

STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing

Arnold City Hall
Council Chambers
2101 Jeffco Boulevard
Arnold, MO 63010

Volume 10

January 30, 2018

IN THE MATTER OF)
MISSOURI-AMERICAN WATER)
COMPANY'S REQUEST FOR)
AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT) File No.
GENERAL RATE INCREASE FOR) WR-2017-0285, et al.
WATER AND SEWER SERVICE)
PROVIDED IN MISSOURI)
SERVICES AREAS)

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1 JUDGE BURTON: Good afternoon, everyone.
2 Let's go ahead and go on the record in File No.
3 WR-2017-0285, et al., In the Matter of
4 Missouri-American Water Company's Request for
5 Authority to Implement General Rate Increase for
6 Water and Sewer Service Provided in the Missouri
7 Service Areas.

8 Today is January 30, 2018. We are in
9 Arnold, Missouri. The time is approximately 12:40
10 p.m. The commission has set this time for a local
11 public hearing in this matter. My name is Kim Burton
12 and I am a regulatory law judge with Missouri Public
13 Service Commission, and to my left I have
14 Commissioner Coleman.

15 Right now I will go ahead and ask for
16 entries of appearance from the parties and then
17 afterwards I'll explain a little bit about the
18 procedure and how we're going to handle testimony
19 today. We will begin with Missouri-American Water
20 Company.

21 MR. LUFT: Thank you, Judge. Tim Luft for
22 Missouri-American Water, and the court reporter has
23 my information.

24 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you. On behalf of the
25 staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission.

1 MS. FORCK: Good afternoon, Judge. Marcie
2 Forck from the staff of the Missouri Public Service
3 Commission, P.O. Box 360, Jefferson City, Missouri.

4 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you. On behalf of the
5 Office of Public Counsel.

6 MS. SHEMWELL: Good afternoon. Lera
7 Shemwell, Office of the Public Counsel. The court
8 reporter has my information. And I encourage you all
9 to testify today.

10 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Ms. Shemwell.
11 Now, how this will work is I have a list of every
12 individual who has already indicated and signed up
13 stating that they would like to provide testimony to
14 the commission. I will call your name, have you step
15 forward, and I will swear you in, and ask you to
16 state and spell your name for the record. And the
17 reason is because we have a court reporter who's
18 sitting over here on my right who is taking down
19 everything that you state. And the reason is because
20 we have five commissioners. So although we have
21 Commissioner Coleman with us here today, the other
22 commissioners will be reviewing the transcript for
23 this hearing and will have an opportunity to see and
24 read what you want them to hear.

25 Now, after we've gone through this list, I

1 will also open the floor up so anyone else who would
2 like to offer statements can do so at that time.
3 Now, I would ask that if you previously appeared at
4 any other local public hearing, that you wait and we
5 first give an opportunity to the newcomers to offer
6 their statements to the commission. I have a timer
7 over here and I'm hoping that you can see it. We'll
8 start it at five minutes per person.

9 Now, I know that there was a question and
10 answer session that occurred prior to this. We have
11 an evidentiary hearing that's scheduled for
12 February 26th to begin. And anything that you want
13 the commission to consider needs to be on the record.
14 That means anything that was addressed in the
15 question and answer session, we're not aware of.
16 That's not part of the record. So we're not able to
17 answer any questions you might have. There are
18 representatives from staff, from the company, and
19 public counsel who will be available if you have any
20 additional questions. But we do want to hear what
21 you have to say and what testimony you would like to
22 offer.

23 That being said, I want to welcome everyone
24 and thank you again for coming and participating and
25 showing your interest in this process. And we will

1 begin with Ms. Janet Smith.

2 JANET SMITH: It is Smith, S-m-i-t-h.

3 (Witness sworn by Judge Burton.)

4 JUDGE BURTON: And will you please state
5 and spell your name for the record.

6 JANET SMITH: My name is Janet Smith,
7 S-m-i-t-h, and it really is.

8 JUDGE BURTON: I just want to state real
9 quickly, too, I forgot to mention, we might be asking
10 you questions about what area, what community you
11 live in because we want to make sure that these local
12 hearings are representative of the customers in their
13 area and that everyone can come here.

14 Now, if you have a specific concern or
15 complaint about service at your residence, this is
16 going to be a public record and the transcript is
17 going to be open to everyone, so please don't state
18 your home address on the record. If there is a
19 question or concern about your specific home and
20 service quality, then representatives will come and
21 talk to you after the hearing. But we might just ask
22 you what area you live in as well.

