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BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing

Thursday, February 23, 2023
6:37 p.m. - 7:06 p.m.

Held at the Osage Community Center
Cape Girardeau, Missouri
Reporter Appeared Remote via WebEx

VOLUME 6
Pages 1 - 24

In the Matter of Union Electric)
Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri's)
Tariffs to Adjust its Revenues) File No.
for Electric Service) ER-2022-0337

KENNETH SEYER, Presiding
REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

MAIDA J. COLEMAN, Commissioner
JASON HOLSMAN, Commissioner
GLEN KOLKMEYER, Commissioner

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

Job No.: 140675

1 APPEARANCES:

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25

1 The following proceedings began at 6:37 p.m.:

2 JUDGE SEYER: Let's go on the record. Today
3 is February 23, 2023. I had to check the time. The
4 time is 6:37 p.m. My name is Ken Seyer. I'm a
5 Regulatory Law Judge with the Missouri Public Service
6 Commission and will preside over this hearing. The
7 Commission has set this time for a local public hearing
8 in File No. ER-2022-0337, which is captioned as In the
9 Matter of Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri's
10 Tariffs to Adjust Its Revenues for Electric Service.

11 The Commission has scheduled this local public
12 hearing to give members of the public a chance to
13 comment about Ameren Missouri's rate case. The Missouri
14 Public Service Commission regulates the rates charged by
15 public utility companies in Missouri to ensure that
16 those rates are just and reasonable. The Commission
17 also regulates the quality of service and safety of the
18 operations of public utilities.

19 Ameren Missouri is a public utility under the
20 Missouri statutes and as such is subject to regulation
21 by the Commission. The Commission is made up of five
22 Commissioners. The Commissioners are appointed by the
23 Governor to fixed terms and confirmed by the Senate.
24 The Commissioners employ a staff of engineers,
25 accountants, attorneys, financial analysts and other

1 specialists in the field of utility regulation.

2 The Commission currently has a vacancy, and so
3 there are currently four Commissioners. And we do have
4 Commissioner Maida Coleman here in person. And
5 Commissioner Holsman, I heard you. Are there any other
6 Commissioners on?

7 All right. This is an official proceeding of
8 the Missouri Public Service Commission, and the
9 statements and testimony of witnesses will be recorded
10 by a court reporter and must be given under oath. Once
11 the hearing testimony is transcribed, the Commissioners
12 will have the opportunity to read all of the witnesses'
13 remarks. Know that the Commissioners value your
14 comments and input.

15 At this time, Commissioner Coleman, would you
16 like to make an opening statement or opening remark?

17 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, Judge. Only
18 would like to say thank you for being here this evening
19 for participating in this community local public
20 hearing. I look forward to any and every person that
21 might be speaking tonight to get your information.
22 Thank you very much.

23 JUDGE SEYER: Commissioner Holsman, would you
24 like to make any remarks?

25 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: Just want to echo what

1 Commissioner Coleman had said. We appreciate you taking
2 the time. We do listen to what you have to say and it
3 does matter. So thank you very much.

4 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you, Commissioner. There
5 are attorneys here tonight representing the parties in
6 this matter. For the record, would each of you identify
7 yourselves and state which party you're representing
8 beginning with Ameren.

9 MR. BANKS: Eric Banks appearing on behalf of
10 Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri, 1824
11 Chouteau Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63103.

12 JUDGE SEYER: All right. For the Commission
13 Staff?

14 MR. STACEY: Scott Stacey, Counsel for Staff,
15 200 Madison Street, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101.

16 JUDGE SEYER: And for the Office of the Public
17 Counsel?

18 MR. WILLIAMS: Nathan Williams, Chief Deputy
19 Public Counsel appearing on behalf of the Office of the
20 Public Counsel and the public. My address is PO Box
21 2230, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

22 JUDGE SEYER: Are there any other attorneys
23 representing parties here tonight?

24 Okay. The way this portion of the hearing
25 will proceed tonight will be to call the names listed on

1 the sign-up sheet in the order that they appear. When I
2 call your name, please step up to the microphone.
3 Before you speak, I will place you under oath and ask
4 you to state and spell your name and then you can offer
5 your comments to the Commission.

6 Per the Commission's order in this case,
7 comments tonight will be limited to five minutes per
8 person. And then once you finish your comments, please
9 remain at the microphone in case there are follow-up
10 questions from the Commissioners or the attorneys for
11 the parties. Please understand that the Commissioners
12 won't be able to answer any of your questions today,
13 because they have to remain impartial and only consider
14 evidence presented at the evidentiary hearing in this
15 matter which is currently scheduled to begin on April
16 3rd.

