

§2518. Joint use of poles

1. Municipality may order joint use of poles. Subject to the provisions of sections 711 and 8302, the municipal officers may, after notice and hearing, order any wires used for conveying electric current or the transmission of telephone messages and attached to poles located in a public street or way of the municipality to be removed and attached to other poles, however owned and controlled, legally located in the public streets or ways, as the municipal officers may designate, only if in their judgment the change is practicable and can be made without unreasonably interfering with the business of any person. The municipal officers may establish such regulations as they determine necessary for the joint use of the poles.

[PL 1995, c. 225, §12 (AMD).]

2. Cost of maintaining joint poles. If the parties using the joint poles cannot agree as to the proportionate share each will bear of the original cost and of the expense of maintaining the poles, or a proper annual rental for the use of the poles, the following provisions apply.

A. The municipal officers may, after hearing the parties, determine the proportionate part of the expense each party will justly bear or a proper rental. [PL 1987, c. 141, Pt. A, §6 (NEW).]

B. The municipal officers shall give personal notice to each party 14 days before the hearing. [PL 1987, c. 141, Pt. A, §6 (NEW).]

C. The owner of the poles may recover, in a civil action, from each party using the poles, the owner's share of the cost and expense or the rental as determined by the municipal officers. [RR 2021, c. 1, Pt. B, §404 (COR).]

[RR 2021, c. 1, Pt. B, §404 (COR).]

3. Orders and decisions of municipal officers. All orders and decisions of the municipal officers under this section shall be in writing and a record of them shall be made by the municipal clerk. The service of a copy of the order or decision, attested by the clerk, upon the parties affected by it is sufficient notice to the party affected to require compliance.

[PL 1987, c. 141, Pt. A, §6 (NEW).]

4. Exception: Long distance lines. This section does not apply to long distance telephone wires or lines of poles used to support them. For the purpose of this section a long distance telephone wire is a telephone wire that extends at least 20 miles in a direct line from a central office.

[PL 1987, c. 141, Pt. A, §6 (NEW).]

5. Appeals. A party aggrieved by an order or decision of the municipal officers relating to the joint use of poles, by any regulation established by the municipal officers relating to the joint use of poles or by their decision as to the party's proportionate share of the original cost, the cost of maintaining the joint poles or the annual rental for the use of the joint poles may appeal from the order, decision or regulation at any time, within 10 days after service of notice of them, to the Superior Court in the county in which the municipality is located.

A. When an appeal is taken, the appellant shall:

(1) Include in the complaint a statement setting forth substantially the facts of the case, and the orders, decisions or regulations of the municipal officers from which the appellant appeals and in what respect the appellant is aggrieved by them; and

(2) Give written notice of the appeal with a copy of the complaint to the opposite party. [RR 2021, c. 1, Pt. B, §405 (COR).]

B. The presiding justice at the first term of the Superior Court shall appoint a committee of 3 disinterested persons, not residents of the municipality named in the complaint, who shall, within 30 days after the appointment, after due notice and hearing:

- (1) Affirm the orders or decisions of the municipal officers;
- (2) Amend or modify the orders or decisions; or
- (3) Make new and further orders, decisions or regulations governing the joint use of poles by any of the parties to the proceedings, or in relation to the proportionate share of the expense to be borne by each party using the joint poles, or the just and fair rental for the use of the poles. [RR 2021, c. 1, Pt. B, §405 (COR).]

C. The committee's report must be filed with the clerk of the Superior Court. Upon being accepted by a Justice of the Superior Court the report is final and binding on all parties to the proceedings, except that questions of law arising under the proceedings may be reserved for decision by the Law Court. [RR 2021, c. 1, Pt. B, §405 (COR).]

D. A person affected by an order or decision of the municipal officers, who is not joined in the original complaint, may, on motion to the Superior Court, be joined in the complaint at any time before hearing by the committee appointed under this section. [PL 1987, c. 141, Pt. A, §6 (NEW).]

[RR 2021, c. 1, Pt. B, §405 (COR).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1987, c. 141, §A6 (NEW). PL 1995, c. 225, §12 (AMD). RR 2021, c. 1, Pt. B, §§404, 405 (COR).

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