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STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

In The Matter Of Liberty Utilities)
(Midstates Natural Gas) Corp. d/b/a)
Liberty Utilities' Tariff Revisions)
Designed To Implement A General Rate) File No.
Increase For Natural Gas Service in) GR-2014-0152
The Missouri Service Areas Of)
The Company)

Public Hearing
July 7th, 2014
Bates County Museum
802 Elks Drive
Butler, MO 64730
Vol. 10

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APPEARANCES

Judge Ron Pridgin, Regulatory Law Judge

Comissioner Bill Kenney, PSC

Reported by:

The Court Reporter:

MS. LISA BALLALATAK, CCR

Kansas CCR No. 1670

MIDWEST LITIGATION SERVICES

1301 Oak Street, Suite B

Kansas City, Missouri 64106

(816) 221-1160

lballalatak@midwestlitigation.com

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1 (The proceedings commenced at 6:43 p.m.)

2 MR. PRIDGIN: Good evening and welcome to
3 to this evening's local public hearing in Case
4 Number GR20140152. I'm Ron Pridgin. I'm one of the
5 judges with the Commission, and with me this evening
6 is one of the commissioners, Commissioner Bill
7 Kenney. This is an official hearing of the
8 Commission, and the reason for this portion of the
9 hearing is to hear any testimony that you might
10 have. If you'll notice we have a court reporter up
11 here, and if you wish to testify, I'll ask you to
12 come forward to be sworn, and I will ask you a few
13 preliminary questions, such as your name, and I'll
14 ask you to spell your name so the court reporter
15 spells it correctly, and whether you're a customer
16 of Liberty Utilities, and then I'll ask if you have
17 any sort of statement for the Commission. Let me
18 see if Commissioner Kenney, if you have any opening
19 remarks.

20 MR. KENNEY: Thank you, Judge.

21 I would just like to welcome everybody
22 here. This is the fifth and final public hearing we
23 have on Liberty, and the process -- I am one of five
24 commissioners. The other four commissioners,
25 because we have our court reporter, and everything

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1 is recorded, they have an opportunity to read all of
2 the testimony from all public hearings and hear some
3 of the concerns of the customers. So I just want to
4 thank you all for showing up tonight. I think we
5 have a wonderful staff. I'm sure they did a great
6 job of educating you on the process. So, again,
7 thank you, and feel free to express your views
8 tonight.

9 MR. PRIDGIN: Commissioner, thank you.

10 Let me see -- before I start calling
11 witnesses, let me get entries of appearance from
12 counsel, please, beginning with the company.

13 MR. DOUGHERTY: Thank you, Judge Pridgin.

14 Appearing on behalf of the company Liberty
15 Utilities, my name is Larry Dougherty. I'm with the
16 law firm of Fisher & Dougherty, PC of Jefferson
17 City. Our address is 101 Madison, Suite 400,
18 Jefferson City, Missouri 65101.

19 Thank you, Judge.

20 MR. PRIDGIN: Mr. Dougherty, thank you.

21 On behalf of the staff of the Commission?

22 MR. TANTEL: Alex Antel for the staff of
23 the Missouri Public Service Commission, PO Box 360,
24 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

25 MR. PRIDGIN: Mr. Antel, thank you.

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1 On behalf of the Office of the Public
2 Counsel, please.

3 MR. POSTON: Thank you. Marc Poston in
4 current public counsel.

5 MR. PRIDGIN: Mr. Poston, thank you.

6 Have I overlooked anyone?

7 All right. If I could just take a moment
8 and explain again what's going to happen. I've got
9 a list of witnesses, and I'll call each witness, and
10 I'll ask that you come to this witness area to be
11 sworn, and to make your statement for the
12 commissioners. If for some reason you are unable to
13 take an oath, such as for religious reasons, please
14 let me know, and I'll ask that your testimony be
15 affirmed instead of sworn.

16 Does anyone have any questions before I
17 call the first witness?

18 All right. Seeing none, the first witness
19 I have is Timothy Hummel, if you'll come forward to
20 be sworn, please, sir.

