

1 STATE OF MISSOURI
2 PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
3 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
4 Local Public Hearing
5 January 24, 2017
6 St. Louis, Missouri
7 VOLUME 11
8 In the Matter of Union)
9 Electric Company, d/b/a)
10 Ameren Missouri's Tariffs) File No. ER-2016-0179
11 To Increase its Revenues)
12 For Electric Service)
13 MORRIS L. WOODRUFF, Presiding
14 CHIEF REGULATORY LAW JUDGE
15 Stephen M. Stoll
16 Maida J. Coleman
17 Scott Rupp
18 Commissioners
19 Court Reporter:
20 Angie R. Kelly, CSR/CCR
21 Missouri CCR #1010
22 Illinois CSR #084-004498
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25 St. Louis, Missouri 63101

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A P P E A R A N C E S

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Good evening. Once again we're ready
2 to start the formal part of the public hearing. Again, my name
3 is Morris Woodruff, I'm judge for the commission. With me I
4 have three of the five commissioners, to my left is Commissioner
5 Steve Stoll, to my immediate left is Maida Coleman -- to my
6 immediate right is Miss Coleman, and to her right is Mr. Scott
7 Rupp, I apologize.

8 The way we will work this tonight is there was a sign
9 up list of people that wish to testify that was up front, we'll
10 call your names as you're listed here, I'll ask to come up to
11 podium, I'll swear you in and give you a chance to make your
12 statement. You may notice the timer here also, we try to limit,
13 we ask people to limit themselves to about five minutes. I
14 won't immediately shut you off when it goes off, but I ask you
15 to try and wrap up your comments, and then try to keep things
16 moving along here.

17 As I indicated earlier, this part of the procedure
18 we'll transcribe and the commission will create a transcript of
19 this which will be available to the public on our website which
20 is PSC.MO.GOV. And if you have any questions about that, you
21 can ask the people at the desk in the back how to access that.
22 And with that being said, anything the commissioners wish to
23 say?

24 MR. STOLL: Good evening everybody, I would like to
25 bring greetings from the commission. As judge said, we have

1 three of our five commissioners here tonight and the others will
2 have an opportunity to read the transcript that's being created
3 by the court reporter. The other thing I did want to mention is
4 this really is the beginning of the rate case process. We start
5 with the local public hearings and then beginning the last week
6 in February, I think it is, yes, we begin the evidentiary
7 hearings in Jefferson City. Those are scheduled for two to
8 three weeks. The evidentiary hearing is basically like a trial
9 and there are documents that are submitted and witnesses that
10 are sworn in and questions that are asked and answered. You can
11 go on-line to watch this, and if you have an interest in that,
12 it probably would be best to talk to some of our staff that
13 basically it's going to the Public Service Commission website,
14 and you can click on the hearing. I found that it's so simple
15 that I can do it, so it's something that you may want to do just
16 to see how the process goes.

17 The other thing I wanted to mention is that I guess
18 that we're here to really to listen to your comments and
19 concerns, that's the reason for having the local public
20 hearings. And so with that, I will turn it back over to the
21 judge, and we'll begin our hearing.

22 JUDGE WOODRUFF: One more thing we need to take care
23 of before I call the first witness, that is we need to determine
24 who's hear on behalf of the parties and their attorneys. I'll
25 ask American Missouri to enter their appearance.

1 MR. GRAMMER: Appearing on behalf of the company, my
2 name is Goeffrey Grammer, my business address is 1901 Chouteau
3 Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri, 63166.

4 JUDGE WOODRUFF: All right, for the staff commission.

5 MS. PAYNE: Whitney Payne for the commission, I
6 previously provided my address and information to the court
7 reporter.

8 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Office of the public counsel.

9 MR. SMITH: Ryan Smith with the Office of Public
10 Counsel, I provided my information and we're ready to proceed.

11 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you very much. We'll call the
12 first witness then, which is Gary Nelling. Good evening.

