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                       January 8, 2014
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 7
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10
     In The Matter Of The General )
     Increase Tariffs For Missouri )File No. GR-2014-0077
11
     Gas Energy, A Division Of
12
     Laclede Gas Company
13
14
15
                KENNARD L. JONES, Presiding,
16
                       SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE.
17
18
19
     REPORTED BY:
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		Page 10
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20	FOR: Staff of the Missouri Public	
	Service Commission.	
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

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1	(Start time of conference: 10:03 a.m.)	
2	PROCEEDINGS	
3	JUDGE JONES: This is Case No. GR-2014-0077,	
4	In The Matter of Missouri Gas Energy, Inc., Filed	
5	Revised Tariffs To Increase Its Annual Revenues For	
6	Natural Gas. My name is Kennard Jones. I'm the	
7	Regulatory Law Judge assigned to this matter.	
8	At this time, let's take entries of	
9	appearances, beginning with Missouri Gas Energy,	
10	Inc.	
11	MR. JACOBS: Todd Jacobs and Rick Zucker on	
12	behalf of Laclede Gas Company, Missouri Gas Energy	
13	Division.	
14	JUDGE JONES: And the Staff of the Division?	
15	MR. BORGMEYER: John Borgmeyer and Kevin	
16	Thompson appearing on behalf of the Staff.	
17	JUDGE JONES: And Office of the Public	
18	Counsel?	
19	MR. POSTON: Marc Poston appearing on behalf	
20	of the Public Counsel.	
21	JUDGE JONES: Any other parties present?	
22	MR. CONRAD: Well, Stu Conrad for Midwest	
23	Gas Association.	
24	JUDGE JONES: This is a Discovery Conference	
25	for a concern brought up by Staff. Staff can go	

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- 1 ahead and put on the record what your concern is.
- 2 MR. BORGMEYER: Yeah. This concern relates
- 3 to some information that Staff reviews for its
- 4 audit of the Company that we haven't been able to
- 5 obtain because it's in the possession of Southern
- 6 Union who is MGE's previous parent company.
- 7 When Laclede purchased MGE, they executed a
- 8 continuing service agreement that would seem to
- 9 require Southern Union to cooperate with the
- 10 Commission audit, but I guess the practical concern
- 11 raised by that is that, early in this case,
- 12 Southern Union expressed some reluctance to fully
- 13 cooperate with Staff's audit and the information
- 14 that Staff wanted, and there weren't really any
- 15 options available to enforce the continuing
- 16 services agreement because the rate case would be
- 17 over by the time any litigation related to that was
- 18 completed.
- 19 So, what we've done is Staff worked with MGE
- 20 to narrow down some of the requests for information
- 21 and MGE's been working with Southern Union to
- 22 collect it for us, and some of the information's
- 23 been filed in the last few days. There's still
- 24 some stuff outstanding, but I guess the concern is
- 25 then related to our ability to obtain information

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- 1 from Southern Union.
- 2 So, I'm hopeful we can go through what's
- 3 left over and come up with a timetable for when
- 4 that's going to be provided.
- 5 JUDGE KENNARD: Okay. I'll ask two
- 6 questions. What power does Missouri Gas Energy
- 7 have to make Southern Union give this information?
- 8 MR. JACOBS: Maybe if I can give you
- 9 background, quickly, if I may?
- 10 JUDGE KENNARD: Sure.
- 11 MR. JACOBS: The nature of discussions of
- 12 Staff and Company has had I would characterize --
- 13 and I'll let John jump in -- as cooperative in the
- 14 sense of trying to get this information. Some of
- 15 the data requests that were proffered early in the
- 16 case relating to Southern Union information are --
- 17 some of it clearly is relevant, some of it we
- 18 thought was maybe not entirely relevant for this
- 19 particular case.
- 20 But what we did was we sat down with Staff
- 21 after we got a response from Southern Union saying
- 22 that, We don't think that we're obligated to
- 23 provide this information and we're not going to
- 24 provide it and, further, we don't think it's
- 25 relevant for your case and we don't see why we

