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STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

VOLUME IV
Local Public Hearing
January 11, 2017
Jefferson City, Missouri

In The Matter of Union Electric)
Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri's) File No.
Tariffs To Increase Its Revenues) ER-2016-0179
For Electric Service)

MORRIS L. WOODRUFF, Presiding
CHIEF REGULATORY LAW JUDGE
DANIEL Y. HALL, CHAIRMAN
STEPHEN M. STOLL,
WILLIAM P. KENNEY,
SCOTT T. RUPP,
MAIDA J. COLEMAN,
COMMISSIONERS

REPORTED BY: Sarah J. Pokorski, CCR 745

1 A P P E A R A N C E S

2

3 For AmerenUE:

Paul A. Boudreau

4 Brydon, Swearngen & England

312 East Capitol Avenue

5 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0456

573-635-7166

6

7

For Consumers Council of Missouri

8 John Coffman

871 Tuxedo Boulevard

9 St. Louis, Missouri 63119

314-395-8002

10

11

12 Office of the Public Counsel:

Marc D. Poston

13 200 Madison Street

P.O. Box 2230

14 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

573-751-5558

15 marc.poston@ded.mo.gov

16

17 Public Service Commission Staff:

Kevin A. Thompson

18 200 Madison Street

P.O. Box 360

19 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0360

573-751-6514

20 kevin.thompson@psc.mo.gov

21

22 Court Reporter:

Sarah J. Pokorski, CCR

23 Missouri CCR No. 745

Midwest Litigation Services

24 711 North Eleventh Street

St. Louis, Missouri 63101

25 314-644-2191

1 PROCEEDINGS

2

3 (Starting time of the hearing: 6:12 p.m.)

4

5 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Greetings once again.

6 We're back now for the formal part of the hearing --
7 hearing process. I have with me now at the table all
8 five commissioners. I'll do the introductions here.
9 To my immediate -- immediate left is Chairman Daniel
10 Hall. Next to him is Commissioner Maida -- Maida
11 Coleman. And then Stephen Stoll. And on my left is
12 Commissioner Scott Rupp. And Commissioner Bill
13 Kenney. We'll go down the list of witnesses here. We
14 only have two that have signed up so far. After I've
15 had -- give those people a chance to testify, I'll ask
16 if there's anyone else in the room who's felt inspired
17 to speak also, and we'll give those people a chance to
18 talk also. Before we do that, I'll ask the attorneys
19 here representing parties to enter their appearance,
20 beginning with Staff.

21 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Judge. Kevin
22 Thompson for the Staff of Missouri Public Service
23 Commission, Post Office Box 360, Jefferson City,
24 Missouri 65102.

25 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Anyone here for Ameren?

1 MR. BOUDREAU: Appearing on behalf of
2 Ameren, Paul Boudreau, Post Office Box 456, Jefferson
3 City, Missouri.

4 JUDGE WOODRUFF: And for Office of the
5 Public Counsel.

6 MR. POSTON: Marc Poston, appearing for the
7 Office of the Public Counsel.

8 JUDGE WOODRUFF: For AARP?

9 MR. COFFMAN: Appearing on behalf of
10 Consumers Council of Missouri --

11 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay.

12 MR. COFFMAN: -- John Coffman, 871 Tuxedo
13 Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63119.

14 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Any other attorneys here?
15 All right. Thank you very much. And then we'll go --
16 bring the first witness up. And if you come on up to
17 the podium, and I'll -- I'll swear you in, and you can
18 go ahead and tell us what you want to tell us.

19 LEONARD STEINMAN,
20 OF LAWFUL AGE, HAVING BEEN DULY SWORN TO TELL THE
21 TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH,
22 TESTIFIED AS FOLLOWS:

23 JUDGE WOODRUFF: And what is your name?

24 MR. STEINMAN: Leonard Steinman.

25 THE REPORTER: Can you spell that for me,

1 please, sir.

2 MR. STEINMAN: S-T-E-I-N-M-A-N.

3 THE REPORTER: And what was the first name?

4 MR. STEINMAN: Leonard. L-E-O-N-A-R-D.

5 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. What would you like
6 to tell us?

