

In the Matter of Evergy Missouri West, Inc.

---

Missouri Public Service Commission

August 09, 2022

---

Vol 05

**PHIPPS REPORTING**

*Raising the Bar!*

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing

Tuesday, August 9, 2022  
6:30 p.m. - 6:51 p.m.

Missouri Public Service Commission  
WebEx

VOLUME 5  
Pages 1 - 18

In the Matter of Evergy Missouri )  
West, Inc. d/b/a Evergy Missouri )  
West's Request for Authority to ) File No. ER-2022-0130  
Implement a General Rate )  
Increase for Electric Service )

CHARLES HATCHER, Presiding  
SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

RYAN A. SILVEY, Chairman  
JASON R. HOLSMAN, Commissioner  
GLEN KOLKMEYER, Commissioner

Stenographically Reported By:  
Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640

Job No. 266295

1 APPEARANCES:

2 On behalf of Evergy Missouri West:

3 Evergy, Inc.  
4 1200 Main Street, 16th Floor  
5 P.O. Box 418679  
6 Kansas City, MO 64105-9679

7 BY: ROGER W. STEINER, ESQ.  
8 roger.steiner@evergy.com

9 Fischer & Dority, P.C.  
10 101 Madison Street, Suite 400  
11 Jefferson City, MO 65101

12 BY: JAMES M. FISCHER, ESQ.  
13 jfischer@aol.com

14 On behalf of the Staff of the  
15 Public Service Commission:

16 Public Service Commission  
17 200 Madison Street, Suite 800  
18 P.O. Box 360  
19 Jefferson City, MO 65102

20 BY: NICOLE MERS, ESQ.  
21 nicole.mers@psc.mo.gov

22 On behalf of the Office of the  
23 Public Counsel:

24 Office of the Public Counsel  
25 200 Madison Street, Suite 650  
P.O. Box 2230  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

BY: JOHN CLIZER, ESQ.  
John.Clizer@opc.mo.gov

21

22

23

24

25

1	I N D E X	Page 3
2		Page
3	Oral Entries of Appearance	5
4	WITNESSES:	
5	Testimony by Kane Sheek	8
6	Testimony by James Turner	12
7	Testimony by Jayson Maloney	14
8	Certificate of Reporter	18
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

1 (The following proceedings began at 6:30 p.m.):

2 JUDGE HATCHER: Let's go on the record. First  
3 I would ask that everyone please mute themselves unless  
4 they are speaking. That will cut down on the noise  
5 level and prevent audio feedback.

6 Today is August 9, 2022. The Missouri Public  
7 Service Commission has set this time for a local public  
8 hearing to give members of the public a chance to  
9 comment about Evergy Missouri West's electric general  
10 rate increase application and that is File No.  
11 ER-2022-0130.

12 The Public Service Commission regulates rates  
13 charged by public utility companies in Missouri to  
14 ensure that those rates are just and reasonable. The  
15 Commission also regulates the quality of service and  
16 safety of the operations of public utilities.

17 The Commission is made up of five  
18 Commissioners. The Commissioners are appointed by the  
19 Governor to fixed terms and confirmed by the Senate.  
20 The Commissioners employ a staff of engineers,  
21 accountants, attorneys, financial analysts, and other  
22 specialists in the field of utility regulation.

23 My name is Charles Hatcher, and I am the  
24 Regulatory Law Judge that will preside over this  
25 hearing. With me today are Chairman Ryan Silvey and

1 Commissioners Jason Holsman and Glen Kolkmeyer. This is  
2 an official hearing of the Missouri Public Service  
3 Commission, and the statements and testimony of  
4 witnesses will be recorded by a court reporter and they  
5 are given under oath. The Commission has not made any  
6 decisions in this case and therefore the Commissioners  
7 cannot answer any questions this evening. They have to  
8 remain impartial until all evidence is presented.

9 Let's turn to a brief abbreviated entry of  
10 appearance for counsel. We already have the addresses  
11 well established on the record. Let's start with Everygy  
12 West, please.

13 MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Judge. On behalf of  
14 the Company, I'm Jim Fischer. I'm a local attorney in  
15 Jefferson City.

16 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, sir. And for the  
17 Staff of the Commission.

18 MS. MERS: Nicole Mers for Commission Staff,  
19 and I encourage everyone if you have comments, please,  
20 please do give them now. We had some great discussion  
21 earlier and I'd love the Commission to be able to hear  
22 that. So thank you.