23 JANET SMITH: I am from -- an officer of a
24 large subdivision in Affton. There's 520 homes. And
25 some of the questions I have are from people in my

1 subdivision. They knew I was coming, so it's from
2 the group.

3 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you.

4 JANET SMITH: One of the first questions
5 they have, we had a major break in our subdivision.
6 As far as I knew, there was eight of them. According
7 to the map, there was a lot more than eight. They
8 were a very slow fix. Very slow. And some of them
9 re-broke. It wasn't a fix and go on.

10 So our pipes are old. Our subdivision is
11 67 years old. After they were fixed, the holes, and
12 they were large holes to get to the pipes, were just
13 filled with gravel. Now, no one has come back to fix
14 the holes. And, of course, people drive over the
15 gravel. They know where the gravel is. We have
16 these big holes. Unfortunately, people are very sad
17 because last year we just got new streets. So you
18 know what it's going to look like now.

19 One of the complaints of a few of the
20 neighbors were that when they fixed it, a whole block
21 was shut off of water. Now, we have a subdivision of
22 old and young and, you know, children, elderly. No
23 one was informed that their block was going to be
24 shut off. And some of them took two to three days to
25 repair. I put on the website because of the breaks

1 were increasing to put some water in the bathtub so
2 you can, you know, not to drink, but to have for
3 other things.

4 One of my thoughts, this is my thought,
5 instead of the expense of digging all the pipes up,
6 have they looked into relining the pipes. You know,
7 they say plastic takes forever to deteriorate, so
8 maybe this is something that can save some money?

9 I did have some customers tell me that when
10 there's problems with bills and they try and get it
11 corrected, it's not the best service in the world.
12 It's really terrible service to get a bill corrected
13 if there is a problem.

14 We are, in our subdivision, our meters are
15 old and they are starting to get replaced, but some
16 of the problems are the new meter that comes in is
17 not brand new. It's been refurbished and redone.
18 But when the meter is shut off, there's a reading.
19 The new meter that comes in doesn't start with the
20 same number, so there's a gap. And so people are
21 getting billed for much bigger bills. And it's a lot
22 of arguments to get that straightened out.

23 I heard this, and I can't document it, but
24 I really would like to have the answer later or
25 whenever, that we've always had the best rated water.

1 Our water taste was good, but I've heard from a
2 couple of people that our rating is down to a C. Is
3 that true?

4 I know there hasn't been much maintenance
5 in Affton area in my subdivision. We have a lot of
6 original owners and there's just not maintenance in
7 our sewers or in the water lines or our water
8 problems. And regarding -- I know the one gentleman
9 mentioned about going from quarterly bills to monthly
10 bills, which we are newly retired and I understand
11 that part, but what scares me is a bill that has to
12 go out monthly, that means postage, paper, and more
13 people to collect monthly with more work. I hope
14 they really think about that.

15 I've asked a lot of questions and I hope I
16 haven't spoken too fast, but we are a big subdivision
17 and an old subdivision. And thank you for your time.

18 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Ms. Smith.

19 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: I have a question.
20 Ms. Smith, right before you started talking about the
21 monthly billing, you mentioned a concern about
22 something, and I missed what that was.

23 JANET SMITH: Is that the maintenance of
24 our pipes?

25 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: That could be it,

1 yes. I don't have that written down.

2 JANET SMITH: Okay.

3 MS. SHEMWELL: Or was it the meter?

4 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: No, no, I got the
5 meter. And you talked about the numbers, the gaps
6 that people are saying that since the number doesn't
7 start, the new meters, where the old one was.

8 JANET SMITH: Yes, ma'am.

9 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you so much.

10 JANET SMITH: And understand, these are the
11 questions that I received. Of course, I announced
12 that I was going to come and a lot of people are
13 working, so things that they asked me to ask about,
14 okay?

15 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you. We
16 appreciate your information.

17 JUDGE BURTON: I have a question for you
18 real quick. You mentioned that there were eight
19 breaks in the water lines?

20 JANET SMITH: Uh-huh.

21 JUDGE BURTON: When did that occur
22 approximately?

23 JANET SMITH: During this cold.

24 JUDGE BURTON: So recently, within the last
25 month or so.

1 JANET SMITH: Yes. And that's the one I
2 was talking about where the holes are just filled in,
3 and when will they be replaced with concrete? And I
4 don't say if because I'm presuming that they are
5 going to be filled in eventually.

6 JUDGE BURTON: And the concern about
7 complaints that customers had with billing, were they
8 able to get those issues resolved or did they file a
9 complaint or did they notify the commission?

10 JANET SMITH: It's a lot -- the two cus --
11 the two residents that I know about, it was a lot of
12 calls, a lot of re-calls, a lot of letters. It was a
13 lengthy process to get it corrected. And more than
14 probably should have been.