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- 1 should provide it. We said, Let's sit down with
- 2 Staff and figure out a way to narrow this.
- 3 This is really at the impetus of Staff in
- 4 the sense of trying to come up with a way for all
- 5 the parties to really narrow the focus. And, so, I
- 6 say that as a compliment to them to say that
- 7 they're really trying to focus on -- our attention
- 8 on what's important in the case rather than some
- 9 cases that would be routine to every case.
- 10 So, probably mid October, late October, we
- 11 started to have discussions about what is really
- 12 needed, and there was dialog back and forth over a
- 13 period of several weeks. In early December, we
- 14 sent out Southern -- Laclede Gas Company sent out a
- 15 note to Staff and said, you know, Based on our
- 16 discussions, we think that you need the following
- information, and so we had an e-mail that said,
- 18 Enumerate all the information that we think that
- 19 they needed, and the Staff came back and confirmed,
- 20 yes, in fact, that's the information we needed.
- 21 December 16th, I sent out an e-mail to
- 22 Southern Union saying, This is the information we
- 23 want. Southern Union said, We'll look for it.
- 24 And, as Mr. Borgmeyer said, really where we are at
- 25 this point is in the subject to input on a meeting

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- 1 of us all yesterday that we've been either told
- 2 that the information has been looked for, we've
- 3 been provided that information, we've been told
- 4 that it doesn't exist, any other document that
- 5 doesn't exist in the Company, said they searched
- 6 the records and they have nothing. So, we've tried
- 7 to provide answers in that regard.
- And, then, probably the biggest issue that's
- 9 outstanding are two things. One, it's a
- 10 compensation study that we believe either was sent
- 11 out last night -- I haven't talked to Mr. Nowak
- 12 about it -- but it was either sent out last night
- 13 or will be sent out today. I saw the documents. I
- 14 know they exist. It's in our possession. We can
- 15 send it.
- 16 Also, the other big chunk of information is
- 17 a list of property taxes, and getting information
- 18 of historical property taxes that Southern Union
- 19 had and was holding on behalf of Missouri Gas
- 20 Energy. That information is forthcoming, and we
- 21 actually, literally, have a UPS tracking number
- 22 where they've mailed the information. It's
- 23 supposed to be delivered to MGE tomorrow, and, you
- 24 know, subject to a very quick review on our part, I
- 25 don't think there will be anything particularly

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- 1 interesting or of concern for us in terms of
- 2 releasing it, so we just need to look at it quickly
- 3 and send it to Staff. I think we can do that as
- 4 early as Friday.
- 5 But my understanding at this point is those
- 6 are the main -- those are the issues that are
- 7 outstanding, and the bottom line is that we have a
- 8 commitment from Southern Union to provide the
- 9 information that they have on the issues that we've
- 10 narrowed. So, in terms of answering your simple
- 11 question to say what authority do we have to compel
- 12 Southern Union, I think that the simple answer is
- 13 that they've provided that information and we've
- 14 narrowed it down to that.
- 15 From a legal standpoint, there is a
- 16 continuing services agreement that said Southern
- 17 Union will provide information related to audits of
- 18 Missouri Gas Energy. Southern Union has taken the
- 19 position that that relates not to rate case
- 20 proceedings but relates to audits that would be
- 21 undertaken on behalf of outside auditors for their
- 22 status as public entity.
- 23 And, in talking to Mr. Borgmeyer about it,
- 24 the question is that, from a practical standpoint,
- 25 the way we try to approach this is to say, Let's

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- 1 come up with an approach that we can file a
- 2 lawsuit, we can make a more formal demand, we can
- 3 do a number of things, but what's the really
- 4 productive thing to do -- which is what they did --
- 5 Staff did sit down and narrow the focus on to what
- 6 we really need.
- 7 And the bottom line is I think -- I'm not
- 8 speaking for Southern Union -- but I think, in
- 9 terms of what they looked at, they looked at the
- 10 narrowed-down request, and it seems appropriate.
- 11 We'll look for the information, if we have it.
- 12 We'll conduct reasonable searches and evidence of
- 13 that.
- 14 Frankly, the Staff came up with one of the
- 15 data requests of all Southern Union Board minutes
- 16 from date 2010, I think, to present. Southern
- 17 Union's question was, Well, after we narrowed it
- 18 down, they said we'll provide information that
- 19 relates to specific topics related to MGE rather
- 20 than Southern Union as a whole, and what they did
- 21 was provided an officer certificate that said they
- 22 looked at the Board minutes and there's nothing
- 23 there that's privileged that references the topics
- 24 that Staff focused on.
- 25 So, from my perspective, I think that, you