23 JUDGE HATCHER: Okay. Thank you. That's a  
24 good point. I'll go ahead and comment on that as well  
25 before we move on. Those discussions that you just had

1 in the question-and-answer session are unknown by the  
2 Commissioners. As everyone just saw, the hearing is  
3 really divided into two portions. The informational  
4 portion, kind of the back and forth that you had with  
5 staff and the counsel there, that's something that the  
6 Commission isn't aware of. So like Counsel Mers said,  
7 if there was something discussed that you'd like to  
8 bring up and let the Commission know, please, we do  
9 invite that.

10 Let's turn now -- I'm sorry for the digression  
11 -- to the Office of the Public Counsel.

12 MR. CLIZER: Good evening, Your Honor. John  
13 Clizer on behalf of the Missouri Office of the Public  
14 Counsel. Thank you.

15 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, sir. And again we  
16 do have a number of intervenors. I am not going to roll  
17 call them; but if there are any counsel for those  
18 intervenors who would like to make their appearance  
19 known on the record, please go ahead and speak up.  
20 Let the record show none spoke up.

21 The process this evening will be to call the  
22 names listed on our pre-registration sign-up sheet.  
23 That was the email in the order that the Commission  
24 asked everyone to email for prior to tonight. I have  
25 four names on the list. I will go through those four

1 names. I will call each one in order, place you under  
2 oath, ask you to state and spell your name, and then ask  
3 for your testimony. Once I'm done calling the names on  
4 that list, I will then open it to anyone who is on the  
5 call this evening who did not pre-register but still  
6 would like to testify to the Commission.

7 So with that, let's go ahead and get started.  
8 And a quick reminder we do have and made the WebEx  
9 available specifically to allow for telephone users to  
10 call in. Telephone users are muted currently and will  
11 need to unmute in order to speak and that is \*6.

12 Okay. The first name on my list is Kane  
13 Sheek. The last name spelling I have is S-h-e-e-k.

14 MR. SHEEK: Yes.

15 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. Mr. Sheek, would you  
16 please -- Let me swear you in.

17 Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the  
18 testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole  
19 truth, and nothing but the truth?

20 MR. SHEEK: I do.

21 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. And would you please  
22 go ahead and state and spell your name for us.

23 MR. SHEEK: Yes. My name is Kane, K-a-n-e,  
24 and my last name is Sheek, S-h-e-e-k.

25 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Sheek. Would you



1 please go ahead and proceed with your comments.

2 MR. SHEEK: Yes.

3 Thereupon:

4 KANE SHEEK,  
5 having been sworn, testified as follows:

6 MR. SHEEK: Thank you for giving me the  
7 opportunity. Like I said, my name is Kane Sheek, and I  
8 am a new resident of Kansas City. I just actually  
9 recently moved from Springfield. I'm an Evergy  
10 customer. And I am concerned for our future and if we  
11 do not responsibly use these rate increase to transition  
12 away from dirty fossil fuels.

13 As someone who has lived with asthma my entire  
14 life, I can tell you that the increasing numbers of bad  
15 air days directly affects my health and my livelihood.  
16 I've had more issues with my asthma within the last  
17 couple of years than I have throughout my entire life.  
18 As hot weather continues to rise and more pollutants  
19 from dirty fuel sources also continue to rise, my lung  
20 capacity has actually gotten worse.

21 I currently am lucky enough to be able to have  
22 health insurance and afford medication to keep this in  
23 check, but for many people in our community I know that  
24 that isn't the case, and continuing to invest rate  
25 increases to dirty energy will only make things worse.

1 Another one of the biggest lessons that I've  
2 learned from being an Eagle Scout is to really leave  
3 places cleaner than when you found them. As I grow  
4 older, I'm trying to leave a world that's cleaner and  
5 has a promise of a livable planet to my nieces and my  
6 nephews and future generations to come. And really we  
7 can't ignore this climate crisis anymore.

8 With Missouri getting hit with harsher  
9 droughts, more frequent flooding, and climate anomalies  
10 like the polar vortex that we saw in 2019, we really  
11 can't wait to speed up transitions towards clean and  
12 renewable energy.

13 And lastly, as a young professional I only  
14 have a finite and rigid budget that I have to follow to  
15 make sure that I can stay afloat. And just within the  
16 past year we've been dealing with large rent increases,  
17 huge increases on things like gas and grocery prices,  
18 and now it seems that it's inevitable to be seeing  
19 increases in our utility prices as well.

20 With no raises to salary or budget, it is  
21 getting harder and harder to keep up with necessary  
22 bills. I love Kansas City and I want to be able to live  
23 in a city where I can find opportunities to make a good  
24 life for myself and my family.

25 So I ask that if you are raising rates that

1 you please use the money wisely and invest in renewables  
2 that keep this planet livable for the future and to keep  
3 KC affordable for younger folks like me that are just  
4 starting out. That is all I have. So thank you for  
5 your time.