17 The Commission has not made any decisions in
18 this case as to Ameren Missouri's rates and other
19 matters in this case. The Commission is interested in
20 your comments and will use them to help make their
21 decision. If you have comments after the hearing or if
22 you're unable to stay and give your comments in person,
23 you may submit them via the Public Service Commission's
24 website psc.mo.gov. And if you do make comments on the
25 website, please reference this Case No. ER-2022-0037.

1 MR. WILLIAMS: I believe you misstated the
2 case number. It's 0337.

3 JUDGE SEYER: Sorry about that. Thank you,
4 Mr. Williams. The case number is ER-2022-0337, 0337. I
5 apologize.

6 All right. And so we have two names on the
7 list. The first name is Stanley Hendrix. Is
8 Mr. Hendrix here? And then the other name I have is
9 John Stagg.

10 MR. STAGG: Here.

11 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Stagg, would you like to
12 step up to the microphone. Before you get started,
13 would you raise your right hand, please, to be sworn in.
14 Thank you. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony
15 you give in this hearing shall be the truth, the whole
16 truth and nothing but the truth?

17 MR. STAGG: It is the truth as far as I know.

18 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Mr. Stagg, if you
19 could, you might need to be a little closer to the
20 microphone.

21 JOHN STAGG,
22 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

23 MR. STAGG: My name is John Stagg, J-o-h-n
24 S-t-a-g-g. I'm a senior citizen. I'm retired. Here's
25 my bill. See my bill for my double-wide mobile home.

1 FACILITATOR: Could you speak into the mike,
2 please.

3 MR. STAGG: Here's my bill. This is my bill.
4 I'm sure none of you have a bill this high. I have a
5 little statement I wrote up. I'm going to read it here.

6 Ameren wants to raise our rates to pay for
7 their woke agenda, solar panels, windmills, which are
8 unsustainable. Submitting to the radical agenda of the
9 EPA gestapo is causing electric utility rates to become
10 unsustainable. We are burdened with double interest
11 rates thanks to the Biden regime and 20 percent
12 inflation.

13 We don't need Ameren and the utility
14 commission to continue to raise our utility rates to a
15 point where we can no longer afford to pay our utility
16 bills. Our wages have not increased. Neither have
17 retirement benefits, certainly not mine for us seniors.

18 Yet Ameren can afford to send their lobbyists
19 to Jefferson City and bribe politicians to look the
20 other way.

21 Ameren pays their executives huge salaries and
22 I want to -- oops, excuse me. We have -- I don't know
23 if this is backwards. I think it's Baxter Warner,
24 Baxter Warner, he's getting \$8,371,478 annually. Nelson
25 Gregory, he's getting \$1,552,890 yearly. Here we have

1 Martin Lyons here, or is it Lyons Martin, I don't know.
2 It's \$3,100 -- I'm sorry, well, it's \$3 million. He's
3 getting \$3 million, just over \$3 million a year.
4 Michael Moehn, \$2,369,137. And so he's getting almost
5 \$2.5 million a year. Fadi Diya, \$1,915,393 a year.
6 Richard Mark, \$2,028,542. And some other guy, I can't
7 pronounce his name, it's some foreign name, but he's
8 making over a million. So these people are making
9 millions of dollars every year. They make more money
10 than I make in my whole life. And how -- And I'm paying
11 for it. And the problem with Ameren is it's a monopoly.
12 It's a monopoly. So they can do whatever they want.

13 Anyway, you people tell us to go to our local
14 agencies if we are unable to pay our electric bills.
15 Well, the only agency in my area is East Missouri Action
16 agency, and they run out of money before we even apply
17 for assistance. I mean, the druggies, they don't have
18 any income. So of course they run to Ameren and Ameren
19 gives those druggies money. And they even when decent
20 people need it, there's no money left. So forget about
21 East Missouri Action agency. They're the only ones I
22 know of around.

23 On the other hand, Ameren just gave \$1 million
24 to some organization called Beyond Housing in north St.
25 Louis County, which I might add, I'm not prejudiced but

1 I think Ameren is, because these people in north St.
2 Louis County are all blacks. They're all black people.
3 Now, is there anything wrong with helping black people
4 out? None. It's fine. Why don't they help us out too.
5 I mean, where is the financial assistance for the rest
6 of the 1.2 million Ameren customers, because we don't
7 see any.