13 MR. NELLING: Good evening.

14 JUDGE WOODRUFF: And you are Gary Nelling?

15 MR. NELLING: Gary Nelling from University City.

16 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Spell your last name for the benefit
17 of the court reporter.

18 MR. NELLING: N-E-L-L-I-N-G, I'm an architect and
19 designer and investor.

20 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Let me swear you in before you start.

21 MR. NELLING: Excuse me.

22 (Witness sworn)

23 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you, what would you like to
24 tell us?

25 MR. NELLING: This is really a commentary, not

1 testimony. I am not, as an architect, I'm not an expert in
2 matters of energy, I'm reacting to what occurred tonight from
3 what I read recently, it's simply an opinion, but it does still
4 appear to me after hearing what I heard this evening, that the
5 company that has had 60 to 70 percent rate increase over ten
6 years without an increase in amount of service provided, even
7 factoring in, and factoring in a fuel cost coming down, also
8 factoring in the maintenance and replacement of stations,
9 equipment and so on, that doesn't seem to be a terribly well run
10 company. I have not had taken the opportunity to look over it,
11 read your annual reports or anything else, it just seems to be
12 an inconsistency between the cost passed on to the customer, and
13 the service being provided.

14 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Any questions from the parties?

15 MR. STOLL: No questions, thank you for your
16 testimony.

17 MS. COLEMAN: Thank you, sir.

18 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you. The next name on the list
19 is Josie Johnson. Is Miss Johnson here? George Gholston Jr.
20 Good evening, sir.

21 MR. GHOLSTON: Good evening.

22 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Your name is George Gholston?

23 MR. GHOLSTON: Yes, George Goldstein, last name
24 G-H-O-L-S-T-O-N Jr.

25 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Please raise your right hand.

1 (Witness sworn)

2 JUDGE WOODRUFF: What would you like to tell us?

3 MR. GHOLSTON: First I'd like to say congratulations
4 to us. It had been ten years since numerous power outage of
5 2006. We had at least 3 multi-day outage events and some of us
6 we endured multi-week outages. We were told that it was normal
7 because of the abnormal weather patterns. The truth was, Ameren
8 had been neglecting it's infrastructure, and had been wasting
9 some of the funds we had paid them on bonuses, stock options and
10 high dividends.

11 Over the last ten years, they have connived and lied
12 about the need for rate increases, and it continues. We have
13 tried to slow down these rate increases to no avail. Ten years
14 ago I decided to learn as much as I could about electric bills
15 and how to conserve energy. My average monthly electric bill in
16 2006 was about \$62 per month. In 2016, my average monthly
17 electric bill was about \$31 per month. In 2012 my average
18 monthly electric bill was \$18.24 per month. I went overboard
19 that year, I denied myself of comfortable living conditions. I
20 encourage those of you who can't afford these higher rate
21 increases to mitigate these increases by conserving energy
22 consumption.

23 The Missouri Public Service Commission has been unable
24 to stop these rate increases, so it will be up to customers of
25 Ameren to get -- to not pay higher bills by being smart

1 consumers and you'll also be reducing your carbon footprint.
2 In addition, since that's all you had to say at that point, but
3 I'd also like to say Ameren is not really managing it's
4 facilities very well. Even to this day, we as customers don't
5 have the extra funds, we're not getting increases -- increased
6 money coming in, and what little increases we get, it goes out
7 to people like Ameren or Laclede Gas, but all I really want to
8 say is this, Ameren, you've got to do a better job, we can't do
9 this over and over again, and that will be it.

10 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you, sir, any questions?

11 MR. STOLL: Thank you for your testimony.

12 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Next name on the list is Sarah
13 Willey. Good evening.

14 MS. WILLEY: Hello.

15 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Did I get your name right?

16 MS. WILLEY: It's Willey, and that's spelled Sarah
17 S-A-R-A-H Willey W-I-L-L-E-Y.

18 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Please raise your right hand.

