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STATE OF MISSOURI  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
  
TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing  
January 24, 2018

University of Central Missouri  
Elliott Student Union, Room 236  
511 South Holden  
Warrensburg, MO 64093

In the matter of: )  
)  
Missouri-American Water )  
Company's Request for Authority ) File No.  
to Implement General Rate ) WR-2017-0285,  
Increase for Water and Sewer ) et al.  
Service Provided in Missouri )  
Service Areas. )

Kim S. Burton, Presiding  
Regulatory Law Judge

Ryan A. Silvey, Commissioner

Reported by:  
Lauren N. Lawrence, RPR, MO-CCR, KS-CCR

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A P P E A R A N C E S

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 \* \* \* \* \*

3 (Proceedings commenced at 6:04 p.m.)

4 JUDGE BURTON: Good evening, everyone.

5 Let's go ahead and go on the record in File  
6 Number WR-2017-0285, et al., in the matter of Missouri  
7 American Water Company's request for authority to  
8 implement a general increase for water and sewer  
9 service provided in Missouri service areas. Today is  
10 Wednesday, January 24, 2018, and the time is  
11 approximately 6:04 p.m.

12 The Commission has set this time and this  
13 place in Warrensburg, Missouri, for a local public  
14 hearing in this matter. At this time, I will ask the  
15 parties to enter their appearance for the record, and  
16 we will begin with Missouri American Water Company.

17 MR. LUFT: Thank you, Judge Burton.

18 Tim Luft with Missouri American. The court  
19 reporter has my information.

20 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Mr. Luft.

21 On behalf of the staff of the Missouri  
22 Public Service Commission?

23 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Judge.

24 Mark Johnson on behalf of the staff of the  
25 Missouri Public Service Commission. The court

1 reporter has my information.

2 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

3 On behalf of the Office of Public Counsel?

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Judge.

5 My name is Hampton Williams. I'm here on

6 behalf of the Office of Public Counsel. My

7 information has been provided to the reporter.

8 Thank you.

9 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Mr. Williams.

10 Good evening, everyone. My name, again, is

11 Kim Burton. I'm the regulatory law judge with the

12 Missouri Public Service Commission. I'm assigned to

13 this case.

14 To my right is Commissioner Silvey. There

15 are five commissioners with the Missouri Public

16 Service Commission, and the Commission has scheduled

17 approximately 12 different local public hearings to

18 hear what customers might have to say on this request

19 in this file. An evidentiary hearing is scheduled to

20 begin on February 26 of this year, and that will occur

21 in Jefferson City, Missouri, at Missouri Public

22 Service Commission's Office -- in Jefferson City, and

23 that's at the Governor's Office Building. If you

24 would like to be able to observe that hearing, you can

25 access it at that time. It's a two-week hearing, and

1 that's through the Missouri Public Service  
2 Commission's Internet site.

3 Now, at this time, I see that we had an  
4 opportunity for people to identify if they would like  
5 to testify and offer their testimony for the  
6 Commission's consideration.

7 Commissioner Silvey is here, and there are  
8 four other commissioners who will have an opportunity  
9 to review the transcript from this hearing, and that's  
10 because this lady over here is transcribing everything  
11 that's being said and documenting it today. Anything  
12 that might have been brought up in the Q-and-A session  
13 that preceded this hearing will not be available. So  
14 if there's anyone who would like to testify and would  
15 like their thoughts and concerns to be heard by the  
16 Commission, especially on any issues you might have  
17 concerning lead in the water or lead in your service  
18 lines, any replacement issues or water testing issues,  
19 the Commission would like to hear that.

20 So would anyone like to, at this time, come  
21 forward and offer their testimony for the Commission?

22 Okay. Sir, in the back?

23 MS. CHASAR: Is this the people that signed  
24 up ahead of time?

25 JUDGE BURTON: If you would like to offer

1 your testimony, you can come forward, and I will swear  
2 you in and have you state your name for the record,  
3 and you can offer your testimony.

4 There are individuals who could have  
5 testified -- or could have written down that they'd  
6 like to testify. It doesn't matter if you didn't sign  
7 up. You still have that opportunity right now.