6 JUDGE HATCHER: Absolutely. Thank you,  
7 Mr. Sheek. Are there any questions from the  
8 Commissioners? Okay. Hearing none. I appreciate your  
9 testimony, Mr. Sheek.

10 We'll move on. Our next witness is Tracy  
11 Gillenwater. The last name is spelled  
12 G-i-l-l-e-n-w-a-t-e-r. Again, if you're on the phone  
13 it's \*6 to unmute. And if Tracy Gillenwater will say  
14 hello, that will bring their screen to the front of our  
15 WebEx.

16 MR. TURNER: Yes, I've just joined the meeting  
17 as a guest. Was I supposed to call this number?

18 JUDGE HATCHER: You are just calling in now?

19 MR. TURNER: Yes.

20 JUDGE HATCHER: Is this Mr. James Turner, the  
21 name that I see on the screen?

22 MR. TURNER: Yes.

23 JUDGE HATCHER: Okay. Thank you. Mr. Turner,  
24 right now, this is Judge Hatcher, and right now you're  
25 on a conference call. We're having a public hearing for

1 a requested rate increase for Evergy Missouri West. Is  
2 that the phone call you meant to make, sir?

3 MR. TURNER: Yes. I have a feeling that --

4 JUDGE HATCHER: Mr. Turner, you cut out there  
5 a little bit.

6 MR. TURNER: I'm here.

7 JUDGE HATCHER: Okay. We can hear you. I'm  
8 going to take things out of order a little bit unless I  
9 hear an objection. Mr. Turner --

10 MR. TURNER: Yes, sir.

11 JUDGE HATCHER: -- did you call in to give us  
12 your thoughts or your testimony? This is a public  
13 meeting. And what I'd like to do since I've got you,  
14 I'll go ahead and swear you in so you can make comments  
15 to the Missouri Public Service Commission. The  
16 Commissioners are on the line.

17 MR. TURNER: Yes, I'm ready. Thank you.

18 JUDGE HATCHER: Okay. Do you solemnly swear  
19 or affirm that the testimony you're about to give is the  
20 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

21 MR. TURNER: I do.

22 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr. Turner. And if  
23 you would state and spell your name for the record.

24 MR. TURNER: James Roy Turner, J-a-m-e-s R-o-y  
25 T-u-r-n-e-r.

1                   JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr. Turner, and  
2 please go ahead and tell the Commissioners your  
3 testimony.

4                   MR. TURNER: Thank you.  
5 Thereupon:

6                                   JAMES TURNER,  
7 having been sworn, testified as follows:

8                   MR. TURNER: I reside in Kansas City,  
9 Missouri, as do my three sons and a grandson. They can  
10 participate in a bountiful future if regulatory actions  
11 like this rate case will take proper account of how  
12 carbon dioxide and methane emissions from coal and gas  
13 hurts our climate and our economy.

14                   A hotter climate will reduce the potential for  
15 American farmers to raise enough food. Increased heat  
16 waves will result in more money being spent to keep  
17 dwellings cool leaving less potential funds for  
18 productive investment. Evergy needs to stop spending  
19 about \$500 million of its customers' money per year to  
20 import coal from Wyoming. Evergy needs to use  
21 securitization to expedite the retirement of its  
22 Hawthorn coal plant by 2025 and all of its coal plants  
23 no later than 2030, because we still have a shot at  
24 avoiding the worst impacts of our already changing  
25 climate if we will take necessary and prompt action.

1           Everygy shareholders should have some skin in  
2 the game. That is, the shareholders should have some  
3 skin in the game when the fossil fuels it chooses during  
4 its resource planning exceed their projected cost.  
5 Ratepayers shouldn't bear all the costs for volatile  
6 fossil fuel prices because utility executives gambled on  
7 coal and gas when a combination of fixed price resources  
8 are available that can meet customer demand, including  
9 wind, solar, and efficiency.

10           I am personally committed to such changes. I  
11 have solar panels on my house, and I drive an  
12 electric-powered car. That concludes my statement.

13 Thank you.

14           JUDGE HATCHER: Mr. Turner, I appreciate you  
15 showing up and coming to testify this evening. Are  
16 there any Commissioner questions for Mr. Turner?

17           All right. Hearing none. We will go to the  
18 next name on the list, Adam Rossi. The last name is  
19 spelled R-o-s-s-i, Adam Rossi.

20           Okay. Hearing no answer, we'll go back to our  
21 remaining name on our pre-registered witness list, Tracy  
22 Gillenwater. Okay. Hearing no reply.

23           I'd like to go ahead and open it up to anyone  
24 who is in the audience this evening who would like to  
25 testify to give their thoughts to the Commissioners.

