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1	STATE OF MISSOURI
	PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
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	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
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5	Prehearing Conference
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7	February 5, 2013
	Jefferson City, Missouri
8	Volume 1
9	
10	In the Matter of Summit)
	Natural Gas of Missouri, Inc.'s)Case No. GO-2013-0360
11	Proposed Conversion Rebate Program)
12	
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	RONALD D. PRIDGIN, Presiding
14	SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE
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20	REPORTED BY: Monnie S. Mealy, CCR, CSR, RPR
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1	APPEARANCES	
2	For Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission:	
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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	JUDGE PRIDGIN: All right. Thank you. Good
3	morning. We are on the record. This is the prehearing
4	conference in File No. GO-2013-0360 in the Matter of
5	Summit Natural Gas of Missouri, Inc.'s Proposed Conversion
6	Program Extension.
7	I'm Ron Pridgin. I'm the Regulatory Law Judge
8	assigned to preside over this prehearing conference being
9	held on February 7th, 2013, in the Governor Office
10	Building in Jefferson City, Missouri.
11	The time is 10 a.m. I'd like to get entries of
12	appearance from Counsel, please, beginning with Summit.
13	MR. COOPER: Dean Cooper on behalf of Summit
14	Natural Gas and Missouri, Inc. The court reporter has the
15	has the address. And with me today are Martha Wankum,
16	and on the telephone Michelle Moorman, both of the
17	company.
18	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Mr. Cooper, thank you. On
19	behalf of the Staff of the Commission, please.
20	MR. KEEVIL: Appearing on behalf of the Staff of
21	the Public Service commission, Jeff Keevil, P.O. Box 360,
22	Jefferson City, Missouri, 65102. And we also we have
23	several Staff members here for the when the prehearing
24	commences.
25	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Mr. Keevil, thank you. On

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1	behalf of the Office of the Public Counsel, please.
2	MR. POSTON: Thank you. Mark Poston appearing
3	for the Office of Public Counsel and the public.
4	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Mr. Poston, thank you. Is there
5	anyone else here wishing to enter an appearance? All
6	right. Hearing none, I am going to try to get out of your
7	way as quickly as I can, the reason being is, at least as
8	I understand it, Summit would like to file direct
9	testimony today, and so I expect the parties have a lot to
10	talk about and need to get to pretty quickly.
11	Could I trouble the parties, or at least one
12	party, to file something by 5:00 today, at least let me
13	know whether we have an objection to the proposed
14	procedural schedule or kind of let me know what's going
15	on, if nothing else?
16	MR. COOPER: Well, your Honor, I think
17	really, the reason I file that had proposed procedural
18	schedule was we have had some conversations, or at least
19	some communication, prior to today. And at least, in my
20	opinion, Staff and OPC had other ideas as to how the case
21	should proceed.
22	So they may say differently, but but my
23	impression is that we we probably are going to need
24	responses and and your ruling to to resolve that
25	issue.

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1	Now, Mr. Keevil and Mr. Poston may have other
2	other points of view on that.
3	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Right.
4	MR. COOPER: But that was my impression and the
5	reason for filing that.
6	JUDGE PRIDGIN: And I understand.
7	MR. KEEVIL: Judge, let me jump in here. I
8	honestly think there are some procedural matters which the
9	Ninth Floor, either you or the Commission, probably needs
10	to address early on here because that, to me the if
11	you've read the pleadings, like you said, Mr. Cooper fired
12	a filed a proposed schedule this morning.
13	Yesterday afternoon or no. Yesterday
14	morning, I guess, I filed a Request for Order Directing
15	Notice, and, also, I guess it was really in the
16	alternative, for two things.
17	One, that Summit be ordered to file an
18	application and then serve that according to the
19	Commission's application rules, or, in the alternative, at
20	least notice be issued to other public utilities in the
21	service territory as well as other parties that the
22	Commission might deem in need of notice.
23	And I I think and then I saw in
24	Mr. Cooper's pleading this morning, he, rather than filing
25	an application, suggested filing a Motion for Variance,

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1	which while I mean, you could accomplish the notice
2	I guess some of the notice issues there. There would also
3	be you know, technically speaking, I still don't think
4	I'm sure Mr. Cooper would disagree with me. I don't
5	think that would still comply with the the rules.
6	Now, if the Ninth Floor wants to proceed in that
7	way, as long as we get the notice issue accomplished, I
8	suppose I can if you guys say, Okay, we don't need an
9	application, you can waive waive the application rule,
10	waive the all the other rules that would also be
11	required in addition to the the promotion to practice
12	rule.
13	You know, if you want to proceed that way, we
14	can proceed that way. However, I I still think there's
15	a question as to which way we're going to proceed on this,
16	which could, in turn, affect, you know, whether we get any
17	Intervenors.
18	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Right.
19	MR. KEEVIL: Which would also, obviously, effect
20	the procedural schedule. So there's that procedural issue
21	kind of hanging out there because they haven't filed an
22	application, which I think may need to be resolved before
23	we can actually come to the procedural schedule with
24	three-way agreement.
25	Obviously, they want to move as fast as