15 JUDGE BURTON: Okay.

16 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: One more thing.

17 JANET SMITH: Yes, ma'am.

18 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: And for anyone else
19 here that may be dealing with concerns about how to
20 get assistance, are you and those in your subdivision
21 familiar with the consumer department that we have at
22 the Public Service Commission? We deal with customer
23 complaints, all types of things. So we, the Public
24 Service Commission, can also intercede sometimes
25 under issues.

1 JANET SMITH: Okay. If you don't mind, I'd
2 like to put that in our -- on our website?

3 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: We can make sure you
4 get all kind of information. We have a Public
5 Service Commission attorney here, but also we have a
6 young lady out at the desk with information about how
7 to contact the Public Service Commission.

8 JANET SMITH: If you don't mind, I will put
9 that on our website.

10 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Please do.

11 JUDGE BURTON: And can you hold on one
12 moment. I think Mr. Luft has a question.

13 MR. LUFT: Ms. Smith, can you stick around
14 so we can answer questions about your subdivision and
15 the breaks that occurred last month?

16 JANET SMITH: Sure. Thank you for your
17 time.

18 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: That's what you get
19 for being the representative, okay? Of your
20 subdivision.

21 JANET SMITH: I've got to learn to say no
22 more often.

23 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you very much.

24 JUDGE BURTON: Next the commission will
25 hear from Doug Cain.

1 DOUG CAIN: I think I'm going to pass.

2 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, sir.

3 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, sir.

4 JUDGE BURTON: Mary Blum? Bloom?

5 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Bloom? Take your
6 time.

7 MARY BLUM: My name is Mary Blum.

8 (Witness sworn by Judge Burton.)

9 JUDGE BURTON: Would you please state and
10 spell your name for the record.

11 MARY BLUM: Mary P. Blum, B-l-u-m.

12 JUDGE BURTON: And would you be more
13 comfortable testifying sitting down?

14 MARY BLUM: No, that's all right.

15 JUDGE BURTON: All right. Thank you.

16 MARY BLUM: Well, the first question I want
17 to ask is we're paying an increase of two-twelve here
18 in District 1. And in 2 and 5, they're paying
19 two-o-one. Now, why is the difference?

20 JUDGE BURTON: I'm sorry, we're not allowed
21 to answer questions on the record, but there are
22 representatives from staff, the company, and the
23 public counsel who will be available after the
24 hearing is concluded off the record to answer any
25 questions you may have.

1 MARY BLUM: Yeah. And I'm like this
2 gentleman from South County there. I'm on a fixed
3 income, and I have to save my money to pay the taxes
4 and everything. And I've been here for 54 years. So
5 I'm a really a good resident here. And there's going
6 to be a lot of people start moving out of the city of
7 Arnold and the city of -- altogether because American
8 Water is taking over everything. And that is highly
9 ridiculous. And you're wanting us to give you an
10 increase, and I can see that you're going to -- you
11 need to upkeep everything, but everything is not as
12 best -- and every other line in these here is staff
13 raises. We don't get no raise. And I'm on a fixed
14 income too. So that's all I've got to say.

15 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, ma'am.

16 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, Ms. Blum.

17 JUDGE BURTON: The commission will next
18 hear from DeLila Cupp.

19 DeLILA CUPP: I'm right here. I'll pass
20 until the question session.

21 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, ma'am. Sharon
22 Bertram.

23 (Witness sworn by Judge Burton.)

24 JUDGE BURTON: Will you please state and
25 spell your name for the record.

1 SHARON BERTRAM: Sharon Bertram,
2 B-e-r-t-r-a-m.

3 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you.

4 SHARON BERTRAM: I live in South St. Louis
5 County in Mehlville. I was -- I always followed
6 items in the newspaper. This morning in the
7 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, page A-10, was a letter from
8 Liz Schmidt addressing major concerns about proposed
9 rise in water rates.

10 One concern, and I -- these express my
11 concerns also, so I will kind of paraphrase them
12 here. The so-called estimate of future expenses
13 rather than a verifiable audited cost. This could
14 easily result in overcharging for service. It would
15 also add a charge that would raise rates even when
16 usage declines. This use-less-and-pay-more model
17 desensitizes conservation and essentially shifts the
18 risk burden from the investor owned utility to the
19 individual customer.

20 There's another part of the proposal that
21 would in some areas, particularly more suburban
22 areas, would subsidize water service to other areas
23 where water treatment and delivery is much more
24 expensive. This would result in an increase to
25 St. Louis metro of a whopping 45 percent.