1 This is a public hearing and that's what it is here for.  
2 Just speak up to testify. How that will work on the  
3 WebEx is, that will bring your rectangle, for lack of a  
4 better description, to the front of everyone's WebEx  
5 page and then just like we've seen I'll swear you in and  
6 then ask for your comments.

7 If you've called in on the telephone, it is \*6  
8 to unmute. If you're talking and no one is answering  
9 you, you're muted. It's \*6 to unmute if you're on your  
10 telephone.

11 MR. MALONEY: Are you able to hear me?

12 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes, yes, I can hear someone.

13 MR. MALONEY: Sorry about that, Your Honor. I  
14 would like to testify under oath, please. My name is  
15 Jayson Maloney spelled J-a-y-s-o-n M-a-l-o-n-e-y.

16 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you very much. Do you  
17 solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are  
18 about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing  
19 but the truth?

20 MR. MALONEY: I do.

21 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. And please go  
22 ahead and give the Commissioners your testimony.  
23 Thereupon:

24 JAYSON MALONEY,  
25 having been sworn, testified as follows:

1           MR. MALONEY: Thank you first off for the  
2 opportunity to testify, Your Honor. My name is Jayson  
3 Maloney. I've been a resident of Kansas City now for  
4 about a year and a half. I relocated here to take a  
5 position with a large lending institution in Kansas  
6 City. I moved my business here so I not only have  
7 purchased a home and have a residential account, but I  
8 also have a commercial account with Evergy.

9           I'm here to state similar to some of the other  
10 speakers that Evergy should be held more accountable for  
11 responsible rate increases. In my own business I look  
12 at a lot of the socioeconomic impacts, as well as the  
13 impacts on the environment. This rate increase fails to  
14 address those climate issues and, you know, address the  
15 reliable energy generation.

16           When we look at Evergy, you know, stating the  
17 facts, they spend nearly \$500 million a year on coal, as  
18 James had stated, from Wyoming, but that's not counting  
19 all of these dollars that are spent keeping these old  
20 inefficient plants running every single year. The cost  
21 for fossil fuels continue to increase. The costs for  
22 housing, the costs for basic foods and necessities  
23 continues to increase, and those costs are ultimately  
24 passed down to consumers.

25           My mother is disabled and relies on a fixed



1 income, and she feels the brunt of these increases.  
2 Myself, as a young professional, I also work to keep my  
3 balanced budget and I want to continue to see that these  
4 prices are affordable for everyone in Kansas City. For  
5 us that are working professionals it may seem like a  
6 small amount, but for those that are on retirement,  
7 disability or fixed income, this can have a massive  
8 impact on their budget.

9 I want a utility company that understands  
10 climate crisis and does what they can to be the next  
11 generation and has responsibility to look for  
12 alternatives for these fuel sources. So I thank you for  
13 your time in allowing me to provide testimony.

14 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr. Maloney. I  
15 appreciate your time in being here this evening and your  
16 testimony.

17 MR. MALONEY: Thank you.

18 JUDGE HATCHER: I will run through our two  
19 remaining names and ask one last time for any other  
20 persons who wish to testify. We're still looking for  
21 Tracy Gillenwater or Adam Rossi or anyone else who is in  
22 attendance who would like to give their thoughts to the  
23 Commissioners.

24 Okay. That will bring this public hearing to  
25 a close. I want to thank all of our participants today

1 for their testimony. If you do have additional comments  
2 or you know someone or you had technical difficulty and  
3 could not make your comment this evening, you still may  
4 make written comments by going to the PSC's web page and  
5 that's psc.mo.gov and in the upper right-hand corner is  
6 a link to comment on cases. Make sure and include this  
7 case number, and I'll repeat that, ER-2022-0130.

8 If you have a question for the Office of the  
9 Public Counsel, you may send that to mopco@opc.mo.gov.

10 Commissioners and counsel and our trusty  
11 reporter Bev, thank you all for working your evenings.  
12 This hearing is now adjourned and we are off the record.

13 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Thank you, Judge.

14 JUDGE HATCHER: Thanks, Chairman. Thanks,  
15 Commissioners.

16 (Thereupon, the proceedings concluded at 6:51  
17 p.m.)

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2 STATE OF MISSOURI )

3 COUNTY OF COLE )

4 I, Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640, do  
5 hereby certify that I was authorized to and did  
6 stenographically report the foregoing Public Service  
7 Commission local public hearing and that the transcript,  
8 pages 1 through 17, is a true record of my stenographic  
9 notes.

10 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,  
11 employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties,  
12 nor am I a relative or counsel connected with the  
13 action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

14 Dated this 19th day of August, 2022.

15   
16 \_\_\_\_\_

17 Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25