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- 1 know, things are in progress. I think that Staff's
- 2 frustration, justifiably, it has taken some time
- 3 for Southern Union to provide the information. I
- 4 think some of that is simply the time of the
- 5 requests in the sense that, admittedly, they had
- 6 the information in October, November time frame,
- 7 but when we really crystallized it, it was in mid
- 8 December, and I know that they had reached out to
- 9 folks to try to get information. Various people
- 10 were on holiday, probably not focused on it as much
- 11 as they should. But, bottom line, we're getting
- 12 what we need at this point by Thursday. Forgive
- 13 the long soliloguy.
- But the other outstanding issue, I guess, is
- 15 to talk about Staff asked to look at the outside
- 16 auditor papers, work papers, and I know that that
- 17 review was conducted yesterday. I don't know, you
- 18 know, if that was the other set of information that
- 19 was outstanding. I don't know. They've gotten
- 20 what they need; we haven't had a chance to meet and
- 21 confer. We'll get confirmation of them what they
- 22 need. But, bottom line, I think at this point
- 23 things are proceeding as they should. But I'll
- 24 defer to Staff because they're the ones asking.
- 25 JUDGE JONES: Is that -- Staff on the same

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- 1 page with the Company?
- 2 MR. BORGMEYER: Yeah, that's generally
- 3 accurate all what he said. I think there are still
- 4 some terms that we're waiting for.
- 5 My understanding from Staff is that the
- 6 Southern Union audit work papers weren't available
- 7 yesterday, and that I understand Grant Thornton is
- 8 looking into that, and in discussion with Southern
- 9 Union, and that they're still in the process of
- 10 that. So, that's one piece that's outstanding.
- 11 MR. JACOBS: Okay.
- 12 MR. BORGMEYER: Like Mr. Jacobs said, I
- 13 think we're expecting some mailing on Thursday that
- 14 will have more property tax information. In
- 15 addition to what's been provided recently, I think
- 16 we're hopeful that that will satisfy that request.
- 17 But there's some information we received just last
- 18 night that I think we still have to look at.
- MR. JACOBS: And some this morning.
- 20 MR. BORGMEYER: And some this morning. So,
- 21 there are still some terms outstanding. And I'm
- 22 not sure if there's -- as far as the audit work
- 23 papers, I'm not sure if there is a way to set a
- 24 date when that might happen.
- 25 MR. ZUCKER: I think, from our perspective,

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- 1 we've asked for the information, and we can ask
- 2 again more collectively. We've already asked them
- 3 to provide information. We can simply sit down
- 4 with Staff and talk about the contents of the
- 5 communications about what exactly we need so we're
- 6 on the same page. We can send that forward, and I
- 7 think, at this point, the threat will be whatever
- 8 we don't have available to Staff, this information.
- 9 We certainly don't object to them asking for it.
- 10 Simply, it's not in our possession to call.
- 11 So, if that is the outstanding issue, I
- 12 think we can elevate it through the company and
- 13 then from whoever still uses it can provide that
- 14 information as quickly as we can, and we can commit
- 15 to sit down with Staff to do that and craft an
- 16 amount that's appropriate for both parties and have
- 17 a conference call with them, if necessary, whatever
- 18 it takes to get across to them the need.
- 19 MR. BORGMEYER: Yeah. What he just
- 20 mentioned was --
- 21 JUDGE JONES: "He" being a member of Staff.
- MR. BORGMEYER: Yeah, a member of Staff.
- 23 -- referencing, he said corporate, corporate
- 24 costs that are a part of the synergy information we
- 25 talked about. We had just gotten some of that

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- 1 stuff last night or this morning. So, we still
- 2 need to see what's in there.
- 3 MR. ZUCKER: Mr. Fred Stone asked the
- 4 question, and I can tell you there's some
- 5 information just this morning. We probably had
- 6 been on the road from Kansas City and haven't had a
- 7 chance to review it. And what we committed to in
- 8 the e-mail is -- my e-mail to Mr. Borgmeyer -- was
- 9 that we would -- could set up a call tomorrow or
- 10 Friday, because we'll meet later today, or we can
- 11 meet today just to walk through what that
- 12 information, basically, contains to see if that
- 13 answers your question.
- MR. BORGMEYER: I think, as far as legal
- options, Staff does have subpoena power, and I
- 16 think we've held off on that so far because MGE's
- 17 been working with Southern Union and we've made
- 18 some progress, but I guess one question we might
- 19 try to resolve is whether it would be helpful for
- 20 Staff to go ahead and pursue subpoenas directly to
- 21 Southern Union to Grant Thornton.
- 22 MR. ZUCKER: I would submit that some of
- 23 that's based on your review of the information in
- 24 the next couple of days, and then, also, you know,
- 25 based on what progress we can get from the Company.

