

The forecast additions to rate base for 2020 and 2021 and the actual additions in 2018 and 2019 as presented by the Company are as follows:

($000's)	**Actual 2018**	**Actual 2019**	**Forecast 2020**	**Forecast 2021**
Deferred Pension Costs	$ 89,678	$ 91,824	$ 89,722	$ 89,836
Credit Facility Issue Costs	120	61	46	31
Cost Recovery Deferral – Hearing Costs	-	494	247	-
Cost Recovery Deferral – Conservation	15,889	17,371	17,602	16,246
Weather Normalization Reserve	1,517	5,654	1,517	-
Customer Finance Programs	2,460	2,494	2,543	2,593
Demand Management Incentive Account	-	1,881	111	150
Total Additions	$ 109,664	$ 119,779	$ 111,788	$ 108,856

Source: Newfoundland Power Inc. - 2021 Capital Budget Application
Report on *Rate Base: Additions, Deductions & Allowances* - Table 1

Our comments with respect to the additions to rate base are noted below:

Deferred Pension Costs

Deferred pension costs are the result of the pension funding exceeding the pension expense as determined in accordance with the recommendations of U.S. GAAP.

According to the table below, the forecast pension plan funding for 2020 and 2021 is $2,673,000 and $2,579,000 and the forecast pension plan expense is $4,775,000 and $2,465,000 for 2020 and 2021 respectively. The difference between the funding and the expense, as indicated below, represents the decrease or increase in deferred pension costs forecasted for 2020 and 2021.

($000's)	Actual 2018	Actual 2019	Forecast 2020	Forecast 2021
Deferred Pension Costs, January 1	$92,017	$89,678	$91,824	$89,722
Pension Plan Funding	2,793	2,770	2,673	2,579
Pension Plan Expense	(5,132)	(624)	(4,775)	(2,465)
Increase/(decrease) in Deferred Pension Costs	(2,339)	2,146	(2,102)	114
Deferred Pension costs, December 31	$89,678	$91,824	$ 89,722	$ 89,836

Source: Newfoundland Power Inc. - 2020 Capital Budget Application
Report on *Rate Base: Additions, Deductions & Allowance*s - Table 2

The forecast pension funding for 2020 and 2021 per Table 2 of the Rate Base: Additions, Deductions & Allowances report is $2,673,000 and $2,579,000 respectively, compared to actual funding in 2019 of $2,770,000. The forecast funding amounts have been agreed to schedules provided by the Company's actuary.

The forecast pension expense for 2020 and 2021 is $4,775,000 and $2,465,000 respectively compared to an actual expense in 2019 of $624,000. The forecast pension expense for 2020 changed from $1,013,000 to $4,775,000 from the 2020 to 2021 Capital Budget Application. According to the Company, the increase in pension expense for 2020 and 2021 versus 2019 is primarily due to a reduction in the discount rate from 3.8% to 3.1% and the amortization of a $38,000,000 actuarial loss in 2019. The forecast pension expense amounts have been agreed to schedules provided by the Company's actuary.

Based on our review of forecast deferred pension costs, we confirm that we have not noted any discrepancies or unusual items.

Deferred Credit Facility Issue Costs

In August 2018, the committed credit facility was renegotiated to extend its maturity date to August 2023. The total amended costs totaled $40,000 and are being amortized over the 5-year life of the agreement, beginning in 2018.

In August 2019, the committed credit facility was renegotiated to extend its maturity date to August 2024. The total amended costs totaled $35,000 and are being amortized over the 5-year life of the agreement, beginning in 2019.

In the 2019/2020 General Rate Application the amortization of credit facility costs associated with the balance as of December 31, 2018 of $120,000 was included as a component of the Company's cost of capital for 2019 and 2020 revenue requirement purposes. As these costs are reflected in customer rates, they are not included in rate base for those years.

Based on our review of forecast deferred credit facility issue costs, we confirm that we have not noted any discrepancies or unusual items.