7 MR. STEINMAN: Four things. Number one is
8 Public Service Commission, I've never -- in 33 Public
9 Service Commission hearings, I've never seen an
10 elected official here. Taxation without
11 representation is a federal offense. There's no
12 representative here, and every time you raise a rate
13 on water, sewer, electric or otherwise, the taxes go
14 up. AmerenUE used to be Missouri Power & Light, and
15 then UE. And I'm very proud of what our rates are
16 right now. We've got one of the lowest rates in the
17 country. But I seen a little article in the Jefferson
18 City newspaper the other day where Mr. John Schulte
19 got \$9000 to replace his light bulbs in his grocery
20 store. Are you going to come and replace my light
21 bulbs in my house that I can actually read with
22 instead of having lights -- I'm sick of having
23 hundred-watt light bulbs that I can't even read a book
24 with. It's making me go blind. The other factor is
25 when all this electricity goes down to a point that

1 AmerenUE's not making no money, are they going to say
2 we're not making no money again, we're going to have
3 to raise rates up because the rest of us have
4 sacrificed, going to a light bulb you can't read no
5 more? That's my main objection is we've got to
6 control what we're doing. AmerenUE, they play a
7 little game: Ameren, Illinois, Ameren, Missouri, it
8 goes back and forth, back and forth. And if you pay
9 attention to it, somebody's getting rich, and it's not
10 me. It's not most of the people that are in here.
11 There's a lot of people that are on set incomes. I'm
12 one of them. I'll be 65 next month. And it gets
13 irritating that five people are up here as judges that
14 I'm paying a salary to, and not a one of you are an
15 elected official that I can vote out. Thank you.

16 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Any questions for
17 Mr. Steinman?

18 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Thank you, sir.

19 COMMISSIONER RUPP: Thank you.

20 JUDGE WOODRUFF: The next on the list is
21 Joan Quick.

22 MS. QUICK: I do not have anything to say.
23 I thought I was signing a registration sheet. So
24 thank you.

25 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Well, you're welcome to

1 come up if you'd like.

2 MS. QUICK: No, thank you.

3 JUDGE WOODRUFF: All right. Is anyone else
4 here that would like to testify? Come on up, sir.
5 Would you tell us who you are.

6 MR. HUBER: Good evening, folks. My name
7 is Thomas Huber. H-U-B-E-R. I'm a Cole County
8 resident. And like the prior gentleman, I too am in
9 my mid-sixties, and --

10 JUDGE WOODRUFF: I need to swear you in
11 before you start.

12 MR. HUBER: Oh, certainly.

13 THOMAS HUBER,
14 OF LAWFUL AGE, HAVING BEEN DULY SWORN TO TELL THE
15 TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH,
16 TESTIFIED AS FOLLOWS:

17 MR. HUBER: I was saying I too am a retired
18 individual, and just -- in fact, tomorrow morning,
19 I'll be applying for my Social Security. I got this
20 notice in my bill from Ameren. And I have no
21 complaints about their service. I've been a customer
22 for some time. I've recently moved to a new home -- a
23 new residence -- so I don't have like a full, total
24 analysis of what my bill is or so. But I'm just a
25 normal, residential family of one person in a home. I

1 got this notice, like I said, with my bill, and it
2 says they want to raise our rates by about 7.7-plus
3 percent. If I apply a normal monthly rate of about
4 \$150 to my residence, gas and -- gas and electric --
5 that seems about what my average is, \$150 a month --
6 it would raise my bill by about \$11.60 a month each
7 month. That's the equivalent, practically, of a whole
8 nother month's worth of utility bills over a year's
9 time. Now, I also notice on my bill that I'm
10 paying -- already paying for an infrastructure
11 replacement surcharge. That means -- I guess that's
12 corporate language or utility language for replacing
13 worn-out plant property and equipment that Ameren uses
14 to provide us service. I am confident, being a
15 corporation as sophisticated as Ameren, they already
16 are getting depreciation allowance for their normal
17 day-to-day operations and claiming depreciation.
18 Depreciation is for wearing out of assets. I can't
19 believe that my total bill -- not my total bill, but
20 money we all pay for our electric and gas charges, no
21 portion of it is allowed to replace what is wearing
22 out or what they need. And on top of that, we're
23 playing -- paying an infrastructure replacement
24 charge. My point is, gentlemen, lady, it's excessive.
25 Now, I'm an old horse trader, too. They're asking for

1 7.7-plus percent. Let's say you folks just give
2 them -- approve half of that. That's still a
3 tremendous increase in money a year for all of us
4 Ameren customers. All of us are Missouri residents.
5 We all know that decades ago, the Missouri
6 Conservation Department asked for one-eighth of 1
7 percent sales tax increase to go for conservation
8 purposes. It yielded that department umpteen millions
9 of dollars. They had more cash than they knew what to
10 do with. They were loaning it out to fire
11 departments, building nature centers, buying land --
12 land to the point they couldn't keep -- they couldn't
13 maintain it all, they couldn't take care of it all.
14 That was just one-eighth of 1 percent. This is a
15 permanent rate increase of 7.7-plus percent. And even
16 if you gave them 5, or you gave them 4, that
17 is tremendously more than one-eighth of 1 percent.
18 And for those of us who are on fixed incomes, between
19 the property tax collector, our health coverage, and
20 now our utility rates, it's just too much. And we've
21 also seen the -- we used to -- do you want to
22 contribute a dollar for the poor people that were
23 under-privileged and couldn't afford their utility
24 bills. You better put a thing in there -- a provision
25 in there for us people that are retired and on fixed