1 I do value good water. I try to conserve
2 as much as I can. Over the last three years, and I
3 have my paper documents to support this, my monthly
4 utility bills, MSD, Ameren, Laclede, Spire, and
5 Missouri-American, and I did go from the quarterly to
6 the monthly for the water, has risen \$50. That's \$50
7 a month. I'm on a fixed income also. And it seems
8 like over the past three to four to five years, all
9 the utilities have suddenly realized, ah, everything
10 is falling apart. We need to fix it. And so our
11 generation of seniors are kind of bearing the brunt
12 of all of the updating, which of course is necessary,
13 but it's falling on a certain population.

14 My car is 14 years old. And from the
15 federal government, I'm probably one of the
16 20 percent that won't get a tax cut. 80 percent
17 will; 20 percent won't. I'm a single, I'm a senior,
18 I will pay off my mortgage in October, and that was
19 going to be yippee, hooray. I'm probably not going
20 to get any benefit because I won't have a mortgage
21 deduction. No medical expenses. So I think I'm
22 getting royally uncared for, let's put it like that.
23 Eric Greitens says three percent of people in the
24 state won't get a tax cut. I bet I'll qualify too.

25 I get a little paper from Ameren every year

1 and it says my electric usage is below the most
2 efficient house in my area. My house is like
3 30 years old, but my bill still keeps going up. So
4 it doesn't do you much good to save energy or
5 anything else.

6 I've been at these public service meetings
7 before for other utilities and it seems like the
8 utility always asks for twice as much as they really
9 need, and then by the time the Public Service
10 Commission negotiates and all that, there's more of a
11 medium type of a solution. So it just always makes
12 me wonder why the high rate on the proposal and then
13 later there's a real cutback on that.

14 This morning I thought I'd do a little
15 research and find out about Ameren UE (sic). And
16 this is taken from the website this morning. Key
17 executives from Missouri-American Water, there are
18 five people listed, president, vice president,
19 operations, business performance --

20 JUDGE BURTON: Ma'am, I want to clarify.
21 You mentioned Ameren. Are you talking --

22 SHARON BERTRAM: I'm sorry,
23 Missouri-American Water. I have Ameren in my brain
24 from another thing. Thank you. Okay, and as I put
25 -- there was -- no ages were given. No board

1 member's data was available under qualifications.
2 For the executive committee, no data available. No
3 company insider's data available. No other board
4 member's data available. No committee data
5 available. So some gentleman said, well, there's
6 three people that aren't even on the board anymore.
7 Well, why can't that change? Why isn't the public
8 informed about these changes? Why can't we find out
9 data about the board members on Missouri-American
10 Water?

11 And my last, I guess, grievance is I
12 received this four-sided copy of the proposal or
13 whatever, and then today we have a one-sided page.
14 And I guess I don't read well enough, but I have two
15 master's degrees, but I guess I can't read too well.
16 Because on this page, the top segment is metered
17 quarterly customers and all the rates are based on
18 the quarterly bill. On this one page that we were
19 given today, it's all done in monthly. To me it
20 would be -- these pages are -- they're not totally
21 all different, but there's -- there's different
22 sections that talk about monthly metered, monthly
23 flat rate, monthly. And then over on this other
24 page, the older page that we got in the mail, mostly
25 it talks about metered -- metered quarterly and then

1 monthly, monthly. So the data is not given quite
2 clearly enough in my humble opinion.

3 Let's see, I think that's probably about
4 all I have to say right now. So I thank you very
5 much.

6 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Ms. Bertram.

7 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you,
8 Ms. Bertram. Thank you.

9 JUDGE BURTON: And I apologize, I don't
10 think I can read this name. Bone?

11 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Last name Bone?

12 JUDGE BURTON: Last name Bone?

13 WITNESS BONE: (Indicating no.)

14 JUDGE BURTON: You don't want to
15 participate? Okay.

16 Houser? Ruth Houser?

17 RUTH HOUSER: Yes.

18 JUDGE BURTON: Good afternoon, ma'am.

19 (Witness sworn by Judge Burton.)

20 JUDGE BURTON: Will you please state and
21 spell your name for the record.

22 RUTH HOUSER: Ruth Houser, H-o-u-s-e-r.
23 And I'm from Arnold. I feel a little bit like an
24 echo, but I do want to say as a fairly new widow, I'm
25 learning to do it all by myself. And everyone is

1 coming for rates, increases. So it is kind of
2 daunting to face these. And, yes, I did not know we
3 had a thousand breaks across the city and county.
4 It's not in print that I saw. But I know it's large
5 and I know they were working in terrible conditions.
6 And I gather our city needs much help in many areas.
7 But to keep taking from the limit that we have set on
8 our incomes and retirement, it -- you know, where do
9 we take it from begins to be the questions. And
10 there's not good places to take it.