8 So I think this whole thing with Ameren has
9 been a scam and continues to be a scam and it's going to
10 continue to be a scam until we get some decent
11 commissioners in there that's going to say enough is
12 enough. So I'm done.

13 JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Stagg.
14 Commissioner Coleman, do you have any questions?

15 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: I wanted to get a
16 clarification on the spelling of your name. Is it
17 S-t-a-g-g or S-t-o-g-g?

18 MR. STAGG: S-t-a-g-g.

19 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: And pronounce it again
20 for me.

21 MR. STAGG: Stagg.

22 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Stagg. Thank you very
23 much.

24 MR. STAGG: My concern is you people won't let
25 me ask you questions but then you can ask me questions.

1 So why should I answer any questions if you won't.

2 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: So the reason the
3 Commissioners can't ask, it's because we have to only
4 receive specific information. We can't just come to
5 this hearing, ask questions specific to your situation
6 relative to your rates or your concerns, being you're
7 not at the next hearing for us to put that on record.

8 MR. STAGG: There's my situation right there,
9 my situation right there. I tell you, I really think
10 that Ameren is like a mafia organization. That's the
11 way I look at them. Just organized crime.

12 JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Commissioner Holsman, do
13 you have any questions?

14 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: No questions, Judge.
15 Thank you.

16 JUDGE SEYER: All right.

17 MR. WILLIAMS: Judge, if I may.

18 JUDGE SEYER: Yes. Mr. Williams.

19 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Stagg, may I ask a few
20 questions?

21 MR. STAGG: Well, you can try. I may not
22 answer them.

23 MR. WILLIAMS: Well, you brought some
24 documents with you. One you indicated is your bill. Is
25 that a document you want the Commission to see?

1 MR. STAGG: No, I'm just showing them. I
2 already showed them. I'm not going to put it in the
3 record or anything like that.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: That's fine. It looked like
5 you read some other documents. Let's see. You were
6 talking about, I believe, Ameren employee salaries.
7 Were you reading that off of a document?

8 MR. STAGG: Yeah.

9 MR. WILLIAMS: Would you like to make that
10 document part of the --

11 MR. STAGG: No, it's public record. You can
12 look it up yourself.

13 MR. WILLIAMS: And you indicated that your
14 bill is for a double-wide trailer?

15 MR. STAGG: Yes. It's a double-wide mobile.
16 Those things don't work very good and I have all
17 electricity. I don't have any natural gas or anything.

18 MR. WILLIAMS: That was my question what you
19 were using for heating.

20 MR. STAGG: Yeah, that's all I have. Natural
21 gas doesn't come out to where I live at that rural area.

22 MR. WILLIAMS: And are you on a fixed income
23 now?

24 MR. STAGG: Yes.

25 MR. WILLIAMS: That's all the questions I

1 have. Thank you.

2 MR. STAGG: Yeah, I'm on a fixed income. I
3 get my retirement, which is very little, from my job. I
4 get a little social security. And I've got five people
5 in my house. My adult daughters. You know, you know
6 how it is with young people now. They can't afford to
7 live any more. So they're stuck living at home with
8 their old parents. And they're going to college. So
9 they're not just wasting their lives away. They
10 couldn't afford to -- a 25-year-old girl, you're not
11 going to be able to just go out on the street and get a
12 decent job and make a living. You know, they have to go
13 to college or they're not going to get anywhere, you
14 know. So I'm supporting my kids.

15 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

16 JUDGE SEYER: Are there any questions from the
17 attorneys for the other parties? Mr. Stacey?

18 MR. STACEY: No questions.

19 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Banks?

20 MR. BANKS: No, thank you, Your Honor.

21 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you, Mr.
22 Stagg. Mr. Stagg is the last name on the list that I
23 have. Is there anyone else here who would like to offer
24 testimony today? Yes, sir. Go ahead. If you don't
25 mind, step up to the microphone.

1 MR. STARNES: Tom Starnes, Jr.

2 JUDGE SEYER: Could you spell that last name,
3 please.

4 MR. STARNES: S-t-a-r-n-e-s.

5 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Mr. Starnes, would
6 you raise your right hand so I can swear you in. Thank
7 you. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you give
8 in this hearing shall be the truth, the whole truth and
9 nothing but the truth?