	Page
1	possible. We wouldn't be opposed to moving faster than
2	normal, but I don't think we want to move as fast as they
3	want to move. So and part of that, like I said, a lot
4	of it, actually, hinges on whether we end up trying the
5	issue of procedure as well as the issue of, you know, the
6	ultimate issue of should the promotional practice tariff
7	be extended another two years or whatever. So I just
8	mention that to make sure you're aware of all that's
9	hanging out there.
10	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Mr. Poston, did you have
11	comments?
12	MR. POSTON: Yeah. I concur with Mr. Keevil
13	that the first step, we think, needs to be an application
14	with the proper notice going out and then move forward
15	from there.
16	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Okay. And and I you know,
17	I think I understand the parties' positions. And if if
18	the parties really have the dispute that it appears that
19	you do, it's something I would want to take to the full
20	Commission to get their ruling on how they want to move
21	forward.
22	And so I guess that's why I'm I'm trying to,
23	more or less, get out of your way and let you continue
24	talking like you've been talking like you told me,
25	which is kind of what I assumed you'd be talking about is

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1	what can we can we agreed on how to proceed?
2	And if not, then you need let me know something
3	today so I can give the Commission some notice, you know,
4	put something on the agenda as quickly as possible, give
5	them as much notice, and say, How do you want to proceed?
6	MR. KEEVIL: Right. That's kind of what I was
7	saying.
8	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Right.
9	MR. KEEVIL: How we wind up how we wind up
10	proceeding you know, if we get the notice issue
11	accomplished, the how then kind of, to my way of thinking,
12	becomes a Ninth Floor issue assuming
13	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Right.
14	MR. KEEVIL: they remain where they are. The
15	other thing I want to throw out here, when you initially
16	suspended the tariff for 60 days, I was not clear and
17	not saying it was something you had to put in the Order.
18	But when I mean, I've seen that done before for two
19	purposes.
20	No. 1 is to kind of allow the parties to get
21	together and propose something, or that that may have
22	been I mean, I've also seen, I mean, as a result of
23	that, parties come together and say, okay, suspend it
24	another X number of days and then fit procedural schedule
25	into the slightly extended period, or whether you were

- 1 trying to, you know, say, Okay, we -- we have to get this
- 2 thing done in 60 days because that's, you know, what it
- 3 was suspended for or whether you were contemplating
- 4 finishing the case in 60 days or the potential of further
- 5 suspension beyond the 60 days, or whether you even
- 6 thought --
- 7 JUDGE PRIDGIN: My thought was instead of just
- 8 randomly suspending it for, you know, six months plus 120
- 9 days or whatever, just -- just like maybe a lot of other
- 10 tariffs, just suspend it for a short amount of time.
- 11 Let's get this case moving.
- 12 If -- if it can't get resolved within the 60
- 13 days, we can deal with that later. It's just -- I just
- 14 wanted kind of a brief, immediate suspension, and that's
- 15 not to say it wouldn't get suspended further.
- 16 Again, I would want to take that to the
- 17 Commission as well because I think 60 days is fairly
- 18 brief. And anything beyond that, I would want the
- 19 Commission's input on.
- 20 Do we really want to keep dragging this out into
- 21 the spring or summer, or do we want this resolved quickly?
- 22 I hope that answers your question.
- MR. COOPER: Judge, just to respond to a couple
- 24 of things that Mr. -- Mr. Keevil, you know, in terms of
- 25 how the case gets started, the prior pleadings have

	Page 10
1	outlined that the company believes that I think it's
2	30.255 kind of provides an alternate way to start this
3	variance waiver process.
4	Now that the tariff has been suspended, and,
5	certainly, we think that's an issue before the Commission.
6	We think it was T'd up by the tariff filing. In the
7	pleading we filed this morning, we state that we don't
8	object to to notice being provided.
9	You know, whether that changes what the
10	procedural schedule can be, I think, depends on whether
11	anybody shows up
12	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Right.
13	MR. COOPER: and where they fit in the
14	process. But but this tariff is is the
15	conversion program is very important to the company
16	because of where it is with with that that Branson
17	area expansion.
18	And, you know, to a certain extent, a long delay
19	is essentially taking it away because of the timing. So
20	so the timing is very important to the company. And
21	that's why we we certainly tried to propose a schedule
22	that would allow the Commission to make a decision one way
23	or the other within that 60-day period.
24	And just so everybody knows, you had mentioned
25	that the company wants to file direct testimony. I think,

