

STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Pre-Hearing Conference
April 6, 2016
Jefferson City, Missouri

Volume 1

BEATRICE OKORIE,)
Complainant,)
vs.) File No. GC-2016-0167
MISSOURI GAS ENERGY)
(LACLEDE),)
Respondent.)

KIM BURTON, Presiding,
SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

REPORTED BY:

Pamela S. Gentry, CCR NO. 426
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APPEARANCES:

FOR THE COMPLAINANT:

No Appearance

FOR MISSOURI GAS ENERGY (LACLEDE):

MR. RICK ZUCKER (via telephone)

The Laclede Group, Inc.

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FOR THE STAFF OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION:

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 JUDGE BURTON: It is currently 12:32 p.m.
3 on April 6th, 2016. The Commission is going on the
4 record in the matter of File No. GC-2016-0168, Beatrice
5 OKorie, plaintiff, versus Missouri Gas Energy,
6 respondent.

7 This pre-hearing conference has been
8 scheduled by the Commission and is being held in its
9 office in Jefferson City, Missouri.

10 At this time, I'm going to ask the
11 parties to enter their appearance.

12 I'm going to see, is Ms. OKorie present?
13 (No response.)

14 JUDGE BURTON: Seeing no one here in the
15 hearing room and not hearing anyone verbalize their
16 appearance, we'll go ahead and address that matter in a
17 moment.

18 On behalf of respondent Missouri Gas
19 Energy?

20 MR. ZUCKER: Rick Zucker, Z-u-c-k-e-r,
21 here on behalf of Missouri Gas Energy.

22 JUDGE BARTON: Thank you.

23 And on behalf of the Staff of the
24 Missouri Public Service Commission?

25 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Judge.

1 Hampton Williams, appearing on behalf of
2 the Staff, P.O. Box 360, Jefferson City, Missouri,
3 65102.

4 JUDGE BARTON: Thank you.

5 Now, the Commission issued an order that
6 was effective on March 21st, 2016, requiring all
7 parties to be present, either in person or
8 telephonically. And, for the record, I will note that
9 Mr. Zucker is appearing via conference call.

10 As of now, we haven't yet seen or heard
11 anything, to my knowledge, on behalf of Ms. OKorie.

12 Has Staff heard anything from Ms. OKorie
13 concerning appearance at this hearing?

14 MR. WILLIAMS: Judge, Ms. OKorie's not
15 contacted the Counsel's office, so -- and I'll also
16 state that, in Staff's report filed several weeks ago,
17 we mentioned that we had made service upon Ms. OKorie
18 to provide us with additional contact information for
19 her, and we have not received any word from that. So,
20 we know that, you know, it was delivered.

21 But we've not -- I believe we have not
22 heard anything from her on that.

23 JUDGE BURTON: Mr. Zucker, could you hear
24 that?

25 MR. ZUCKER: Just barely, but I think I

1 got the gist of it.

2 JUDGE BURTON: Okay. I'm going to turn
3 the volume up and --

4 MR. WILLIAMS: I'll be happy to shout.

5 JUDGE BURTON: -- move that over a little
6 bit.

7 Mr. Zucker, have you heard anything or
8 received any sort of contact from Ms. OKorie?

9 MR. ZUCKER: Well, we -- we -- I'm sorry
10 -- we have a very similar situation. I'm getting a lot
11 of feedback.

12 JUDGE BURTON: I'm going to move this
13 down a bit and see if that assists. Why don't you try
14 again?

15 MR. ZUCKER: Okay. So, we have a very
16 similar situation as the Staff. Ms. OKorie is very
17 difficult to reach. We had been able to reach her with
18 some -- with correspondence. The last thing we heard
19 was that she had filed a complaint with the Attorney
20 General's office in the same kind of issue that she's
21 raised here.

22 But, otherwise, we have not been able to
23 speak with her at all, and I don't think we've
24 corresponded with her for some time.

25 JUDGE BURTON: To my knowledge, there was

1 nothing in the record that was provided from Ms. OKorie
2 as far as a phone number to reach her at, and I'm
3 hearing from the other parties that any attempts to --
4 to reach her or to receive a number that she might be
5 reached at have been unsuccessful. Is that correct?

6 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, your Honor.

7 MR. ZUCKER: That -- that is correct. We
8 tried numbers that we had for her, and they don't --
9 they don't go through, and I think we have determined
10 that she did not have telephone service.

11 JUDGE BURTON: Okay.

12 That being said -- now, Mr. Zucker, I --
13 I understand that, as part of its conditional answer
14 and -- and motion for a more definite statement, the
15 Commission's not yet ruled on that motion for a more
16 definite statement, and there has not been a formal
17 request for a dismissal of this complaint by MGE.