Cost Recovery Deferral – Hearing Costs

In Order No. P.U. 2 (2019), the Board approved hearing costs of up to $1.0 million related to the 2019/2020 General Rate Application to be recovered in customer rates over the period March 1, 2019 through December 31, 2021. The deferred hearing cost balances included in forecast rate base for 2020 and 2021 are included on an after-tax basis consistent with the treatment of the 2019 revenue surplus in the 2019/2020 General Rate Application. According to the Company, the actual hearing costs for the 2019/2020 General Rate Application were $329,728. The Company transferred $670,272 to the RSA on March 31, 2019 representing the difference between actual of $329,728 and estimated costs of $1,000,000 as directed by the Board in Order No. P.U. 2 (2019) instead of a reduction in rate base in 2019.

Based on our review of forecast deferred cost recovery relating to hearing costs, we confirm that we have not noted any discrepancies or unusual items, and it is consistent with approved Board Orders.

Cost Recovery Deferral – Conservation

On April 17, 2013, the Board issued Order No. P.U. 13 (2013) and approved the deferral of annual customer energy conservation program costs and the amortization of annual costs over seven years beginning in 2014 with recovery through the Rate Stabilization Account.

Based on our review of forecast deferred cost recovery relating to conservation and amortization of annual costs, we confirm that we have not noted any discrepancies or unusual items, and it is consistent with approved Board Orders.

Weather Normalization Reserve

The disposition of the December 31, 2019 balance to the Rate Stabilization Account as of March 31, 2020 was approved in Order No. P.U. 10 (2020).

Based on our review of the forecast weather normalization reserve, we confirm that we have not noted any discrepancies or unusual items.

Customer Finance Programs

As indicated by the Company, Customer Finance Programs are loans provided to customers for purchase and installation of products and services related to conservation programs and contributions in aid of construction.

As part of the Company's transition to Asset Rate Base Method (ARBM) in 2008, inclusion of certain other assets and liabilities was required, including Customer Finance Programs receivables. The 2020 and 2021 forecast Customer Finance Programs receivable balance is comparable with 2019 and 2018.

Demand Management Incentive Account

In Order No. P.U. 32 (2007) the Board approved the Company's proposal to establish the Demand Management Incentive Account ("DMI").

In Order No. P.U. 11 (2020) the Board approved a debit transfer of $2,686,951 equal to the balance in the 2019 DMI account of $1,880,866 plus related income tax effects of $806,085 to the Rate Stabilization Account as at March 31, 2020.

Based on our review of forecast DMI, we confirm that we have not noted any discrepancies or unusual items, and it is consistent with approved Board Orders.

RATE BASE DEDUCTIONS

The forecast deductions to rate base for 2020 and 2021 and the actual figures for 2019 and 2018 as presented by the Company are as follows:

($000's)	Actual 2018	Actual 2019	Forecast 2020	Forecast 2021
Other Post-Employment Benefits ("OPEBs")	$ 57,112	$ 61,791	$ 65,778	$ 70,652
Customer Security Deposits	1,071	1,420	1,066	1,066
Accrued Pension Liabilities	5,016	5,104	5,317	5,546
Accumulated Deferred Income Taxes	4,887	10,088	13,093	17,165
2019 Cost Recovery Deferral	-	1,226	613	-
Total Deductions	$ 68,086	$ 79,629	$ 85,867	$ 94,429

Source: Newfoundland Power Inc. - 2020 Capital Budget Application
Report on *Rate Base: Additions, Deductions & Allowance*s - Table 9

Our comments with respect to the deductions to rate base are noted below:

OPEBs Liability

On June 30, 2010, the Company submitted an application to the Board requesting approval for the 2011 adoption of accrual accounting for OPEBs for regulatory purposes. Under the accrual basis, OPEBs costs are recognized as an expense as employees earn the benefits that they will receive after retirement. The application also addressed treatment of the projected OPEBs transitional balance as at January 1, 2011 and the creation of an OPEBs Cost Variance Deferral Account. On December 10, 2011, Order No. P.U. 31 (2010) approved the adoption of the accrual method of accounting for OPEBs costs and income tax related to OPEBs effective January 1, 2011 and the amortization using the straight-line method over a 15-year period of the transitional balance estimated to be $52,400,000. The actual transitional balance was $52,560,000 resulting in annual amortization of $3,504,000.