8 MS. CHASAR: So that's what you're  
9 referring to?

10 JUDGE BURTON: Yes.

11 MS. CHASAR: Yes, I would.

12 JUDGE BURTON: Okay.

13 Will you please raise your right hand?

14 BARBARA CHASAR,

15 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

16 JUDGE BURTON: Would you please state and  
17 spell your name for the record, please?

18 MS. CHASAR: Barbara Chasar, B-a-r-b-a-r-a.  
19 Last name, C-h-a-s-a-r.

20 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, ma'am.

21 And what would you like to state?

22 MS. CHASAR: I got here a few minutes late  
23 and kind of got waylaid by the lady out at the desk  
24 wanting to give me things. I got in here trying to  
25 get to the question and answer, and sitting in the

1 back listening, and suddenly we're done with that, and  
2 I'm like, maybe it needed to be longer. So that's  
3 just from this moment here.

4 My concerns, as with maybe a lot of the  
5 people here, are that people on fixed incomes, very  
6 low fixed incomes, that this rate increase, given  
7 the -- what's gone on in prior years the past few  
8 years, is more than our income can afford. The last  
9 time Social Security gave a cost of living increase  
10 was a year -- maybe last year, and it was like  
11 3 percent. If you are on SSI, last -- in 2017, your  
12 monthly income would have been \$735. That means your  
13 yearly income is less than \$10,000.

14 With the new tax reforms, there's a lot of  
15 concern over social benefits being cut, including  
16 things like Medicaid, Social Security, maybe people no  
17 longer qualifying. And so if our -- we do get a rate  
18 increase for 2018, it's not going to be anywhere near  
19 8 percent. If we end up losing social services, be it  
20 food stamps, Medicaid, or any other low income  
21 housing, any other kinds of things, then those costs  
22 have to come out of our pocket as well.

23 My concern is I have so little to pay my  
24 regular bills the way it is. Maybe my income is not  
25 taxable, but I do pay taxes on every bill I pay,

1 everything I buy at the store, be it clothing,  
2 gasoline, et cetera. My basic needs. Safe, secure  
3 housing, food, medicine. The cost of medicine is  
4 drastically going up. What insurance companies cover  
5 goes down. Will people like myself be faced with  
6 choosing between food, paying a bill, or medicine?

7 I do a lot of volunteer work in the  
8 community, and I deal with the homeless, elderly, low  
9 income all the time. The women are calling in saying,  
10 "I'm out of food. I have two children. My mother and  
11 I, we can make do, but can I have food for her?"

12 I volunteer at the local food center, so I  
13 deal with this, as well as I limit myself. I am on  
14 SSI disability. I am unable to work gainfully  
15 employable. Not of my choosing. Of health reasons.  
16 And, yet, I manage to make do. I'm not going out to  
17 eat that much. I am not splurging on things. I  
18 manage to make do. There are people that aren't as  
19 well at managing those items.

20 And it is correct, our -- our  
21 infrastructure needs to be improved. I want to say to  
22 the company, "How much money and bonuses did you give  
23 out this year? How much money to the top-of-the-ladder  
24 executives and highest people being paid? Was  
25 their -- their salary increased? I'm living paycheck



1 to paycheck. Are they doing two to three homes?

2 Summer home, winter home?

3 My concern is for the common person that's  
4 just trying to make do. The seniors, disabled, low  
5 income families, just somebody who has recently lost  
6 their job. How are people like this going to be able  
7 to make ends meet if the companies don't tighten their  
8 own belts? They don't need constant bonuses and then  
9 turn around and ask for a pay increase. Use the money  
10 from the bonus, please.

11 And I -- I rely on the Commission over here  
12 to be our safety net. One of the things that, like,  
13 the telephone company has is Lifeline. If you make a  
14 certain amount of income or below, you get certain  
15 fees and stuff taken off your bill -- your telephone  
16 bill. My telephone bill, I get credited back about  
17 \$13-some for that.

18 I have testified in the past before the  
19 water company and before the Commission. I asked  
20 them, "Are they going to ever implement a Lifeline  
21 program, something that helps waive these fees that  
22 are intended to provide the service to the low income  
23 so the low income aren't paying the fees anyway?" To  
24 my knowledge, that is yet to be done, and that was  
25 many years ago. So I ask, when is this safety net

1 going to be put in place?