18 At this time, I'm inclined to say let's
19 wait until 1:00 to see if we've heard anything from Ms.
20 OKorie, and we can go off the record until it's closer
21 to 1:00. And, at that point, I will do an order of
22 dismissal, unless there's any objections from the
23 parties.

24 MR. WILLIAMS: No.

25 JUDGE BURTON: Mr. Zucker?

1 MR. ZUCKER: No objection, your Honor.

2 JUDGE BURTON: All right.

3 Well, that being said, I'm currently
4 showing the time is 12:37. Let's go ahead and go off
5 the record for right now, and we'll see -- we will keep
6 the phone line open during this time just to see if Ms.
7 OKorie is able to call in. Okay.

8 (Off the record.)

9 JUDGE BURTON: Okay. We're back on
10 record.

11 I'm currently showing the time is 1:00
12 p.m. on April 6th, 2016. We have not received any
13 communication from the complainant, Ms. Beatrice
14 OKorie. So, at this time, I would like to order that
15 this complaint be dismissed. I'll be sending out a
16 notice of this for failure to prosecute her complaint
17 and failure to comply with the Commission's March 21st,
18 2016, order requiring all parties to participate in
19 this pre-hearing conference.

20 Before we go off the record, is there any
21 additional matters that need to be addressed?

22 MR. WILLIAMS: No, your Honor.

23 JUDGE BURTON: Mr. Zucker?

24 MR. ZUCKER: No, your Honor.

25 JUDGE BURTON: All right. That being

1 said, that will conclude our pre-hearing testimony --
2 our pre-hearing conference for today, and we'll go off
3 the record. Thank you very much.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

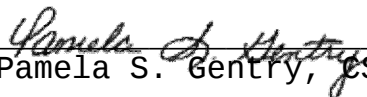
5 MR. ZUCKER: Thank you.

6 (Off the record.)

7 * * * * *

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Pamela S. Gentry, Certified Shorthand Reporter with the firm of Tiger Court Reporting, LLC, do hereby certify that I was personally present at the proceedings had in the above-entitled cause at the time and place set forth in the caption sheet thereof; that I then and there took down in Stenotype the proceedings had; and that the foregoing is a full, true and correct transcript of such Stenotype notes so made at such time and place.


Pamela S. Gentry, CSR, CCR



A able 5:17,22 7:7 above-entitled 9:6 additional 4:18 7:21 address 3:16 addressed 7:21 ago 4:16 ahead 3:16 7:4 answer 6:13 appearance 2:3 3:11,16 4:13 APPEARAN... 2:1 appearing 4:1,9 April 1:7 3:3 7:12 assists 5:13 attempts 6:3 Attorney 5:19	caption 9:7 cause 9:6 CCR 1:24 9:15 Certified 9:3 certify 9:5 City 1:8 2:17 3:9 4:2 closer 6:20 Commission 1:2 2:12,14 3:3,8 3:24 4:5 Commission's 6:15 7:17 communication 7:13 complainant 1:13 2:2 7:13 complaint 5:19 6:17 7:15,16 comply 7:17 concerning 4:13 conclude 8:1 conditional 6:13 conference 1:6 3:7 4:9 7:19 8:2 contact 4:18 5:8 contacted 4:15 correct 6:5,7 9:9 corresponded 5:24 correspondence 5:18 Counsel's 4:15 Court 1:25 9:4 CSR 9:15 currently 3:2 7:3,11	difficult 5:17 dismissal 6:17 6:22 dismissed 7:15 E E 3:1,1 9:1,1 effective 4:6 either 4:7 Energy 1:15 2:5 3:5,19,21 enter 3:11 F F 9:1 failure 7:16,17 far 6:2 feedback 5:11 File 1:14 3:4 filed 4:16 5:19 firm 9:4 Floor 2:8 foregoing 9:9 formal 6:16 forth 9:7 full 9:9 G G 3:1 Gas 1:15 2:5 3:5 3:18,21 GC-2016-0167 1:14 GC-2016-0168 3:4 General's 5:20 Gentry 1:24 9:3 9:15 getting 5:10 gist 5:1 go 3:16 6:9,20 7:4,4,20 8:2 going 3:3,10,12 5:2,12 Governor 2:15	Group 2:7 H Hampton 2:13 4:1 happy 5:4 hear 4:23 heard 4:10,12 4:22 5:7,18 6:19 hearing 3:15,15 4:13 6:3 held 3:8 Honor 6:6 7:1 7:22,24 I inclined 6:18 information 4:18 issue 5:20 issued 4:5 J Jefferson 1:8 2:17 3:9 4:2 Judge 1:19 3:2 3:14,22,25 4:4 4:14,23 5:2,5 5:12,25 6:11 6:25 7:2,9,23 7:25 K keep 7:5 KIM 1:19 kind 5:20 know 4:20,20 knowledge 4:11 5:25 L Laclede 1:16 2:5 2:7 LAW 1:19	let's 6:18 7:4 line 7:6 little 5:5 LLC 1:25 9:4 lot 5:10 Louis 2:9 M Madison 2:16 March 4:6 7:17 Market 2:8 matter 3:4,16 matters 7:21 mentioned 4:17 MGE 6:17 Missouri 1:1,8 1:15 2:5,9,17 3:5,9,18,21,24 4:2 moment 3:17 motion 6:14,15 move 5:5,12 N N 3:1 need 7:21 note 4:8 notes 9:10 notice 7:16 number 6:2,4 numbers 6:8 O O 3:1 objection 7:1 objections 6:22 office 2:15 3:9 4:15 5:20 Okay 5:2,15 6:11 7:7,9 OKorie 1:12 3:5 3:12 4:11,12 4:17 5:8,16 6:1 6:20 7:7,14 OKorie's 4:14
B back 7:9 barely 4:25 BARTON 3:22 4:4 Beatrice 1:12 3:4 7:13 behalf 3:18,21 3:23 4:1,11 believe 4:21 bit 5:6,13 Box 2:16 4:2 Building 2:15 BURTON 1:19 3:2,14 4:23 5:2 5:5,12,25 6:11 6:25 7:2,9,23 7:25 C C 3:1 9:1,1 call 4:9 7:7	D D 3:1 definite 6:14,16 delivered 4:20 determined 6:9			