19 (Witness sworn)

20 JUDGE WOODRUFF: What would you like to tell us?

21 MS. WILLEY: Sure, so my name is Sarah Willey, and I'm
22 from Florissant, welcome to my town. As a rate payer, it's
23 really important to me that Ameren focus on investments and
24 energy efficiency and focus on structuring rates in ways that
25 will reward efficiency. Part of the reason for this is because

1 it's just prudent, waste not want not, so they say. The other
2 reason is because routine efficiency impacts the environment in
3 a way that impacts our health. I live with asthma, it means a
4 lot to me to know that we're doing what we can to keep our air
5 clean.

6 I believe that PSC should reject this new rate and any
7 rate changes which would increase the fixed portion of the
8 customers bill, that way those of us who are working hard to
9 limit our energy use, like Mr. Gholston we just heard from, as
10 well as customers who invest in solar and are generating their
11 own energy are not penalized for doing so.

12 Also currently the rates are such that the more you
13 use, the lower your rates become, the less you use, the more
14 you're paying for your energy, and you think that should be
15 reversed, people should be penalized for using more and people
16 should get a reward for using less, thank you.

17 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Any questions?

18 MR. STOLL: No, thank you for your testimony.

19 JUDGE WOODRUFF: The next name on the list is Karen
20 Meyer. Good evening, spell your last name for the court
21 reporter.

22 MS. MEYER: M-E-Y-E-R.

23 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Raise your right hand, I'll swear you
24 in.

25 (Witness sworn)

1 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you, what would you like to
2 tell us?

3 MS. MEYER: Yes, I would, similar message as Sarah and
4 the gentleman over here, basically as a rate payer, and also an
5 investor in Ameren, I believe that Ameren should also invest in
6 more programs that will encourage people not to use so much
7 energy. I've always felt like that was really just not fair to
8 the environment and us, and there are a lot of people out
9 especially in our area that have asthma and different diseases,
10 that are because of air pollution, so it makes health sense and
11 smart sense to do that.

12 So, I believe there's -- I would like the commission
13 to consider that Ameren should adopt that climbing block rate
14 order, which will encourage people to use less energy. And so
15 also the idea about the fixed rate where I also agree that
16 people who are -- have solar, you know, they shouldn't be kind
17 of penalized for that, I think the more we can do to encourage
18 all that, the better off everybody will be, thank you.

19 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Any questions?

20 MR. STOLL: No questions, thank you for your
21 testimony.

22 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Next name on the list is Charles
23 Meador.

24 MR. MEADOR: Last name is Meador if you want to be
25 correct.

1 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Can you spell your last name for the
2 court reporter?

3 MR. MEADOR: Yes, M-E-A-D-O-R, Charles.

4 JUDGE WOODRUFF: If you please raise your right hand
5 (Witness sworn)

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

7 MR. MEADOR: Mine is more opinion or commentary,
8 because I don't know enough about the business to really give
9 you a testimony as such, but I will -- I'm here representing
10 myself and people in the community, neighborhood, my city. I'm
11 also representing the AARP chapters in this eastern part of the
12 state, there are about five or six of us. Florissant,
13 University City and others, and they asked me to say a few
14 words.

15 This is a systemic problem, asking, demanding more
16 money every six to 12 months. You say it only raises your
17 monthly bill by \$8, \$10, \$12 and sometimes more, and how many
18 increases can people like this afford before they break. Every
19 utility wants and demands money, electricity, water, gas, sewer,
20 your local fire department, telephone service, the local police
21 department and let's say \$10 a month, that's about \$70 every
22 month right now, but then six months or a year from now they're
23 going to ask for the same amount again or more and more and
24 more, and when comes a breaking point? Because we do not -- my
25 income doesn't go up. Oh, we did get a raise in social security

1 this year, 3 tenths of one percent, which is eaten up by an
2 amount of money taken out by Medicare, so my income went up
3 virtually zero on social security, and I'm imagine every one
4 else is the same.