11 I do like that you stated there's a plan
12 being tested somewhere about working with seniors and
13 rates. And I think please hurry. There's a lot of
14 us. But, you know, happier people are easier for you
15 to work with. So maybe we need a little brightness
16 in our bills and life.

17 And I just basically did want to echo that
18 there are many seniors. I've watched where we used
19 to fill two and three and four buses at our bus
20 stops. And when we moved in, our house had children
21 in every house. It's a tiny subdivision, but so is
22 the whole valley. It's gotten very quiet. There are
23 many seniors in the valley where I live.

24 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Ms. Houser.

25 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

1 JUDGE BURTON: That completes the list of
2 individuals who previously signed up to testify. At
3 this time, I will open up the floor. If there are
4 other individuals who would like to testify, please
5 raise your hand and I will call you forward. Ma'am,
6 we'll start with you.

7 (Witness sworn by Judge Burton.)

8 JUDGE BURTON: Could you step closer to the
9 microphone?

10 CONNIE GLEASON: Yes, I do.

11 JUDGE BURTON: And would you state and
12 spell your name for the record.

13 CONNIE GLEASON: My name is Connie Gleason.
14 That's G-l-e-a-s-o-n. I'm a resident of Oakville.
15 I'm curious to know what Missouri-American Water is
16 planning to do about the fact that according to the
17 environmentalworkinggroup.org and a number of reports
18 that I have found online, such as this one right
19 here, I'm wondering what Missouri-American Water is
20 planning to do about the fact that St. Louis' water
21 tests at 1.258 subparts per billion of chromium-6 in
22 our water supply when the enforceable, the legally
23 enforceable limit of .10 parts per billion. So is
24 this rate increase going to cover bringing that down
25 from, oh, I don't know, four times the legal amount?

1 And that this is all part -- I also read that this
2 has to do with the fact that the EPA has made
3 concessions with a number of utilities, I'm sure
4 Missouri-American Water is not the only one, that
5 they do not feel that it is -- what's the word I'm
6 looking for -- too expensive. It's too expensive for
7 them to bring it down to where it's safe for people,
8 yet according to this information, one part per
9 billion is a single drop in an olympic-size pool of
10 water. So how does Missouri-American Water plan to
11 bring this down?

12 And I also heard some other people and I
13 would like to know also, how much is the board of
14 directors making? And why are these projections
15 based on nothing to do with costs, according to what
16 I saw on television, according to what I've seen on
17 the internet. These are projections that seem to
18 just be pulled out of air. They should be based on
19 costs, not projections, not a wanna-be list.

20 And frankly, I don't think any board of
21 directors or any people who are heading up
22 Missouri-American Water are deserving, with this kind
23 of water, that they deserve increases in salaries
24 while people are being poisoned by chromium-6? This
25 is ridiculous. I would really like to know, what is

1 Missouri-American Water planning to do about this
2 level of poison in our water?

3 JUDGE BURTON: Ms. Gleason, after the
4 hearing you will have an opportunity if you like to
5 share the information with the representative
6 counsels, but also with Ms. Shemwell who represents
7 the Office of the Public Counsel as well.

8 CONNIE GLEASON: Okay.

9 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Excuse me,
10 Ms. Gleason, I'd be interested in seeing the
11 information that you have. Not right now, I can't
12 take it. I want to ask if you're willing to have it
13 submitted as evidence.

14 CONNIE GLEASON: Of course.

15 JUDGE BURTON: Do you have --

16 CONNIE GLEASON: This is not my research,
17 by the way.

18 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Sure.

19 CONNIE GLEASON: This is research by --
20 and is it true? Well, let's see. One, two, three,
21 four, four pages of references and documentation and
22 different environmental agencies and authorities on
23 the subject, you know, four pages of it.

24 JUDGE BURTON: If you would -- if it would
25 be okay with you, if you want to have it submitted

1 for the commission's consideration, you can provide
2 that copy to me and I will mark it as an exhibit to
3 be included into the record?

4 CONNIE GLEASON: I'd appreciate it because
5 according to this, it causes cancers that are just --
6 it says exposure to chromium-6 can cause lung cancer,
7 liver damage, reproductive problems, developmental
8 harm. I mean it just goes on and on, the cancers.
9 So --

10 JUDGE BURTON: Do you want to go ahead and
11 give me your copy now or do you have an additional
12 copy? Because I won't be able to give it back to
13 you.

