



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**Board of Public Utilities**  
44 South Clinton Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Post Office Box 350  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350  
[www.nj.gov/bpu/](http://www.nj.gov/bpu/)

CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE

<b>SEAN BRONNER, JR.,</b>	)	ORDER ADOPTING
Petitioner,	)	INITIAL DECISION
	)	
v.	)	
	)	
<b>SOUTH JERSEY GAS COMPANY,</b>	)	BPU DOCKET NO. GC20050355U
Respondent.	)	OAL DOCKET NO. PUC 09396-20

**Parties of Record:**

**Van L. McPherson, III., Esq.,** on behalf of Respondent, South Jersey Gas Company  
**Sean Bronner, Jr., Pro Se**

BY THE BOARD:

The within matter is a billing dispute between Sean Bronner, Jr. (“Petitioner”), and South Jersey Gas Company (“SJG,” “Respondent,” or “Company”). This Order sets forth the background and procedural history of Petitioner’s claims and represents the Final Order in this matter. Having reviewed the record, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (“Board”) now **ADOPTS** the Initial Decision rendered on October 15, 2021, as follows.

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

On April 15, 2020, Petitioner filed a petition (“Petition”) with the Board requesting a formal hearing to resolve a billing dispute with SJG for gas service rendered at Petitioner’s premise (“Property”). The Company filed an answer to the Petition on June 10, 2020.

On September 23, 2020, the Petition was transferred to the Office of Administrative Law (“OAL”) for hearing as a contested case pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 to -15 and N.J.S.A. 52:14F-1 to -23. This matter was assigned to Administrative Law Judge (“ALJ”) Edward J. Delanoy, Jr. SJG and Petitioner entered into a written Settlement and Release Agreement (“Agreement”) with an effective date of June 15, 2021. On October 14, 2021, the OAL received a copy of the executed Agreement. The Petitioner’s mother, Renee Dixon-Bronner, executed the Agreement on behalf of Petitioner pursuant to a power of attorney, which was attached to the Petition at the time it was filed.

On October 15, 2021, ALJ Delanoy, Jr. issued an Initial Decision concluding that the Agreement satisfied the requirements of N.J.A.C. 1:1-19.1, and concluded the matter. The OAL did not receive exceptions to the Initial Decision from either party.

### **DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS**

In customer billing disputes before the Board, a petitioner bears the burden of proof by a preponderance of the competent, credible evidence. See Atkinson v. Parsekian, 37 N.J. 143, 149 (1962). The burden of proof is met if the evidence establishes the reasonable probability of the facts alleged and generates reliable belief that the tended hypothesis, in all human likelihood, is true. See Loew v. Union Beach, 56 N.J. Super. 93, 104 (App. Div.), certif. denied, 31 N.J. 75 (1959).

In the present instance, the parties reached an agreement pursuant to N.J.A.C. 1:1-19.1, which states in relevant part:

- (a) Where the parties to a case wish to settle the matter, and the transmitting agency is not a party, the judge shall require the parties to disclose the full settlement terms:
  1. In writing, by consent order or stipulation signed by all parties or their attorneys; or
  2. Orally, by the parties or their representatives.
- (b) Under (a) above, if the judge determines from the written order/stipulation or from the parties' testimony under oath that the settlement is voluntary, consistent with the law and fully dispositive of all issues in controversy, the judge shall issue an initial decision incorporating the full terms and approving the settlement.

Pursuant to the terms of the Agreement, and in order to fully resolve this matter, Respondent agreed that the account for the premise in question was the responsibility of Sean Bronner, Sr. until June 17, 2021, and thereafter a new account would be created, which would be the responsibility of Sean Bronner, Jr., the Petitioner.

ALJ Delanoy, Jr. reviewed the record and terms of the Agreement and concluded: "that this matter is no longer a contested case before the Office of Administrative Law." See Initial Decision at 2.

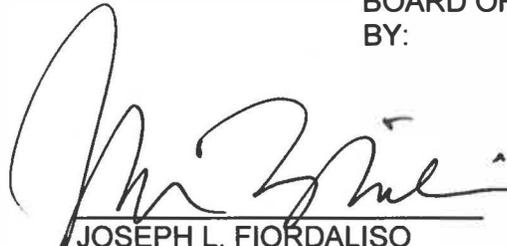
Thus, after careful review and consideration of the entire record, the Board **HEREBY FINDS** the findings and conclusions of law of ALJ Delanoy, Jr. to be reasonable and, accordingly, **HEREBY ACCEPTS** them.

Accordingly, the Board **HEREBY ADOPTS** the Initial Decision in its entirety and **ORDERS** that the Petition be **DISMISSED**.

This order shall be effective November 24, 2021.

DATED: November 17, 2021

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES  
BY:



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JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO  
PRESIDENT



\_\_\_\_\_  
MARY-ANNA HOLDEN  
COMMISSIONER



\_\_\_\_\_  
DIANNE SOLOMON  
COMMISSIONER



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UPENDRA J. CHIVUKULA  
COMMISSIONER



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ROBERT M. GORDON  
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST: 

\_\_\_\_\_  
AIDA CAMACHO-WELCH  
SECRETARY

**Sean Bronner, Jr. Petitioner**

**v.**

**South Jersey Gas Company, Respondent**

**BPU DOCKET NO. GC20050355U  
OAL DOCKET NO. PUC 09396-20**

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**State of New Jersey**  
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

**INITIAL DECISION**

**SETTLEMENT**

OAL DKT. NO. PUC 09396-20

AGENCY DKT. NO. GC20050355U

**SEAN BRONNER, JR.,**

Petitioner,

v.

**SOUTH JERSEY GAS COMPANY,**

Respondent.

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**Renee Dixon-Bronner**, Mother and Power of Attorney, appearing for petitioner

**Van L. McPherson, III**, Assistant General Counsel, for respondent

Record Closed: October 14, 2021

Decided: October 15, 2021

BEFORE **EDWARD J. DELANOY, JR.**, Deputy Director and Assignment Judge:

This matter was filed with the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) on September 23, 2020, for determination as a contested case, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 to -15 and N.J.S.A. 52:14F-1 to -13.

The parties agreed to a settlement of all issues in dispute and have prepared a Settlement and Release Agreement, which is attached and fully incorporated herein.

I have reviewed the record and the terms of settlement and I **FIND**:

1. The parties have voluntarily agreed to the settlement as evidenced by their signatures or their representatives' signatures on the attachment.
2. The settlement fully disposes of all issues in controversy and is consistent with the law.

I **CONCLUDE** that this matter is no longer a contested case before the Office of Administrative Law. It is **ORDERED** that the parties comply with the settlement terms and that these proceedings be concluded.

I hereby **FILE** my initial decision with the **BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES** for consideration.

This recommended decision may be adopted, modified or rejected by the **BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES**, which by law is authorized to make a final decision in this matter. If the Board of Public Utilities does not adopt, modify or reject this decision within forty-five days and unless such time limit is otherwise extended, this recommended decision shall become a final decision in accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:14B-10.

October 15, 2021 \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
EDWARD J. DELANOY, JR., Deputy  
Director and ALAJ

Date Received at Agency:

10/19/2021  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date Mailed to Parties:

10/19/2021  
\_\_\_\_\_

mph