The total amount of the deduction to rate base related to OPEBs for 2019 is $61,791,000 with $65,778,000 and $70,652,000 forecast for 2020 and 2021 respectively. The actual and forecast OPEBs are consistent with calculations provided by the Company's actuary.

Customer Security Deposits

Customer Security Deposits are provided by customers in accordance with the Schedule of Rates, Rules and Regulations.

As part of the transition to ARBM in 2008 the inclusion of Customer Security Deposits was required as a component of rate base. The 2020 and 2021 forecast Customer Security Deposits balance is fairly comparable with 2019 and 2018 balances.

Accrued Pension Liabilities

Accrued pension liabilities represent the executive and senior management supplemental pension benefits comprised of a defined benefit plan (Pension Uniformity Plan - PUP) and a defined contribution plan (Supplementary Employee Retirement Plan - SERP). The balance represents the cumulative costs of these unfunded plans, net of associated benefit payments.

As part of the transition to ARBM in 2008 the inclusion of accrued pension liabilities was required as a component of rate base. The actual and forecast PUP are consistent with calculations provided by the Company's actuary. The Company is the designated administrator responsible for the overall administration, interpretation and application of the SERP. The liability is determined by the Company in accordance with the terms of the SERP.

Accumulated Deferred Income Taxes

Deferred Income Taxes arise due to the Board's approval of the Company's use of tax accrual accounting related to plant investment, pension costs and other employee future benefit costs.

According to the Company, the increase in accumulated deferred income taxes for 2020 and 2021 forecast over 2019 actuals is primarily due to deferred tax related to plant investment. In 2019, Newfoundland Power adopted the use of the accelerated capital cost allowance (CCA) for income tax purposes which increased CCA claims and associated deferred tax.

Based on our review of Future Income Tax balances, we confirm that we have not noted any material discrepancies or unusual items, and it is consistent with approved Board Orders.

Cost Over Recovery – 2016 and 2019 Revenue Surplus

As a result of the Board's decisions included in Order No. P.U. 18 (2016) the 2016 revenue shortfall proposed by the Company shifted to a revenue surplus of $2,600,000 ($1,800,000 after tax). The Board order provided for a credit of the 2016 revenue surplus through a regulatory amortization beginning July 1, 2016 and concluding on December 31, 2018.

As a result of the Board's decisions included in Order No. P.U. 2 (2019) the Company's 2019 revenue surplus was $2,500,000 ($1,700,000 after tax). The Board order provided for a credit of the 2019 revenue surplus through a regulatory amortization beginning March 1, 2019 and concluding on December 31, 2021.

Based on our review of the forecast cost over recovery – 2016 and 2019 revenue surplus, we confirm that we have not noted any discrepancies or unusual items.

RATE BASE ALLOWANCES

The Rate Base allowances included in the Company's rate base are the Cash Working Capital ("CWC") allowance and the Materials and Supplies allowance. These represent the average amount of investor-supplied working capital necessary to provide service. The 2020 and 2021 forecast CWC and the Materials and Supplies allowance are based on the method used to calculate the 2019/2020 average rate base as approved by the Board in Order No. P.U. 2 (2019).

According to the Company, the CWC allowance is higher for forecast 2020 and 2021 from 2019 primarily due to higher purchased power costs resulting from the October 1, 2019 purchased power rate change and normal inflationary and wage increases. Furthermore, lower current tax expense in 2019 related to higher tax deductions for interest during construction and regulatory mechanisms. Average materials and supplies for rate base purposes in 2020 and 2021 forecast years are comparable with 2019.

Based on our review of the Rate Base Allowances, we have not noted any discrepancies or unusual items and the forecast for 2020 and 2021 is consistent with 2019/2020 test year data.

I trust this is the information you requested. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Yours sincerely,
Grant Thornton LLP

Barry Griffiths

Barry Griffiths, CPA, CA
Principal – Assurance Services

ABrown.

Angie Brown, CPA, CA, CIA
Director – Advisory Services