open 7:6	6:1,20 7:5,8,10	St 2:9	vs 1:14	4
order 4:5 6:21 7:14,18	7:20 8:3,6	Staff 2:12 3:23 4:2,12 5:16	W	426 1:24
P	REGULATO... 1:19	Staff's 4:16	wait 6:19	5
P 3:1	report 4:16	state 1:1 4:16	we'll 3:16 7:5 8:2	573.751.8517 2:18
p.m 3:2 7:12	REPORTED 1:23	statement 6:14 6:16	We're 7:9	6
P.O 2:16 4:2	Reporter 9:4	Stenotype 9:8 9:10	we've 4:21 5:23 6:19	6 1:7
Pamela 1:24 9:3 9:15	Reporting 1:25 9:4	Street 2:8,16	weeks 4:16	63101 2:9
part 6:13	request 6:17	Suite 2:15	Williams 2:13 3:25 4:1,14 5:4 6:6,24 7:22 8:4	65102 4:3
participate 7:18	requiring 4:6 7:18	T	word 4:19	65102-0360 2:17
parties 3:11 4:7 6:3,23 7:18	respondent 1:17 3:6,18	T 9:1,1	X	6th 2:8 3:3 7:12
person 4:7	response 3:13	telephone 2:6 6:10	Y	7
personally 9:5	Rick 2:6 3:20	telephonically 4:8	Z	700 2:8
phone 6:2 7:6	right 7:2,5,25	testimony 8:1	Z-u-c-k-e-r 3:20	8
place 9:7,11	room 3:15	Thank 3:22,25 4:4 8:3,4,5	Zucker 2:6 3:20 3:20 4:9,23,25 5:7,9,15 6:7,12 6:25 7:1,23,24 8:5	800 2:15
plaintiff 3:5	ruled 6:15	thereof 9:7	0	
point 6:21	S	thing 5:18	1	
pre-hearing 1:6 3:7 7:19 8:1,2	S 1:24 3:1 9:3,15	think 4:25 5:23 6:9	1 1:10	
present 3:12 4:7 9:5	scheduled 3:8	Tiger 1:25 9:4	1:00 6:19,21 7:11	
Presiding 1:19	see 3:12 5:13 6:19 7:5,6	time 3:10 5:24 6:18 7:4,6,11 7:14 9:6,10	12:32 3:2	
proceedings 1:4 9:6,8	Seeing 3:14	today 8:2	12:37 7:4	
prosecute 7:16	seen 4:10	transcript 1:4 9:10	2	
provide 4:18	sending 7:15	tried 6:8	200 2:16	
provided 6:1	SENIOR 1:19	true 9:9	2016 1:7 3:3 4:6 7:12,18	
Public 1:2 2:12 2:14 3:24	service 1:2 2:12 2:14 3:24 4:17 6:10	try 5:13	21st 4:6 7:17	
Q	set 9:7	turn 5:2	3	
R	sheet 9:7	U	314.342.0500 2:10	
R 3:1 9:1	Shorthand 9:3	understand 6:13	360 2:16 4:2	
raised 5:21	shout 5:4	unsuccessful 6:5		
reach 5:17,17 6:2,4	showing 7:4,11	V		
reached 6:5	similar 5:10,16	verbalize 3:15		
receive 6:4	situation 5:10 5:16	versus 3:5		
received 4:19 5:8 7:12	sorry 5:9	volume 1:10 5:3		
record 3:4 4:8	sort 5:8			
	speak 5:23			