2 Also, for people who have had poor  
3 experiences, once you leave here -- we do our little  
4 talk, and they get their adjustment approved through  
5 the Commission -- are we no longer thought of? Our  
6 life goes on. And the way the current political  
7 system is going, it's hard telling who of us will  
8 have -- continue to have the means to make our  
9 month-to-month payments, our bills, and not end up on  
10 the street, homeless.

11 So that's kind of where I'm coming from,  
12 and I do know there are people that are more well off  
13 than I. Nobody likes to pay too much. I am more than  
14 willing to pay a fair share. I have no problem with  
15 that. I understand the need for infrastructure,  
16 improvement, and maintenance, but I still come back  
17 to, they're doing this. Are they tightening their  
18 belt where it needs to be, or am I making up the  
19 difference to have a cushion in their pocket when I'm  
20 worried about my next paycheck, my next meal? I'd be  
21 happy to take any questions from you.

22 JUDGE BURTON: All right. Thank you.

23 Any questions?

24 All right. Thank you, ma'am

25 MS. CHASAR: Thank you.

1 MR. SILVEY: Thank you.

2 JUDGE BURTON: Is there anyone else that  
3 would like to offer testimony for the record?

4 Sir, come on down.

5 Would you please raise your right hand?

6 JOHN PARSONS,

7 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

8 JUDGE BURTON: Okay. Will you please state  
9 and spell your name for the record?

10 MR. PARSONS: John, J-o-h-n, Parsons,  
11 P-a-r-s-o-n-s.

12 They were talking here awhile ago about an  
13 8 percent increase or such. We went back and looked  
14 through our -- before coming, we went back to 2015 and  
15 looked through our records, took an average of the  
16 bill, and then we went -- come up to 2017 and took an  
17 average of the bills. And our rate in that time has  
18 increased 54 percent. Five-four percent. So they're  
19 talking about 8 percent. I'm -- I'm -- I'm puzzled at  
20 that.

21 And our -- they're -- they're talking about  
22 setting up a mechanism so that the company can adjust  
23 their rates in the future automatically. I mean,  
24 that's kind of like putting the wolf in charge of the  
25 chicken house. That sounds ridiculous to me, to

1 have -- the company being able to adjust their own  
2 rates of what they're making.

3           And one other thing. I was telling a  
4 minute ago here, a couple -- two or three years ago,  
5 the water company put about a 12-inch main or such  
6 down our street. The contractor they had went through  
7 and cut off sewer lines, water lines, and such and  
8 patched them when they got through. They did not use  
9 city standards in terms of patching them. They did  
10 not bed it in gravel. They did not use reasonable  
11 care in backfilling, and we ended up getting a large  
12 rock over the top of the sewer line of ours that they  
13 patched. We had to have a company come in and fix it,  
14 and it cost us about \$1,300.

15           I went to their contractor, and it had been  
16 just a little over a year, and all they did was kind  
17 of grinned. He says, "Well, it's been more than a  
18 year. You can't do anything about it." So that's all  
19 I'm saying.

20           JUDGE BURTON: Sir, could you just stay up  
21 here real quick? I just have a question.

22           Are you a water or sewer customer for  
23 Missouri American or both?

24           MR. PARSONS: Water. I think the City  
25 is -- controls our sewer rate. In this same period,

1 it has gone up 300 percent.

2 JUDGE BURTON: And you live in Warrensburg?

3 MR. PARSONS: Yes.

4 JUDGE BURTON: Okay.

5 MR. PARSONS: And I don't know -- does the  
6 water company have anything to do with the sewer now?

7 The bill used to be together at one time. It's not  
8 anymore. But...

9 JUDGE BURTON: Okay. If you have any  
10 questions, we're not allowed to answer any questions  
11 you might have. We're just here to take the testimony  
12 and essentially ask you any questions. But if you  
13 have any questions about who provides what service,  
14 and what you see on your bill, there are going to be  
15 representatives from the company here to answer your  
16 questions after we go off the record.