5 Advertising, Ameren has beautiful advertising, it's
6 really pretty, why do they advertise? They have a virtual
7 monopoly, why do they need to advertise? Why do they need to
8 put money into advertising, that doesn't come cheap, I'm sure.
9 Bonuses for CEOs and other officers below them. Why, what have
10 they done to earn those bonuses? Not much. I believe their
11 salaries are excessive, but still. Boards of directors, they're
12 mainly past CEOs and presidents of companies and when they are
13 past presidents, they're not on one board, they're on a dozen
14 boards across the nation. And so they're all multi-millionaires
15 themselves. Why not get some common people on these boards? By
16 common people, I mean that don't make in excess of half million
17 or two million or however many million dollars they make, are
18 they the only people capable.

19 You said that the profits, all the profits are given
20 back to the customers, how much money does that amount do, does
21 that amount to 5 cents a month, \$2 a month, 50 cents a month, I
22 never seen any decrease in my bills because of profits coming
23 back to me. And the profits of your parent company, which I
24 forget how many states they control now the electricity in, I'm
25 told last year I think it was 23 different states, it was an

1 astronomical amount, trillions of dollars in profit. Profit is
2 what's left after everything else is paid for, all the salaries,
3 all equipment, all fuel, everything is paid for, and what is
4 left is profit. So these trillions of dollars of profit, where
5 does to go? I don't see it come back to me, I don't know if it
6 comes back to you, I doubt it.

7 I have purchased light bulbs for many years now and
8 refrigerators and washers and dryers and I have unit and it
9 didn't lower my bill. I have noticed no appreciable amount of
10 lowering of my bill or my gas bill, they're about the same as
11 they have been or increased over the years, they have not
12 decreased at all. I do remember one example of the PSC and I'm
13 going to go overtime here. I remember when the power plant was
14 built, and I heard some of the reasons for overruns of the
15 costs, which I won't go into now. But I recall before the plant
16 came on-line, the PSC at the time was asked to, they were asked
17 to increase the rates by 100 percent, Ameren wanted 100 percent
18 increase in rates across the board. My rate was say let's round
19 it, \$50 a month, they wanted to upgrade \$100 for me, more than
20 that at the time, but still. The PSC did not give them 100
21 percent, just for figures now, I don't recall the exact figures,
22 but let's just say they gave them 60 percent, fine, right, now
23 they got 60 percent what they asking for, Ameren was happy for
24 another six to eight months, then they asked for more, then they
25 asked for roughly 60 percent more, of which may got maybe 30

1 percent, and 6 months later they asked for 55 percent more, at
2 that they got 40 percent. So now inside 18 months, they got
3 more than the 100 percent they asked for 18 months before.

4 I expect the agency to grant some of the increases
5 they're asking for this time, I expect it every time really, it
6 will be shocking if they didn't, but I believe what should
7 happen is they should use the profits to cover all these costs
8 they're asking for because if they're making trillions of
9 dollars every single year, I don't see any of it. They claim
10 it's coming back to us, where's that money going into? It
11 should go into whatever they want to do with improving, service,
12 it should go down, be used as part of it to shut down the atomic
13 plants they know they have to -- they should set that money
14 aside, and put it into an escrow. It wouldn't bother me to do
15 that, it would bother some auditor somewhere, but still, I
16 apologize for going over my time, but thank you for your time.

17 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Any questions? Thank you very much,
18 sir.

19 MR. STOLL: Thank you for your testimony.

20 JUDGE WOODRUFF: He was the last witness, he was the
21 last one that signed up on the sign up sheet, is there anyone
22 else in the room that wants to testify, that didn't sign up?
23 Alright, well then I don't see any hands coming up, so I thank
24 you for coming this evening, and we are adjourned.

25 (Whereupon, the hearing adjourned at 7:27 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, ANGIE R. KELLY, an Illinois Certified Shorthand Reporter (IL CSR# 084-004498) and Missouri Certified Court Reporter (MO CCR# 1010) do hereby certify that the witness whose testimony appears in the foregoing deposition transcript was duly sworn by me; that the testimony of said witness was taken by me to the best of my ability, and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my direction; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this deposition was taken; and further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto; nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 25th day of January, 2017.



Notary Public

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