In the Matter of Missouri-American Water Company

Missouri-American Water Local Public Hearing January 24, 2023

Vol 6





BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing

Tuesday, January 24, 2023 6:15 p.m. - 6:29 p.m.

Missouri Western State University
4525 Downs Drive
Blum Union 218/219
St. Joseph, MO 64507
and WebEx

VOLUME 6 Page 1 - 14

In the Matter of Missouri-American)
Water Company's Request for)
Authority to Implement General Rate) File No.
Increase for Water and Sewer) WR-2022-0303
Service Provided in Missouri)
Service Areas)

KENNETH SEYER, Presiding REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

MAIDA J. COLEMAN, Commissioner JASON R. HOLSMAN, Commissioner GLEN KOLKMEYER, Commissioner

Stenographically Reported By: Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640

Job No.: 289242

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Page 4 1 The following hearing began at 6:15 p.m.: 2 JUDGE SEYER: Let's go on the record. Today 3 is January 24, 2023. The time is 6:15 p.m. My name is 4 Ken Seyer. I'm a Regulatory Law Judge with the Missouri Public Service Commission, and I will preside over this 5 portion of the hearing. 6 7 The Commission has set this time for a local 8 public hearing in File No. WR-2022-0303, which is 9 captioned as In the Matter of Missouri-American Water 10 Company's Request for Authority to Implement General Rate Increase for Water and Sewer Service Provided in 11 Missouri Service Areas. The Commission has scheduled 12 this local public hearing to give members of the public 13 a chance to comment about Missouri-American Water 14 15 Company's request for a rate increase. 16 The Missouri Public Service Commission 17 regulates the rates charged by public utility companies in Missouri to ensure that those rates are just and 18 19 reasonable. The Commission also regulates the quality 20 of service and safety of the operations of public 21 utilities. Missouri-American Water is a public utility 2.2 under Missouri Statutes and as such is subject to 23 regulation by the Commission. 24 The Commission is made up of five 25 Commissioners. The Commissioners are appointed by the

January 24, 2023 Page 5 Governor to fixed terms and confirmed by the Senate. 1 2 The Commissioners employ a staff of engineers, accountants, attorneys, financial analysts and other 3 specialists in the field of utility regulation. 4 With us today is Commissioner Glen Kolkmeyer 5 6 in person, and participating via WebEx internet 7 connection is Commissioner Maida Coleman and Commissioner Jason Holsman. 8 This is an official hearing of the Missouri 9 10 Public Service Commission and the statements and testimony of witnesses will be recorded by a court 11 12 reporter and must be given under oath. Once the hearing testimony is transcribed, the Commissioners will have 13 the opportunity to read all of the witnesses' remarks. 14 15 Know that the Commissioners value your comments and 16 input. 17 At this time, would any of the Commissioners 18 like to make opening remarks? 19 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Good evening. Glen 20 Kolkmeyer again. I want to welcome everyone here 21 tonight to this local public hearing. We welcome your 22 comments and we do listen to what the public has to say, 23 so again thank you and welcome. Thank you, Judge. 24 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Any of the other

25

Commissioners?

Page 6 1 Thank you, Judge. COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: 2 just want to echo the sentiments of Commissioner 3 Kolkmeyer and appreciate everybody offering their valuable opinion this evening. Thank you. 4 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: I concur with the 5 comments made. Thank you, everyone. Thank you, Judge, 6 7 for conducting the hearing tonight. JUDGE SEYER: Thank you, Commissioner Coleman. 8 9 There are attorneys here tonight representing the 10 parties in this matter. For the record, would each of 11 you identify yourselves and spell your name for the court reporter and state which party you're 12 13 representing. 14 MR. LUFT: Thank you, Judge. Tim Luft, 15 L-u-f-t, on behalf of Missouri-American Water, 727 Craig Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63141. 16 17 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you. 18 MS. VanGERPEN: Lindsay VanGerpen, which is 19 V-a-n-G-e-r-p-e-n, on behalf of the Office of the Public Counsel, and our address is 200 Madison Street, 20 21 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102. 2.2 MS. BRETZ: Karen Bretz for Staff of the 23 Commission, B-r-e-t-z, and our address is 200 Madison 24 Street, 8th Floor, Jefferson City, 65101. 25 MR. COFFMAN: Good evening. John Coffman with