10 MR. STARNES: Yes.

11 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. Please do try to
12 speak into the microphone.

13 TOM STARNES, JR.,
14 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 MR. STARNES: It's interesting there's an
16 attorney for the Company, there's an attorney for the
17 Commission, there's an attorney for the public, the
18 customers?

19 MR. WILLIAMS: Correct.

20 MR. STARNES: What do you do for the
21 customers?

22 MR. WILLIAMS: We take issues with some of the
23 items that the utilities rely on for supporting their
24 rate requests. For example, one of the things that the
25 Commission does is give a return on investment, capital

1 investment. And different people have different
2 opinions about what that return should be. We have a
3 witness who's sponsoring a position that results in
4 about an \$80 million less than what Staff's position is,
5 which is I believe on the order of \$40 million less than
6 Ameren Missouri's position in the case.

7 MR. STARNES: Throughout the year do you have
8 contact or correspondence from the public giving you
9 information or putting requests or questions to you --

10 MR. WILLIAMS: We do --

11 MR. STARNES: -- besides this kind of a
12 meeting?

13 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, we do. Anyone -- We get
14 contacted by the public. Sometimes they're referred
15 from the Commission Staff and sometimes they contact us
16 directly. We're open to that.

17 MR. STARNES: And do you cover other companies
18 and other utilities besides Ameren and besides electric?

19 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes. I mean, the
20 publicly-owned Commission-regulated water utilities,
21 sewer utilities, gas utilities.

22 MR. STARNES: Okay. Well, I guess the
23 customers would like to see kind of more input from you
24 or more vocal, like to see you to be more empathetic to
25 the customers and just some kind of results. I think I

1 asked you awhile ago are you with Ameren. So are you a

2 --

3 MR. BANKS: I'm one of Ameren's outside
4 counsels.

5 MR. STARNES: Yeah, you're your own law firm
6 that has Ameren as a client?

7 MR. BANKS: That's correct.

8 MR. STARNES: So in a little bit in a
9 roundabout way you're a little bit with Ameren kind of.
10 It's just deceptive to sit out here and pretend to be
11 one of us when you're one of them. I don't appreciate
12 that.

13 MR. STAGG: I don't appreciate it.

14 MR. STARNES: It's dirty. Set some chairs up
15 there and sit on that side. Don't sit out here and
16 pretend to be one of us and pretend like there's 30
17 people here but they're all just afraid to talk when
18 there's really only two or three people here, you know.
19 That's not a good setup.

20 I've been told in other states the utilities
21 are -- sometimes they're state owned or state run,
22 they're not private corporations. And we need some kind
23 of more competition, some additional competition. And
24 once upon a time with Ronald Reagan he broke up AT&T
25 because they were considered a monopoly, and the justice

1 department and the presidents have been asleep at the
2 wheel for decades now. And we -- I guess you've got the
3 corporations -- I guess that's one reason you give
4 political contributions that you're ashamed to admit how
5 much it is so you won't tell us. And if we ever had
6 another Reagan come along that would be willing to slow
7 down monopolies or break them up, that's the only thing
8 that's going to help individual Americans, single
9 customers. Because you talk to the people out here in
10 the public, they're not happy with Ameren and they're
11 not happy with the Public Service Commission either.

12 And how much -- What's the annual pay of
13 Public Service Commission people for Missouri? That's
14 another number we're afraid to talk about?

15 JUDGE SEYER: Well, I mean, it's public
16 record. You can Google it, I'm sure.

17 MR. STARNES: I'm not sitting in front of an
18 internet computer at the moment. That's another thing
19 we're ashamed to talk about. There must be some guilt
20 there or something. Why are we ashamed? Could I get a
21 card from you, Office of the Public Counsel?

22 MR. WILLIAMS: Sure.

23 MR. STARNES: I didn't catch your name
24 earlier.

25 MR. WILLIAMS: Certainly.

1 MR. STARNES: Permission to approach.

2 MR. WILLIAMS: But I do want to remind you the
3 purpose of this part of the proceeding is for you to
4 express views, not to ask questions really.

