

1 STATE OF MISSOURI  
2 PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
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5 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
6 Prehearing Conference  
7

8 March 24, 2004  
9 Jefferson City, Missouri  
Volume 1

10

11 The Staff of the Missouri Public )  
Service Commission, )  
12 )  
Petitioner, )  
13 )  
v. ) Case No. TC-2004-0390  
14 )  
Heartland Health System, Inc., )  
15 )  
Respondent. )  
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18 RONALD D. PRIDGIN, Presiding,  
19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE.  
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12 FOR: Staff of the Missouri Public  
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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 JUDGE PRIDGIN: On the record, please.

3 Good morning. We are on the record for the prehearing  
4 conference in Case No. TC-2004-0390, the Staff of the  
5 Missouri Public Service Commission vs. Heartland Health  
6 System, Incorporated. I'm Ron Pridgin, the Regulatory Law  
7 Judge assigned to preside over this case.

8 This prehearing conference is being held on  
9 March 24th, 2004, at 10 o'clock in the morning, and we are  
10 in the Hotel Governor Office Building in Jefferson City,  
11 Missouri. We are here because of my March 15, 2004 Order  
12 setting this case for prehearing conference.

13 If I could, at this time I would like to  
14 get entries of appearance from counsel, beginning with  
15 Staff, please.

16 MR. BATES: Good morning, your Honor.  
17 Bruce H. Bates appearing on behalf of the Staff of the  
18 Missouri Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 360,  
19 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

20 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Mr. Bates, thank you. On  
21 behalf of Heartland Health System, please.

22 MR. WRIGHT: Good morning, your Honor.  
23 Seth C. Wright on behalf of Heartland Health System,  
24 address 3101 Frederick Avenue, St. Joseph, Missouri.

25 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Mr. Wright, thank you. Any

1 other parties wishing to enter an appearance? Seeing  
2 none.

3 I don't see any pending motions. Are there  
4 any motions or anything else that the parties need to  
5 bring to my attention at this time?

6 MR. BATES: Your Honor, I believe the only  
7 thing that is currently scheduled in this matter is a  
8 procedural schedule due one week from today. So I would  
9 propose that we use this time to help develop that. There  
10 is some language in the Commission's Order setting this  
11 prehearing conference indicating settlement discussions,  
12 and our directions have been that we cannot do that at  
13 this time. So I just want on the record that we won't be  
14 able to use that at this time as we normally would in a  
15 case.

16 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you for pointing that  
17 out, Mr. Bates, and I understand. That is, of course, one  
18 of the purposes or the usual purpose of this conference.  
19 But notwithstanding perhaps not being able to settle, I  
20 would still need the parties to get together to pick dates  
21 for filing testimony and hearing dates.

22 Anything else?

23 MR. WRIGHT: No, your Honor.

24 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Also, I do want to alert  
25 the parties, notwithstanding what you may see on the

1 calendar up on the ninth floor, and that is where you need  
2 to go to pick dates, if you're looking for any type of  
3 hearing dates anywhere near Memorial Day, those dates may  
4 very well be unavailable. So I want you to keep that in  
5 mind. I will be out of town. So if you're looking for  
6 dates any time in late May or early June, please check  
7 with me before you pick those because those dates may very  
8 well be unavailable.

9 Anything else that the parties need to tell  
10 me?

11 MR. BATES: Your Honor, I assume this would  
12 be a normal -- this is a somewhat new kind of case for the  
13 Commission, and I assume that the procedural schedule  
14 would include the normal filing of testimony as well as  
15 statements of position and just all the normal matters  
16 normally included there?

17 JUDGE PRIDGIN: That's correct. And I  
18 understand that because the issues in this case may not be  
19 nearly as complex as issues in other cases, I understand  
20 those may be pretty brief and cursory, but yes, I would  
21 prefer that you go ahead and set that in your proposed  
22 procedural schedule to lay out your statements of position  
23 and your issues, et cetera.

24 MR. BATES: Very good. Thank you.

25 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you. Anything else?

1 All right. If nothing else, you have access to this room  
2 until five o'clock. I'm up on the ninth floor if you need  
3 me for anything. The Commissioners' and Judges' calendars  
4 are also up on the ninth floor if you need to check for  
5 dates.

6 All right. Thank you very much. We will  
7 now go off the record.

8 WHEREUPON, the recorded portion of the  
9 prehearing conference was concluded.

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