the Consumers Council of Missouri, 871 Tuxedo Boulevard, 1 2 St. Louis, Missouri 63119, here representing the Consumers Council of Missouri. 3 JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Thank you. The way this 4 5 portion of the hearing will proceed tonight will be to call the names of anyone who has signed up to speak in 6 7 the order that they have signed up. When I call your 8 name, please step up to the microphone. But before you speak, I will place you under oath and ask you to state 9 10 and spell your name and then you can offer your comments to the Commission. 11 12 So we actually -- I am seeing just one name on the list and is it Ms. Weigum? Okay. If you wouldn't 13 14 mind, would you step up to the microphone, please. All 15 right. Would you go ahead and state and spell your 16 name? 17 MS. WEIGUM: My name is Virginia Weigum, 18 W-e-i-g-u-m, and I have been a resident of St. Joseph 19 for approximately 50 years. I am a senior. Would anybody like to see my driver's license? 20 21 JUDGE SEYER: No. 22 MS. WEIGUM: I am a senior citizen, and I do 23 live on fixed income. JUDGE SEYER: Before you testify any further, 24 25 let me place you under oath, please. Would you raise

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Page 8 1 your right hand, please. Thank you. Do you swear or 2 affirm that the testimony you're about to give in this 3 hearing is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but 4 the truth? MS. WEIGUM: Yes. 5 JUDGE SEYER: Do you need to adjust that 6 7 microphone? I'm just asking. MS. WEIGUM: It's fine. 8 9 JUDGE SEYER: Then go ahead. You can proceed 10 with your comments. 11 VIRGINIA WEIGUM, 12 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows: 13 MS. WEIGUM: My comment is for seniors that live on fixed income, and a great percentage of the city 14 15 does, I am very concerned that with everyone raising their rates, food, utilities, the cost of living, that 16 17 it will present an additional hardship for them. And I've heard terrible stories about seniors having to eat, 18 19 this is extreme, eating dog food and making other 20 choices. And I would think that everybody would take 21 that into consideration. I know it costs money to be a 2.2 business and to run your business, but please consider 23 everything. Thank you. JUDGE SEYER: All right. If you don't mind, 24 25 would you remain at the microphone. Commissioner

	1	Page 9 Kolkmeyer, do you have any questions for this witness?
	2	COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: No, sir.
	3	JUDGE SEYER: For the sake of the court
	4	reporter, his answer is no. Commissioners Coleman or
	5	Holsman, do you have any questions for this witness?
	6	COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: No questions, Judge.
	7	COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: No questions, Judge.
	8	JUDGE SEYER: Thank you, Ms. Weigum. You're
	9	excused.
	10	MS. WEIGUM: Thank you.
	11	JUDGE SEYER: As I said, that's the only name
	12	I have on the list. Is there anyone else who did not
	13	sign up on the list who would like to testify tonight?
	14	Go ahead.
	15	MS. CULVER: My name is Daphne Culver. That
	16	spelling of the last name is C-u-l-v-e-r.
	17	JUDGE SEYER: Would you mind spelling your
	18	first name as well?
	19	MS. CULVER: It is D-a-p-h-n-e.
	20	JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. Would you raise your
	21	right hand to be sworn. Thank you. Do you swear or
	22	affirm that the testimony you are about to give in this
	23	hearing shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing
	24	but the truth?
	25	MS. CULVER: I do.
- 1		

1	JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. You can go ahead.
2	DAPHNE CULVER,
3	having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:
4	MS. CULVER: I have a comment. With respect
5	to shareholders and profits, I do feel like it is
6	immoral and inappropriate for that life necessity to be
7	a money-making proposition. I feel that we have come to
8	a very poor place if we are looking at the necessity of
9	human life as a shareholder proposition we're trying to
10	make money from. And that is my comment.
11	JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Do any of the
12	Commissioners have any questions for Ms. Culver?
13	COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: No questions, Judge.
14	COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: No questions, Judge.
15	JUDGE SEYER: All right. No questions from
16	Commissioner Kolkmeyer either. Thank you very much.
17	MS. CULVER: Thank you.
18	JUDGE SEYER: Is there Yes, go ahead.
19	MS. GOODRICK: So I was wondering about since
20	we pay for sewer rates also along with the water
21	JUDGE SEYER: Well, I think I need to get you
22	under oath.
23	MS. GOODRICK: Oh, okay.
24	JUDGE SEYER: So if you'll state your name,
25	please.