21 TIMOTHY HUMMEL,
22 being first duly sworn, testified under oath as
23 follows:

24 MR. PRIDGIN: If you'll state your name
25 and spell it for the court reporter, please.

1 MR. HUMMELL: Timothy Hummel,
2 T-i-m-o-t-h-y H-u-m-m-e-l.

3 MR. PRIDGIN: And are you a customer of
4 Liberty Utilities?

5 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

6 MR. PRIDGIN: All right. Do you have a
7 statement for the Commission, sir?

8 THE WITNESS: Yes. I understand the
9 reasons for rate increases. I don't agree with the
10 amount of the rate increases. It seems to me
11 western Missouri is unduly much higher than the
12 other areas of operation in Missouri. They
13 explained that's due to the population density of
14 this area, but a 57 and a half percent increase in a
15 monthly delivery charge seems to me that -- is too
16 high, and I hope the Commission takes into account
17 this area, the several counties in this service area
18 that -- the economics, the unemployment, the
19 retirement rate. I just hope they look at the whole
20 picture before they make a decision on this rate
21 increase, and that's -- that is my statement.

22 MR. PRIDGIN: All right. Mr. Hummel,
23 thank you. If you'll keep your seat for just a
24 second. Commissioner Kenney, did you have any
25 questions?

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1 MR. KENNEY: No. Thank you very much,
2 Mr. Hummel. I appreciate your testimony.

3 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

4 MR. PRIDGIN: All right. Thank you very
5 much, sir.

6 The next witness -- I hope I'm getting
7 this correctly. Is it Marcene Irwin?

8 MARCENE IRWIN,
9 being first duly sworn, testified under oath as
10 follows:

11 MR. PRIDGIN: And if you'll state your
12 name and spell it for the court reporter, please.

13 MS. ERWIN: First name Marcene, spelling,
14 M-a-r-c-e-n-e; last name Irwin, I-r-w-i-n.

15 MR. PRIDGIN: And are you a customer of
16 Liberty Utilities?

17 MS. ERWIN: Yes, I am.

18 MR. PRIDGIN: Okay. What is your
19 statement for the commissioner?

20 MS. ERWIN: Well, as I said earlier, it's
21 not -- this wasn't a question. I think we're being
22 penalized. This is a very small community. It's a
23 lot of retired, there's a lot of farmers, there's a
24 lot of welfare. Most people are in Social Security.
25 I'm a widow, I'm on Social Security, and any little

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1 bit that they raise anything, I have to weigh, Okay,
2 is it this medication I can take, or is it maybe
3 I'll have to go next week and get bread. It doesn't
4 sound like a lot, I'm sure, to a lot of people, but
5 when you add this up every month, do it times 12,
6 and that's a year, what are you going to do? What
7 is important to you now? I can't buy milk this
8 week, maybe I can buy bread next week, and I just
9 think we're being penalized. That's my opinion.

10 MR. PRIDGIN: Ms. Irwin, thank you.

11 Commissioner, any questions?

12 MR. KENNEY: Thank you, Mrs. Irwin, I
13 appreciate it very much.

14 MR. PRIDGIN: Thank you for your time.

15 All right. The next witness -- I hope I'm
16 pronouncing this correct, Wanda Chevalier.

17 WANDA CHEVALIER,
18 being first duly sworn, testified under oath as
19 follows:

20 MR. PRIDGIN: Please state and spell your
21 name for the court reporter, please.

22 A. Wanda, W-a-n-d-a, Chevalier,
23 C-h-e-v-a-l-i-e-r.

24 MR. PRIDGIN: And are you a customer of
25 Liberty Utilities?

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1 MS. CHEVALIER: Yes.

2 MR. PRIDGIN: And what is your statement
3 for the commissioner?

4 MS. CHEVALIER: As I stated before, I feel
5 this is putting a great hardship on the senior
6 citizens and also many of the people -- this is not
7 a very wealthy town. People have a hard time making
8 a living, and they just really don't need extra
9 expenses, and seniors who live on a fixed income,
10 the government isn't going to understand this. They
11 don't give us extra money for stuff like this. We
12 live on a very fixed income, and that's why I feel
13 this is important that we not do this to our friends
14 and our people in the city.