17 MR. PARSONS: Okay.

18 JUDGE BURTON: So if you can just stick  
19 around here after, I think someone will find you to  
20 clarify.

21 MR. PARSONS: Thank you.

22 MR. SILVEY: Thank you for your testimony.

23 JUDGE BURTON: Is there anyone else who  
24 would like to offer statements on the record for the  
25 Commission's consideration?

1 We'll start with you, sir.

2 MR. RIZZO: It's starting to get warm in  
3 here.

4 JUDGE BURTON: You're fine.

5 Would you raise your right hand?

6 PAUL A. RIZZO,  
7 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

8 JUDGE BURTON: And please state and spell  
9 your name for the record.

10 MR. RIZZO: My name is Paul A. Rizzo,  
11 R-i-z-z-o, and I'm here to make several statements.

12 I want to thank the previous two people  
13 who -- and I don't want to piggyback on them and seem  
14 redundant, but I've been in this community since 1993,  
15 and I've seen a lot of people, and I've met a lot of  
16 people. I retired from the Air Force, and I retired  
17 here. My children went to school here and graduated  
18 at the University of -- here in town, and it's a great  
19 city. It's a great town.

20 However, this rate increase is going to  
21 affect not only the senior citizens -- and I'm here to  
22 represent a lot of them, because I live in an area in  
23 this town that there's plenty of widows and widowers  
24 and people who are 75 years, 80 years old and are on a  
25 fixed income, and they are only getting Social

1 Security.

2 And then there are the students of the  
3 schools. This -- for example, this summer, the  
4 school, we're giving them free lunches because their  
5 families couldn't afford to feed them.

6 Now, 8.8 percent, if you look at a \$30  
7 bill, that's not much, is it? Not to you. Not to me.  
8 But to those people, that's a lot of money, and that's  
9 every month. And in the last, two, three years,  
10 Social Security hasn't gotten any -- any raises. They  
11 just got a 2 percent raise. That's a good example.  
12 Medicare went up, and they lost money in their monthly  
13 check.

14 There are some widows that are moving out  
15 of their two-bedroom apartment, looking for a  
16 one-bedroom apartment because they can't afford it,  
17 and they can't afford to buy food. Half of them are  
18 going to the senior center and to shelters to get the  
19 food.

20 I see kids -- I live near the school. I  
21 see kids all summer long going in there to get free  
22 food, and a lot of them are homeless. And -- and  
23 there are a lot of people in the community that donate  
24 clothes and stuff for those kids and those -- and  
25 those families.

1           So, yes, \$75 million wastewater and water  
2 treatment improvements, that's a lot of money. And  
3 who is going to be paying for it? Yes, those people  
4 who can't afford it.

5           Now, to me, I'm here to tell you, I can  
6 afford the -- the 8.8 percent. I can do that, but I  
7 don't think these other people -- it's right that they  
8 have to foot the bill. I think that it should be  
9 structured a little bit at a time. If they want to  
10 increase it -- you know, I know it's hard to do. The  
11 infrastructure and how it is. "Oh, we got to do it  
12 now. We got to pay for it now." I realize that and  
13 so do a lot of other people, but when you get hit with  
14 it all at once when you're on a fixed income and then  
15 there's more increases opened up -- and it's clearly  
16 stated that there could be more coming -- it puts them  
17 into a shell shock, and they're concerned. And  
18 they're going, "Oh, my god. Where am I going to get  
19 the money next? They don't have a job. They're 75 to  
20 80 years old. They have to rely on, you know, the  
21 government giving them an increase.

22           It's not -- it's just not going to work. I  
23 mean, it's going to put a lot of people in a bind. So  
24 I decided to come along with a friend of mine tonight  
25 and express my, you know, concerns for these people,



1 and I hope -- and I think that they could restructure  
2 it -- okay. How about a percent and a half for the  
3 next 3 or four years and spread it out? I know it  
4 won't help them get the work done right away. I  
5 understand that. But concerns need to be taken for  
6 the people of this -- this town, and it's just not  
7 this town. There's a lot of people in Missouri that  
8 are suffering the same problems.