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- 1 I think some of that depends on the information
- 2 that we get in the next couple of days and Staff's
- 3 review of that. I think it also depends on what
- 4 progress we've made with Grant Thornton and,
- 5 keeping in mind, that it probably needs at this
- 6 point to be kept under a short fuse to make that
- 7 decision in the sense that your direct testimony is
- 8 coming up soon, and if we can, the quicker we can
- 9 get it, obviously.
- 10 So, I think that would be, you know, Staff's
- 11 decision, ultimately, when they want to send the
- 12 subpoena out, but we'll certainly cooperate with
- 13 them to try to get this information and request out
- 14 as quick as we can.
- JUDGE JONES: Okay. So, just to be clear,
- 16 because Staff has narrowed the information they
- 17 want, there aren't any objections to the
- 18 information?
- 19 MR. ZUCKER: No.
- JUDGE JONES: What kind of time constraints
- 21 is Staff operating on?
- 22 MR. BORGMEYER: Well, our direct testimony
- 23 is due the 23rd of January.
- JUDGE JONES: Two weeks from now.
- MR. BORGMEYER: Two weeks from now. So,

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- 1 that puts us on a pretty tight timetable.
- I would think we'd need to know -- we'd need
- 3 to know probably the next couple of days what
- 4 deadlines will be realistic for the information
- 5 that's in the possession of Grant Thornton. I
- 6 think that, if we could have the information a week
- 7 before our cost of service report is due, I think
- 8 that would probably be -- without exactly
- 9 conferring with Staff -- right now, I think that
- 10 would be about as close as we'd want to cut it.
- JUDGE JONES: Does MGE have any concerns
- 12 with these time constraints? I mean, given what you
- 13 know now?
- 14 MR. JACOBS: Right.
- JUDGE JONES: I know you can't speak for
- 16 them.
- 17 MR. ZUCKER: Essentially, it's information
- 18 that's not in our possession, and we've asked for
- 19 it. We need to narrow the focus. You know, the
- 20 only thing outstanding, from our perspective, that
- 21 we haven't been promised at this point or a date
- 22 certain when it will be delivered is the outside
- 23 auditor information related to Southern Union
- 24 Company. So, that's really the unknown, from my
- 25 perspective.

Page 24 What we can do is, you know, reach out to 1 2 them today, tomorrow. We've got a settlement 3 conference this afternoon and to try to really crystallize the point with them, and we need this 4 5 data, and then Staff will have enough information to make a determination about what they need to do 6 7 to exercise their options with respect to the Southern Union auditor papers, which I understand 8 is the main issue outstanding at this point. 10 JUDGE JONES: Okay. Is there anything the Commission can do to facilitate that process, that 11 12 you can think of? 13 MR. BORGMEYER: Other than Staff exercising it's subpoena power, I don't know that there's 14 15 anything the Commission can do directly. At least I'm not aware of anything right now. 16 17 JUDGE JONES: Does anyone have anything else 18 they would like to talk about on the record? 19 (No response.) 20 JUDGE JONES: Okay. Let's go off the 21 record. (Whereupon, the record ended at 10:20 a.m.) 22 23 2.4

Fax: 314.644.1334

25

		Page 25
1	CERTIFICATE	
2	STATE OF MISSOURI)	
3) ss.	
4	COUNTY OF COLE)	
5	I, Pamela S. Gentry, Certified Court	
6	Reporter with the firm of Midwest Litigation	
7	Services, do hereby certify that I was personally	
8	present at the proceedings had in the above-	
9	entitled cause at the time and place set forth in	
10	the caption sheet thereof; that I then and there	
11	took down in Stenotype the proceedings had; and	
12	that the foregoing is a full, true and correct	
13	transcript of such Stenotype notes so made at such	
14	time and place.	
15	Given at my office in the City of	
16	Jefferson, County of Cole, State of Missouri.	
17		
18		
19		
20	Pamela S. Gentry, CCR #426	
21		
22		
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