BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

In the Matter of Osage Water Company)	Case No. WR-2009-0149
Small Company Rate Increase.)	
In the Matter of Osage Water Company)	Case No. SR-2009-0152
Small Company Rate Increase)	

STAFF RESPONSE TO OPC'S EVIDENTIARY HEARING REQUEST AND STAFF MOTION TO CONSOLIDATE EVIDENTIARY HEARINGS

COMES NOW the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission (Staff), by and through counsel, and for its *Response to OPC's Evidentiary Hearing Request and Staff Motion to Consolidate Evidentiary Hearings* (Motion) states the following to the Missouri Public Service Commission (Commission):

- 1. On June 26, 2009, the Office of the Public Counsel (OPC) filed its Request for Evidentiary Hearing (Request) for the above cases regarding Osage Water Company's (Company) rate increase requests pursuant to Commission Rule 4 CSR 240-3.050(19) and (20) after a local public hearing was held, per OPC's request, on June 12, 2009.
- 2. OPC also included in its request a specified list of issues that OPC believes should be the subject of the hearing. See *Request* at 2-4. These issues are limited to and all relate to the inclusion of certain Judgment amounts and possible interest payments in the Company/Staff Disposition Agreements. *Id*.
- 3. Once OPC has filed a request for evidentiary hearing with a specified issues list Rule 3.050(20) states that "the utility's case shall be resolved through contested case procedures conducted in the time remaining in the rate case process, consistent with the requirements of section (24)...."

- 4. The timeframe set out under Rule 3.050(24) specifies that the "proposed full resolution of a small utility rate case must be finally presented to the commission no later than nine (9) months after the case is opened, regardless of how it is presented, and the commission's decision and order regarding the case shall be issued and effective no later than eleven (11) months after the case was opened."
- 5. Therefore, Staff notes, as both cases above were filed October 23, 2008, the nine month deadline for presentation to the Commission is July 23, 2009, while the eleven month deadline for an effective Commission decision and order is September 23, 2009.
- 6. OPC's limited list of issues filed pursuant to rule 3.050(19) and (20) should restrict any evidentiary hearing held in this matter to those issues, while *all other resolutions* contained within the Company/Staff Agreement Regarding Disposition of Small Water Company Revenue Increase Request and Company/Staff Agreement Regarding Disposition of Small Sewer Company Revenue Increase Request, both filed on May 21, 2009, should be treated as unopposed and, therefore, as unanimous agreements pursuant to Rule 2.115(C) and (E) respectively.
- 7. Limiting the evidentiary hearing(s) to the same specific issues listed for the above cases would be serve judicial efficiency.
- 8. Furthermore, as the three judgment issues listed by OPC in its Request For Evidentiary Hearing are identical, it would be judicial economy to consolidate these two cases evidentiary hearings, as presumably the same evidence, witnesses, and parties would also be the same.

WHEREFORE, Staff respectfully submits its Motion for the Commission's information and consideration in this case and requests that the Commission consolidate these two cases

evidentiary hearings, limit the issue presented, and enter an Order adopting the other resolved items as explicitly agreed upon by Staff and the Company.

Respectfully submitted,

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Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been mailed, hand-delivered, transmitted by facsimile or electronically mailed to all counsel of record this 6^{th} day of July 2009.

/s/ Shelley Syler Brueggemann