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1	actually, as we were walking over here, the company did go
2	ahead and file the direct testimony. So I think it's
3	filed and available for for folks to see at this point
4	in time. And, obviously, the significance of that will be
5	decided at some later date. But but it has been filed.
6	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Okay.
7	MR. POSTON: Can I just jump in here?
8	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Sure.
9	MR. POSTON: Just on whether we should try to
10	squeeze in the 60 days. Ideally, this should have been
11	filed back in August, September. You know, the program
12	expired December 31st, and they filed this on December
13	28th.
14	It didn't really give anybody a whole lot of
15	time to do anything before the program would be suspended.
16	So I just want to throw that out there that that I
17	don't feel like we should have to crunch, you know, our
18	time frame because they didn't file it when they should
19	have.
20	MR. KEEVIL: I would concur with that. They
21	knew the thing was going to expire December 31st, and they
22	waited until December 28th, 2012, to file the thing. So
23	if they wanted if this was really that important to
24	them, there was to reason they couldn't have filed in June
25	of 2012 and we wouldn't have this crunch

Page 12 And I would, also, just mention a, quote, 1 2 promotional practice to encourage conversion from other 3 heating sources than natural gas, the thing has been in effect since 1994. I have never in my -- I'm not saying 4 5 it's never happened, but I have personally never seen a conversion promotional practice in effect for 20 years 6 7 when the purpose is to help the -- a start-up company get 8 started. 9 You know, this thing should -- I don't know why this thing is still here after 20 years, but it is, and we 10 have to deal with it. But to say that this is somehow 11 12 because of Branson that they now need this conversion, I mean, it's -- it's been there for 20 years. 13 It would seem to me if they were going to be 14 viable or not, it should have taken place sometime over 15 16 the past 20 years. 17 MR. COOPER: Of course, Mr. Keevil wasn't involved in that Branson certificate case or any of the 18 issues that went on there. I think my memory is that the 19 20 Staff kind of threw up its hand and said, Well, if 21 somebody's willing to loan the money, we guess it's viable. 22 23 I mean, it -- it was known early on that that was -- it was a service that Branson wanted badly, but it 24 was something that was going to have to be worked hard at 25

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1	to get sufficient penetration to make that system
2	JUDGE PRIDGIN: And if I can interrupt, we're
3	getting into substance, and I'm not going to be able to
4	help you resolve any substance issues today. And I
5	understand, you know, everyone's got got some
6	disagreement and some frustration, but I can't help you
7	resolve that today.
8	And I want to refocus, really, on the procedure.
9	And that may be more difficult to pull apart from each
10	other than they would be in normal cases, and I understand
11	that. But I I guess I'm kind of wanting to wrap up my
12	bit and at least give you time to say either talk
13	either reach an agreement or don't and then let me know
14	something today so that I can at least let the Commission
15	know we've had a dispute we've got a procedural dispute
16	that we need the Commission to resolve quickly, so I can
17	give them some time to chew on it for agenda next week.
18	So is there and and, obviously, you know,
19	any pleadings that you wanted to file to give the
20	Commission guidance on why the Commission should you
21	know, motions, objections or whatever, I don't have to
22	tell you this, but feel free to do so. It makes my job
23	easier. It makes the Commission's job easier.
24	So is there anything else that the parties want
25	to bring to my attention? Mr. Poston?

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1	MR. POSTON: I do have a question. In your
2	one of your Orders, you stated that the Commission needed
3	more evidence, I think it was, or just what were you
4	thinking? Are you thinking in lines of the the
5	promotional practices rule and and the good cause
6	showing? Is that what you were referencing when you
7	JUDGE PRIDGIN: More well, just more so that
8	we that the Commission didn't have any kind of record.
9	It just had a tariff filing and had parties objecting to
10	the tariff. So the Commissioners wanted to suspend the
11	tariff and see if the parties needed to go to hearing or
12	not, basically.
13	MR. POSTON: So that wasn't necessarily a
14	statement as to what procedural you think needs to be
15	filed?
16	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Correct. Correct. Anything
17	else I can do for the parties before I go off the record?
18	All right.
19	Ms. Moorman, please stay on the line. I'm going
20	to wrap up here in a minute and leave the room. And if
21	you'll stay on the line for them, please.
22	MS. MOORMAN: Thank you.
23	JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you. If there's nothing
24	further from the parties? All right. We will go off the
25	record in the prehearing in Case No. GO-2013-0360. Thank

		Page 15
1	you. We are off the record.	
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1	REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE				
2					
3	STATE OF MISSOURI)				
)ss.				
4	COUNTY OF OSAGE)				
5					
6	I, Monnie S. Mealy, Certified Shorthand Reporter,				
7	Certified Court Reporter #0538, and Registered				
8	Professional Reporter, and Notary Public, within and for				
9	the State of Missouri, do hereby certify that I was				
10	personally present at the proceedings as set forth in the				
11	caption sheet hereof; that I then and there took down in				
12	stenotype the proceedings had at said time and was				
13	thereafter transcribed by me, and is fully and accurately				
14	set forth in the preceding pages.				
15					
16	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and				
17	seal on February 7, 2013.				
18					
19					
20					
21	Monnie S. Mealy, CSR, CCR #0539				
22	Registered Professional Reporter				
23					
24					
25					

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