15 That's it.

16 MR. PRIDGIN: Thank you.

17 MR. KENNEY: Thank you very much, ma'am.

18 MR. PRIDGIN: All right. Thank you so
19 much.

20 The next witness is a Charlotte Guss.

21 CHARLOTTE GUSS

22 being first duly sworn, testified under oath as
23 follows:

24 MR. PRIDGIN: If you'll state your name
25 and spell it for the court reporter, please.

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1 MS GUSS: Charlotte, C-h-a-r-l-o-t-t-e
2 G-u-s-s is my last name.

3 MR. PRIDGIN: And are you a customer of
4 Liberty Utilities?

5 MS GUSS: Yes, I am.

6 MR. PRIDGIN: What is your statement,
7 ma'am?

8 MS GUSS: I made the statement earlier
9 that I appreciated Liberty Utilities putting in an
10 office where we can come in and pay our bill right
11 there at the office. I like that 49 cents in my
12 pocket instead of in the mail running around out
13 there getting to the office where it's supposed to
14 be on time. Sometimes that don't work, but I like
15 that office down there. And I can use my debit card
16 and pay it, and it comes right out of my checking
17 account right then and there. I appreciate it very
18 much.

19 MR. PRIDGIN: Thank you.

20 If you have nothing further, commissioner?

21 MR. KENNEY: No. Thank you very much,
22 ma'am.

23 MR. PRIDGIN: All right. Thank you for
24 your time and your testimony.

25 The next witness I have is a Wanda Rector.

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1 WANDA RECTOR,
2 being first duly sworn, testified under oath as
3 follows:

4 MR. PRIDGIN: And if you'll state your
5 name and spell it for the court reporter.

6 MS. RECTOR: Wanda, W-a-n-d-a, Rector,
7 R-e-c-t-o-r.

8 MR. PRIDGIN: Okay. And are you a
9 customer of Liberty Utilities?

10 MS. RECTOR: Yes.

11 MR. PRIDGIN: Okay. What is your
12 statement, ma'am?

13 MS. RECTOR: It's kind of a repeat, but I
14 just had to be on record to say that I think it's an
15 unreasonable rate. We've had several raises in the
16 last years on things, but nothing this exorbitant,
17 and on a fixed income, it can get hard.

18 MR. PRIDGIN: All right. Thank you.

19 MR. KENNEY: Thank you.

20 MR. PRIDGIN: Thank you very much.

21 And those are all of the witnesses that I
22 have that are listed on the sheet.

23 Is there anyone else who wishes to
24 testify?

25 All right. Anything from counsel?

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1 Commissioner Kenney?

2 MR. KENNEY: Just to reiterate, this
3 process takes quite a while. Our staff analyzes all
4 of the books of the company. You have the office of
5 public counsel who is there on your behalf, and our
6 staff does a juggling job to work and try to present
7 the Commission with some good alternatives, so I
8 just want to appreciate all of coming out. I know
9 this is very important to each of you, and my
10 colleagues in the Commission also realize that. So
11 we take your personal testimony very much to heart,
12 and we try to weigh it. And, again, I will read the
13 other testimony of the hearings I was not at, and so
14 will my other commissioners. So, again, thank you
15 very much for turning out tonight. I appreciate it.

16 MR. PRIDGIN: I'll also echo those
17 comments, and thank everyone for attending. If
18 there's nothing further, I thank you. We will close
19 the local public hearing GR20140152.

20 Thank you very much. We're off the
21 record.

22 (The proceedings concluded at 6:54 p.m.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Lisa D. Ballalatak, a Notary Public for the State of Missouri, do hereby certify that I appeared at the time and place first hereinbefore set forth, that I took down in shorthand the entire proceedings had at said time and place, and that the foregoing constitutes a true, correct, and complete transcript of my said shorthand notes.

Witness my hand and seal this 17th day of July, 2014

Lisa D. Ballalatak
Notary Public
State of Missouri

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