14 CONNIE GLEASON: Yeah, I have it on my
15 computer. And anybody wants it, ask me for my e-mail
16 address and I'll give it to you.

17 JUDGE BURTON: I'm going to go ahead and
18 just mark this as LPHA-1. If the parties would like
19 to review this.

20 CONNIE GLEASON: The only city that tested
21 higher is Phoenix, Arizona. And Missouri-American
22 Water is number two on the list.

23 MR. LUFT: I would just object. I think
24 these are samples of source water, not tap water.
25 I'm objecting to the sample.

1 JUDGE BURTON: Did the court reporter get
2 that?

3 THE REPORTER: Could you repeat that,
4 please?

5 MR. LUFT: Objection that some of the
6 samples are not tap water, they're source water.
7 Much different.

8 JUDGE BURTON: Missouri-American objected
9 to the admission of LPHA-1 due to some of the
10 information concerning source water, not tap water.
11 Commission is going to overrule that objection and
12 this will be admitted into the record and a copy will
13 be provided to all the parties after the hearing is
14 concluded.

15 Thank you.

16 CONNIE GLEASON: Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you,
18 Ms. Gleason.

19 JUDGE BURTON: Any other individuals who --
20 are there any other individuals who would like to
21 testify? I'm going to take the gentleman that's
22 seated first and then I'll get to you in the back
23 next.

24 (Witness sworn by Judge Burton.)

25 JUDGE BURTON: And would you state and

1 spell your name for the record.

2 JOHN LARSON: Yes, my name is John Donovan
3 Larson, J-o-h-n, D-o-n-o-v-a-n, L-a-r-s-o-n.

4 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: You can go ahead.

6 JOHN LARSON: So I just want to make
7 several points. I'm in the water business. I'm an
8 engineer. I wanted to comment as a customer of
9 Missouri-American Water on some of these points,
10 things that are being brought up in this rate case.

11 First, just a comment. Regarding monthly
12 billing, it seems to me that the increased cost in
13 postage and in meter reading would be significant in
14 going to monthly billing. It also makes it easier
15 for rates to increase without a great deal of
16 scrutiny by the public, whereas a quarterly bill of
17 somewhere around a hundred dollars make more of an
18 impact on people. So people's interest in keeping
19 rates down is more significant when there's quarterly
20 billing. The utility could consider taking requests
21 from customers who want monthly billings and provide
22 estimated billings two out of every three months and
23 then a true-up bill at the end of the third month.

24 Second point I wanted to make regarding
25 this future tester concept. When I started in the

1 water business years ago, there was an effort started
2 by a man named Leo Grides (phonetic) to put on the
3 ballot in the state of Missouri a proposal that
4 utilities could not put costs of new capital expenses
5 into rate base until those capital expenses were
6 complete. It had to do with the Callaway Nuclear
7 Plant where the cost of the plant was -- Ameren at
8 that time wanted to roll it into rate base before it
9 was complete. So the concept of using a future test
10 year predicted costs and using those to justify rates
11 doesn't seem -- seems to fly in the face of that. I
12 don't know if that law, which was passed into state
13 statute, by the way, I don't know if that law was
14 overturned or if this particular suggestion gets
15 around that. But the concept is still there, that an
16 expense should be complete to the utility before it
17 could be charged to the customer.

18 Third point has to do with the cost of
19 doing business at Missouri-American Water Company.
20 Back when I worked for that company, the cost of
21 capital expense were rolled into rate base at a
22 certain rate, paid back over a certain number of
23 years. And the cost of maintenance was also rolled
24 into rates. The payback was in a different number of
25 years. Costs of maintenance were received back over

1 a longer payback period. I bring this up because in
2 all the work that Missouri-American is doing to
3 replace pipes, there is still a good deal of
4 maintenance work. And I would encourage the Public
5 Service Commission to be careful about the costs that
6 they allow to be listed as capital expense when
7 oftentimes from my experience those costs were
8 actually maintenance expense and, therefore, would be
9 paid back in a longer period of time, which would
10 cause the rate payer less money.

11 The fourth thing has to do with their
12 true-up concept of allowing rates to be charged in
13 such a way that there are -- that it guarantees that
14 the water company will get their money back and the
15 cost of doing business. And I just want to reiterate
16 that there is a risk involved in doing business at
17 any company. And by taking away the risk entirely by
18 allowing the utility to charge more than what a usage
19 actually is in order that the rates would completely
20 cover the cost every year goes against the concept of
21 a business taking on risk, whether it's a utility or
22 a car company.