1 incomes to help us pay our utility bills. Also, their
2 notice goes on: This is driven by reduced revenues in
3 general, and then from their largest customer -- I
4 don't know who that is. Probably where they're
5 selling power or electric to -- perhaps out of state.
6 I don't know. You folks know that better than I do.
7 Why should we as resident customers be penalized if
8 their business -- and I thought that's what we all
9 want to do, reduce our use of energy. So people are
10 being more efficient, they're cutting down on their
11 use of energy, and now we've got to pay more, and
12 we've got to subsidize the biggest customer? That
13 just doesn't even hardly seem equitable. And anybody
14 that argues that it is, well those of us are on fixed
15 incomes, and have limited means, and unlike a
16 corporation, can't pass the cost on -- I can't pass my
17 utility bill on to anyone else. It's just a matter of
18 time, like I said, between the property tax, and this,
19 and health insurance, I might as well go to bankruptcy
20 court. It's just a matter of time. So that's all I
21 have to say. I appreciate your time. And like I say,
22 we saw what one-eighth of 1 percent yields. Give them
23 half of what they're asking for, it's still a
24 tremendous windfall, and it's a permanent rate
25 increase, and we're still being mugged for

1 infrastructure charges and all that. And I know
2 there's depreciation already factored in there, too.
3 Okay, folks. Thank you very much.

4 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you, sir. Any
5 questions?

6 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Thank you, sir.

7 CHAIRMAN HALL: Thank you, sir, for your
8 testimony.

9 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Sir, I will clarify one
10 thing for you. The rate increase is only for the
11 electric, not for the gas.

12 MR. HUBER: Okay. Well, they didn't
13 specify that in there.

14 JUDGE WOODRUFF: I just wanted to make sure
15 you understand.

16 MR. HUBER: Still too much.

17 JUDGE WOODRUFF: All right. Anyone else
18 wish to testify? Yes, sir. Come on up. Good
19 evening.

20 MR. STRUEBIG: Good evening.

21 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Tell us your name, please.

22 MR. STRUEBIG: My name's Bryan Struebig.

23 B-R-Y-A-N S-T-R-U-E-B-I-G.

24 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Swear you in.

25 BRYAN STRUEBIG,

1 OF LAWFUL AGE, HAVING BEEN DULY SWORN TO TELL THE
2 TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH,
3 TESTIFIED AS FOLLOWS:

4 JUDGE WOODRUFF: What would you like to
5 tell us?

6 MR. STRUEBIG: Well, to begin with, Ameren
7 does do a wonderful job providing service to its
8 customers, and we're thankful for that. We're
9 thankful to the workers that do everything to keep the
10 lights on in our house and keep us warm. I hope
11 they're really successful over the weekend with the
12 coming ice storm. The rate increase is simply just
13 bad financial management on the part of Ameren,
14 unfortunately. They are looking to raise two hundred
15 six million -- or \$206.4 million dollars, as I see
16 here. But if you look at their annual report for last
17 year, they have a -- you know, their earnings were up
18 every single quarter last year, and the year before.
19 In fact, they're -- after expenses, they still showed
20 a profit of \$6,186,300,000. They could have easily
21 made up for this shortchange that they are trying to
22 hit the consumer with simply by reducing the dividend
23 that they paid out to their shareholders last year,
24 which came to a total of \$428,189,000. The year
25 before that, it was four hundred and one thousand five

1 hundred -- or four hundred and one million -- I
2 apologize -- \$401,503,000. Why should I have to pay
3 more for my electric bill just to make the
4 shareholders more wealthy? My -- my income hasn't
5 gone up in years. Wages are stagnant. Ameren is
6 looking to be able to renegotiate their labor with the
7 labor unions if Right-to-Work is passed and prevailing
8 wage is also decreased. It's just -- you know,
9 there's no reason that the Missouri residents should
10 be also forced to pay this extra money when they have
11 donated so much money to various political campaigns
12 in order to get Right-to-Work passed in order to get
13 the prevailing wage laws reduced and -- and to put a
14 lot of money behind the eminent domain fight that they
15 are trying to put on in Northern Missouri with the
16 Grain Belt Expressway which -- where we -- it's been
17 estimated we will be able to get power at about two
18 kilowatt -- or two cents per kilowatt hour. That's
19 pretty much all I have.

20 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Questions?

21 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No. Thank you for
22 your testimony.

23 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Thank you, sir.

24 MR. STRUEBIG: Thank you.

25 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Anyone else wish to

1 testify? I don't see any other hands going up, so
2 once again, thank you for coming this evening. And we
3 are adjourned.

4

5 (Ending time of the hearing: 6:26 p.m.)

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