	1	Page 11 MS. GOODRICK: Tina Goodrick.
	2	JUDGE SEYER: How do you spell your last name,
	3	please?
	4	MS. GOODRICK: G-o-o-d-r-i-c-k.
	5	JUDGE SEYER: And would you raise your right
	6	hand to be sworn. Thank you. Do you swear or affirm
	7	that the testimony you're about to give in this hearing
	8	shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
	9	truth?
	10	MS. GOODRICK: Yes.
	11	JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. Go ahead.
	12	TINA GOODRICK,
	13	having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:
	14	MS. GOODRICK: I don't know if this pertains
	15	but we have we recently had you guys replace, I don't
	16	know if it was you or the city, replace some of our
	17	sewer lines that had rusted through and were leaking
	18	into our creeks in the neighborhood, and I was wondering
	19	if there are any plans on correcting the stormwater
	20	drainage pipes running through the city that are
	21	collapsing and causing our ground to be washed away into
	22	the creeks and erode away.
	23	JUDGE SEYER: Now, the Commissioners
	24	themselves can't answer that kind of a question in this
	25	proceeding today. They have to wait until the actual
- 1		

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- 1 rate hearing to hear evidence on those kind of matters.
- 2 Mr. Luft?
- 3 MR. LUFT: Ms. Goodrick, you were here earlier
- 4 when representatives of Missouri-American said we do not
- 5 have the sewer or the stormwater in the City of St.
- 6 Joseph.
- 7 MS. GOODRICK: Okay. Thank you.
- 8 JUDGE SEYER: Okay. And any questions from
- 9 the Commissioners? None from Commissioner Kolkmeyer.
- 10 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: No questions, Judge.
- 11 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: No questions, Judge.
- 12 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you, Commissioners. Thank
- 13 you. Thank you for your testimony.
- 14 All right. Is there anyone else? All right.
- 15 Would any of the Commissioners like to make closing
- 16 remarks?
- 17 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Again, I just want to
- 18 thank everyone for coming out this evening on a cold
- 19 evening. We do take and listen to your comments and we
- 20 appreciate those that did give them. Thank you, Judge.
- 21 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: Judge, this is
- 22 Commissioner Holsman. I just want to thank everybody
- 23 for coming. Thank you for being there. Thank
- 24 Commissioner Kolkmeyer for making the trip to St. Joe
- 25 and thank everybody for giving their opinion.

1	Page 13 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, Judge.
2	JUDGE SEYER: Thank you, Commissioner Coleman.
3	And I would also like to thank all the participants
4	today for their testimony. If you afterwards want to
5	add additional comments or if you know of someone who
6	could not be present tonight but would like to comment,
7	you or that person can make written comments by
8	contacting the same email address used to register for
9	this hearing which is watersewercomments@psc.mo.gov and
10	if you would like to contact the Office of the Public
11	Counsel, it is mopco opcservice, one word,
12	@opc.mo.gov. Thank you, Ms. VanGerpen. Or you can go
13	to the Public Service Commission website. And like I
14	said at the beginning of the hearing, the file number is
15	WR-2022-0303.
16	So if there is nothing further, this hearing
17	is now adjourned and we are off the record. Thank you.
18	(The hearing concluded at 6:29 p.m.)
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1	Page 14 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
2	STATE OF MISSOURI)
3	COUNTY OF COLE)
4	I, Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640, do
5	hereby certify that I was authorized to and did
6	stenographically report the foregoing Public Service
7	Commission Local Public Hearing and that the transcript,
8	pages 1 through 13, is a true record of my stenographic
9	notes.
10	I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
11	employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties,
12	nor am I a relative or counsel connected with the
13	action, nor am I financially interested in the action.
14	Dated this 6th day of February, 2023.
15	P 1 To P. 4.1.
16	Beverly Jean Bentch
17	Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640
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200	@opc.mo.gov	B-R-E-T-Z	Coffman
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