23 And the fifth item has to do with the
24 statewide rate. I don't know the details of this
25 proposal, but I do know that local utilities, many of

1 which are owned by Missouri-American Water, probably
2 should not be lumped into the same rate structure as
3 those of us in St. Louis. We've got a totally
4 different kind of a cost of system maintenance, and a
5 tout of a thousand people should have a rate base
6 based on their own system and their own cost as
7 opposed to a conglomeration of costs where they would
8 meld with the experience of the people in St. Louis.
9 So those are my points.

10 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Mr. Larson.

11 JOHN LARSON: Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, sir.

13 JUDGE BURTON: And then I believe we had a
14 gentleman in the back.

15 (Witness sworn by Judge Burton.)

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

18 WILLIAM SULLIVAN: William Sullivan,
19 S-u-l-l-i-v-a-n. I live in nearby South St. Louis
20 County.

21 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: What was the first
22 name again?

23 WILLIAM SULLIVAN: William, W-i-l-l-i-a-m.

24 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, sir.

25 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, sir.

1 WILLIAM SULLIVAN: I would like to
2 piggyback on this gentleman's comments that just
3 testified. A lot of these are my concerns, too, is
4 the lumping of the cost of St. Louis City and
5 St. Louis County. I have to say that having been in
6 business for a long time, now coming close to my
7 retirement years, whenever I see -- and part of my
8 background, I worked for a trunk line carrier for a
9 number of years. And I remember back in the '70s
10 when the whole industry was entering into full
11 meltdown because of the Penn Central disaster and the
12 subsequent bankruptcies that seem to be taking
13 everything out. And there was one underlying theme
14 behind it, every one of these, deferred maintenance.
15 In order to make the company look good, Penn Central
16 especially just conveniently didn't maintain things
17 and created the impression that things were more or
18 less okay.

19 When I see a huge increase coming like this
20 that's going to double my water bill, I'm thinking
21 what had happened over the last 15 years? How much
22 of this cost that we're asked to bear now is a result
23 of maintenance that should have been done five years
24 ago, ten years ago, 15 years ago, 20 years ago, and
25 didn't get done for whatever reasons? I would have

1 liked to -- I was very disappointed that in all the
2 public relations paper that we received in the mail,
3 that I hear this talk about infrastructure, we need
4 this money for infrastructure. That's pretty vague.
5 I would like to see -- I would like to see at least
6 when I -- what my managers always expected me to
7 produce for my departments was high-level budget
8 projections. What am I going to spend? Hey, I want
9 75 million dollars, guys. What are you going to
10 spend it on? Well, here's what it's going to be
11 spent on, where I have more of an idea of what -- of
12 exactly where this money is going, for instance,
13 actual infrastructure versus debt service versus
14 salary increases versus other line items.

15 So I -- and I have friends who are
16 engineers. I had a very long-time good friend that
17 recently retired from St. Louis Water Works at Chain
18 of Rocks, so I have some idea of what the -- what the
19 onche (phonetic) is, you know, in that business, you
20 know, and what -- and what the challenges are. But
21 I -- I just sense -- I just sense a certain lack of
22 transparency the way this was just suddenly presented
23 to the public with the nice convenient timing of, oh,
24 by the way, we just had all these main breaks, some
25 of which were also on Watson Road, and if my memory

1 serves me correctly, those mains were just replaced
2 not -- maybe five, six years ago. I can't validate
3 that, but -- but some of -- there were about I think
4 two or three main breaks up there. So, okay, we just
5 replaced this infrastructure. What happened that it
6 all broke again?

7 So, you know, it all comes down to what
8 mistakes were made in the past. I would like to see
9 the Public Service Commission look to see how much
10 deferred maintenance was actually being trying to be
11 remediated by this. And what is the proactive plan
12 to make sure that a mess like this doesn't happen in
13 the future. Thank you.

14 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Mr. Sullivan.

15 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, sir.

16 JUDGE BURTON: Is there anyone else who
17 would like to offer testimony for the commission's
18 consideration? Sir.

19 (Witness sworn by Judge Burton.)

20 JUDGE BURTON: Will you state and spell
21 your name for the record, please.

22 LESTER HORN: My name is Lester, that's
23 L-e-s-t-e-r, Horn, H-o-r-n.

24 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, sir.

25 LESTER HORN: I just want to make a quick

1 couple comments about the -- I live here in Arnold,
2 by the way. About the last two years flooding, 2016
3 and 2017. In the 2016 flood, along with other
4 utilities, American Water pulled out of the
5 subdivisions and left all the backup water going to
6 homes. That backup water obviously was compacted by
7 actual floodwater into the homes. 2017, to their
8 credit, they did some pumping. You know, I live in a
9 subdivision where it does -- we see floodwater and
10 backup water, and I had to dispute the figure given.
11 2016, over 300 complaints; 2017, there were ten
12 complaints. I can guarantee you that I can step out
13 my door and I can look at ten houses and every one of
14 those people was complaining. That's ten out of, I
15 don't know, a hundred and something homes in the
16 subdivision. So that fact is incorrect.