9 So that's all I needed to -- to express my  
10 opinions and theirs, and I thank the Commissioner, and  
11 I thank you, Judge, and I thank everyone else.

12 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Mr. Rizzo.

13 MR. RIZZO: Thank you.

14 MR. SILVEY: Thank you for your testimony.

15 JUDGE BURTON: Ma'am, I believe you'd like  
16 to testify?

17 Please raise your right hand.

18 TINA KEITH,

19 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

20 JUDGE BURTON: Would you state and spell  
21 your name for the record?

22 A. Tina Keith, T-i-n-a K-e-i-t-h.

23 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you.

24 MS. KEITH: I guess my concerns -- most of  
25 us live on a budget. I'm a huge budgeter, and I know

1 that, if you own a business, you know that you're  
2 going to replace your roof every 15 years. So you put  
3 so much money away every year. I, of course, run my  
4 budget by a year, not that big of a budget, but -- so  
5 it -- it concerns me that that hasn't been done in the  
6 past. I mean, why are they not putting money back  
7 every month, every year towards the cost that they  
8 know they're going to have for building the  
9 infrastructure, things like that?

10 Also, the cost of living goes up, what, two  
11 to 3 percent a year? They're talking about increases  
12 every three years of at least 8 or 9 percent. That's  
13 more than the cost of living. So there are a lot of  
14 people that that is really affecting.

15 I'm a school nurse and have had my eyes  
16 opened a lot in the couple of years that I've been  
17 doing that as to how many homeless there are and how  
18 many low income. We have -- as the gentleman before  
19 me said, we have a lot of children that sometimes  
20 that's the only meal they get, is the ones that they  
21 get at school. I have kids that are sick, and I've  
22 talked to parents and the parents will say, "Well, I  
23 know that if they're at school, they get a hot meal.  
24 If they're at home, I don't have any food."

25 So, you know, 8 percent, like he said, I --

1 I can handle that. My husband and I can handle that,  
2 but there are a lot of people that \$3 to \$4 a month --  
3 or \$10 a month, however much it's going to be, they  
4 don't have it. I mean, they don't even have the money  
5 to buy food, so how are they going to pay a higher  
6 water bill? So I'm kind of here for them, more than  
7 myself.

8 I think that's pretty much all I have.

9 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Ms. Keith.

10 MR. SILVEY: Thank you.

11 MS. KEITH: Thank you.

12 JUDGE BURTON: Is there anyone else that  
13 would like to offer testimony, for the record?

14 Okay. Seeing no hands, I want to thank  
15 everyone for coming out here and for taking your time  
16 to come out here and express your interest in this  
17 whole process. And this is just one step in the  
18 process. There is the -- the evidentiary hearing, and  
19 that's when all the evidence and testimony will be  
20 considered by the Commission, and that's a long and  
21 extensive process. And if you're interested, it is  
22 available on the Internet site, and representatives  
23 from the company, the Office of Public Counsel, and  
24 staff, after we conclude today, will be happy to  
25 provide you information on how to access that

1 information, or if you want to provide additional  
2 comments online, you can post them through the  
3 Commission's website for consideration in this case.

4 And I also want to thank representatives  
5 from the University for participating and letting us  
6 use your nice facilities and for staff participation  
7 and for companies as well.

8 And, please, if you have any other  
9 questions that you want to have answered, I assure  
10 you, representatives from all the parties that are  
11 here will be happy to answer them after we go off the  
12 record. So thank you, everyone, and we are now going  
13 to go off the record.

14 (Proceedings concluded at 6:28 p.m.)

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I N D E X

TESTIMONY OF:	PAGE
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E X H I B I T S

(No exhibits were marked.)

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## CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, Lauren N. Lawrence, Registered Professional Reporter, Missouri Certified Court Reporter #1368, Kansas Certified Court Reporter #1690, do hereby certify that the witness whose testimony appears in the foregoing proceedings was duly sworn by me; that the testimony of said witness was taken by me to the best of my ability and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my direction; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this proceedings was taken, and further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties thereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.



---

Lauren N. Lawrence  
RPR, CCR-MO #1368, CCR-KS #1690

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS 1/24/2018

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