5 MR. STARNES: Okay. Well, this is maybe
6 somebody to reference or contact in the future. So
7 thank you.

8 MR. WILLIAMS: You're quite welcome.

9 JUDGE SEYER: I'm sorry? Go ahead.

10 MR. WILLIAMS: I was just telling him he's
11 welcome.

12 JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Williams.
13 If you don't mind, Mr. Williams, there's also the email
14 address for the Public Counsel office is opcservice --

15 MR. WILLIAMS: On my card is my email address.

16 JUDGE SEYER: Okay. General comments to the
17 Office of the Public Counsel is opcservice@opc.mo.gov, I
18 believe.

19 All right. Mr. Starnes, if you wouldn't mind,
20 I'll check with the Commissioners. Commissioner
21 Coleman, do you have any questions? All right.
22 Commissioner Holsman?

23 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: No questions, Judge.

24 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you. Any
25 questions from the attorneys?

1 MR. WILLIAMS: No, thank you.

2 MR. BANKS: No, thank you, Your Honor.

3 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you. Thank
4 you, Mr. Starnes.

5 MR. STARNES: A moment ago they referred to
6 somebody as Judge. What's that mean? What's that mean,
7 Judge?

8 JUDGE SEYER: I am a regulatory law judge.
9 And I personally will not be conducting the hearing
10 that's scheduled to start April 4th, but I do conduct
11 hearings for the Public Service Commission and so as a
12 judge we preside over the hearing but it's ultimately
13 right now four Commissioners that decide on whether to
14 grant the rate request, rate increase request.

15 MR. STARNES: And you're not a Commissioner?

16 JUDGE SEYER: I'm not a Commissioner, no.

17 MR. STARNES: Thank you.

18 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Is there anyone else
19 who would like to make comments? Okay.

20 MR. STAGG: I have a question. Can I ask one
21 little question.

22 MR. WILLIAMS: Of whom?

23 MR. STAGG: Well, it's just a simple question.

24 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Stagg, why don't you go
25 ahead, if you don't mind, use the microphone.

1 MR. STAGG: Yes, I'm happy to do it, if I have
2 your permission to do it.

3 JUDGE SEYER: You have my permission.

4 MR. STAGG: Miss or Mrs. Coleman, are you a
5 Commissioner?

6 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Yes, I am.

7 MR. STAGG: And you're the only Commissioner
8 here?

9 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: We have a Commissioner
10 online.

11 MR. STAGG: That's right. You have one on the
12 TV or whatever. Okay. So we have two Commissioners.
13 So two out of four. That's a better average than we
14 usually get. We usually get one if we're lucky but
15 usually none. So thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, sir.

17 THE STENOGRAPHER: Judge, Commissioner
18 Kolkmeier is also on the line.

19 JUDGE SEYER: Commissioner Kolkmeier, do you
20 have any questions for Mr. Starnes or Mr. Stagg for that
21 matter?

22 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: No, not at this time.
23 Thank you, Judge.

24 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you,
25 Commissioner. Commissioner Coleman, would you like to

1 make any closing remarks?

2 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you to both of
3 you gentlemen for your attendance tonight, and for your
4 information we do take into consideration what we hear
5 from those who feel the desire to come before the
6 Commissioners and to present information to us. My hope
7 is that during the question and answer phase you were
8 able to ask and receive answers to any questions that
9 you might have had and do know and understand that those
10 that are in this room that are with the Company, that
11 are with the Office of the Public Counsel and with the
12 PSC Staff are available at any time to address your
13 concerns. Feel free to reach out to any of these
14 entities in the future. I appreciate you being here.
15 Thank you.

16 JUDGE SEYER: Commissioner Holsman, would you
17 like to make any closing remarks?

18 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: I just want to say
19 thank you for taking the time to testify. Have a good
20 evening.

21 JUDGE SEYER: Commissioner Kolkmeier.

22 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Yes, thank you,
23 Judge. I just want to tell those that testified this
24 evening thanks for coming out. Thank you for your
25 testimony and hope everyone has a good evening. Thank

1 you, Judge.

2 JUDGE SEYER: All right. So if there's
3 nothing further, this hearing is now adjourned and we
4 are off the record.

5 (Thereupon, the proceedings concluded at 7:06
6 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF MISSOURI)
COUNTY OF COLE)

I, Beverly Jean Bentsch, RPR, CCR No. 640, do hereby certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing Public Service Commission Local Public hearing; that all of the witnesses were sworn in by me; and that the transcript, pages 1 through 23, is a true record of my stenographic notes.

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

Dated this 3rd day of March, 2023.


Beverly Jean Bentsch, RPR, CCR No. 640

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\$1 9:23	4th 19:10	Americans 17:8
\$1,552,890 8:25		analysts 3:25
\$1,915,393 9:5	6	annual 17:12
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