17 I will give credit where credit is due,
18 that the pumping did help. However, the subdivision
19 is on a three-tier level and there's an area here on
20 the top that could cause backup in that sewer area.
21 It would make sense that you need to take care of
22 that top one, but in order to lower the level of all
23 water, you need to also pump at the same time the
24 lower levels. That way you're drawing more of it
25 down and out.

1 Now, one thing that is a curiosity to me.
2 They talk about trunk lines being put in for
3 improvement to help alleviate some of the backup.
4 How long is that trunk line? Where are those trunk
5 lines? And does it run all the way to MSD, the sewer
6 department? I would like to see them be held
7 accountable to supply that information and mail out
8 to the public of those areas and concerns such as
9 mine about the trunk lines to help eliminate some of
10 the backup water coming into homes. That's it.

11 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you. Mr. Horn, could
12 you identify, is there a name for your subdivision?

13 LESTER HORN: It's Starling Estates.

14 JUDGE BURTON: I'm sorry, I didn't hear
15 you. Could you --

16 LESTER HORN: Starling Estates.

17 JUDGE BURTON: Starling Estates?

18 LESTER HORN: Yes.

19 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, sir.

20 LESTER HORN: Thank you.

21 JUDGE BURTON: Is there anyone else that
22 would like to offer testimony for the commission's
23 consideration? Okay.

24 Seeing no hands, I want to explain a little
25 bit more about the process. The commission still has

1 a few more local public hearings. We're going to be
2 down at UMSL tonight, and then we're going to be in
3 Jefferson City tomorrow, down in Branson and Joplin
4 on Thursday. After this, there's an evidentiary
5 hearing that's scheduled. That's right now scheduled
6 to last for about two weeks and it begins on
7 February 26th, and that's going to occur in Jefferson
8 City, Missouri, at the Public Service Commission's
9 office. It's open to the public if anyone wants to
10 attend. You might want to check with the Public
11 Service Commission or with the Public Counsel's
12 office or contact Missouri-American to verify. The
13 start date has been pushed back due to the settlement
14 issue. If you want to watch the hearing online, it
15 will be VideoCast through the commission's website,
16 and that's www.psc.mo.gov. And if you want to have
17 access to any of the information concerning specific
18 requests or testimony that's been filed, there is a
19 public record that's available for that, and that's
20 by going to the commission's electronic filing
21 information system through the commission's website
22 and looking for the file number for this case, which
23 is WR-2017-0285.

24 I want to thank everyone for coming out
25 here and for offering your testimony for the

1 commission's consideration. There's a lot of
2 evidence that's going to be presented in this case,
3 and this is helpful because this is part of building
4 the record for the commission to consider.

5 MS. SHEMWELL: There's an SR case for
6 Arnold, too.

7 JUDGE BURTON: There is -- Ms. Shemwell is
8 pointing out that there is also the sewer rate case
9 that applies as well for Arnold, Missouri. And that
10 case and evidence concerning that case is going to be
11 included in this hearing as well.

12 So thank you everyone for coming out here
13 today. And if you do have any questions that you
14 want to have answered, there will be representatives
15 from the company, from staff, and the Public Counsel
16 who will be here after the hearing is concluded.
17 That being said, we now are going to conclude this
18 hearing. Thank you.

19 (End of Record.)
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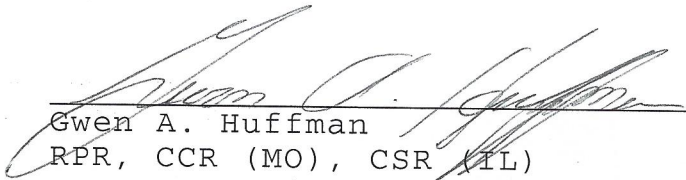
CERTIFICATE

I, Gwen A. Huffman, a Notary Public within and for the County of St. Louis, State of Missouri, do certify that pursuant to Notice, at the Arnold City Hall, Council Chambers, 2101 Jeffco Boulevard, Arnold, Missouri, a

Local Public Hearing,

was held, that the record was reduced to shorthand writing by me on the day, at the place and in that behalf first aforesaid, and later transcribed into typewriting; and the transcript of said record is now herewith returned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 7th day of February, A.D., 2018.


Gwen A. Huffman
RPR, CCR (MO), CSR (IL)
Notary Public

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