1	STATE OF MISSOURI					
2	PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION					
3						
4	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS					
5	Procedural Conference					
6	April 19, 2017					
7	Jefferson City, Missouri					
8	Volume 2					
9						
10	In The Matter of the Petition)					
11	an Interim Receiver And for an) Order Directing the General)					
12	Counsel to Petition the Court) File No. WO-2017-0236 for the Appointment of a)					
13	Receiver For Ridge Creek Water) Company, LLC, and for Ridge)					
14	Creek Development, LLC.)					
15						
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17	MORRIS L. WOODRUFF, Presiding, CHIEF REGULATORY LAW JUDGE.					
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22	REPORTED BY:					
23	Chevon D. McFadden, CVR, CCR NO. 1399					
24	TIGER COURT REPORTING, LLC					
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1	PROCEEDINGS		
2	JUDGE WOODRUFF: All right. The clock on the		
3	wall says it's one o'clock, so we'll go ahead and get		
4	started. We're here today for a Procedural Conference		
5	in File No. WO-2017-0236, which concerns a Petition for		
6	an Interim Appointment of Interim Procedure or		
7	Receiver for the Ridge Creek Water Company and Ridge		
8	Creek Development, Incorporated.		
9	We'll begin today by taking entries of		
10	appearance beginning with Staff.		
11	MR. WESTEN: My name is Jacob Westen. I am		
12	Deputy Counsel for Staff. My contact information has		
13	been provided to the court reporter.		
14	JUDGE WOODRUFF: And for Public Counsel.		
15	MR. SMITH: Ryan Smith, Senior Counsel with		
16	the Office of the Public Counsel.		
17	JUDGE WOODRUFF: And is there anyone here		
18	today on behalf of Ridge Creek?		
19	I don't see anyone in the room I don't		
20	recognize, so I guess not.		
21	Have you had any contact with Ridge Creek?		
22	MR. WESTEN: Actually, Your Honor, I have. I		
23	reached out to both Ms. Stoner and Mr. Stoner to try to		
24	notify them of a possible hearing date prior to their		
25	filing of consent in this case. Mr. Stoner returned my		

- 1 call, but I was unable to take it and left a voice
- 2 mail. That's the extent of the contact that we've had.
- 3 The Staff did hire a private process server who has
- 4 served Mr. Stoner.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay.
- 6 MR. WESTEN: We have received a return
- 7 receipt on that. It has not yet been filed in the
- 8 case. It happened approximately the same time that
- 9 they filed the consents that came in on Friday.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. Well, let's -- while
- 11 we're talking about this, let's talk about the consent
- 12 to appointment. How did that come about?
- MR. WESTEN: I do not have an answer for you,
- 14 Judge.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. It wasn't something
- 16 that was prepared by Staff and --
- 17 MR. WESTEN: It was not prepared by Staff. I
- 18 was notified by the registered agent for the water
- 19 company, Mr. Mark Comley, that he had obtained the
- 20 consents and that we could expect that to be filed. I
- 21 learned that from him on Friday. And, indeed, on
- 22 Friday both companies filed their consent.
- 23 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. What is the situation
- 24 with the system now? Is this an indication that they
- 25 want to abandon the system?

- 1 MR. WESTEN: That's how the Staff would take
- 2 this, Your Honor, that they are willing to -- they are
- 3 either actually or effectively abandoning the system
- 4 that they are consenting to this receivership action so
- 5 there would be no need for a hearing. I spoke with the
- 6 employee who does the billing for the water company
- 7 this morning. She is still conducting billing. They
- 8 are still doing that process, so that at the present
- 9 time it's not like the company has completely stopped.
- 10 They understand that a receiver must be appointed first
- 11 --
- 12 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay.
- MR. WESTEN: -- for them to cease operations.
- 14 But I will note that Staff does have the concern that,
- 15 until such time a receiver is appointed on an interim
- 16 basis, there is a concern that with this consent they
- 17 may view that as a relinquishing of any responsibility
- 18 that they would still otherwise have.
- 19 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Right.
- 20 MR. WESTEN: And so the more timely we can
- 21 have an interim receiver appointed, the less likely,
- 22 should there be an incident, there would be confusion
- over who was supposed to be responsible.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. And I assume we
- 25 have -- Staff as somebody out there monitoring the

- 1 situation or keeping an eye on it?
- 2 MR. WESTEN: We have the contact numbers of
- 3 the two businesses. They have our information --
- 4 JUDGE WOODRUFF: These are busine-- you mean
- 5 the owners of the system?
- 6 MR. WESTEN: The owners of the system, Mr.
- 7 and Ms. Stoner and the two companies, yes.
- 8 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. And I assume the
- 9 customers of the utility would know to contact Staff if
- 10 there was problems?
- 11 MR. WESTEN: Yes. The customers of the
- 12 system are aware of that. The PSC is the agency to
- 13 contact should there be any issues.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. Well, I'll ask you
- 15 both, how would you like to proceed in this matter?
- MR. WESTEN: Well, if I may, Ryan?
- 17 MR. SMITH: Yeah. I don't mind. Go ahead.
- 18 MR. WESTEN: At this point Staff would
- 19 request the Commission to go ahead and issue an order
- 20 appointing the interim receiver and authorizing and
- 21 directing General Counsel to pursue a general
- 22 receivership in Circuit Court in Cole County. Because
- 23 the two companies, Ridge Creek Water Company, LLC and
- 24 Ridge Creek Development, LLC, and both of their members
- 25 have signed and stated that they're willing to consent

- 1 and agree to the entry of a receivership without a
- 2 hearing, that satisfies the -- that satisfies State ex
- 3 rel Rex Deffenderfer, Inc., the Public Service
- 4 Commission, which says that if there is no objection
- 5 there's not contention that no hearing is required. We
- 6 think that's been met.
- We also think that the requirements of the
- 8 Statute 393.145 have been satisfied at this point. And
- 9 the next step is to issue an order appointing the
- 10 interim receiver.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Let me grab that statute
- 12 here.
- MR. WESTEN: I actually have a copy for you
- 14 at hand, Judge, if you --
- 15 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you. We do have our
- 16 new books back here, so --
- 17 MR. WESTEN: Oh, great.
- 18 JUDGE WOODRUFF: All right. Well, the
- 19 statute does talk about after hearing.
- MR. WESTEN: Yes.
- 21 JUDGE WOODRUFF: And I understand
- 22 Deffenderfer sometimes allows that to be waived by the
- 23 consent of the parties.
- MR. WESTEN: Yes. I believe that consent is
- 25 obtained in the filing that occurred this past Friday.

- 1 I keep saying Friday and I don't have the date. I
- 2 think it was April 14 --
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Fourteenth.
- 4 MR. WESTEN: But their filing does say,
- 5 Without trial or adjudication of any issue or fact or
- 6 law herein, hereby consent and agree to the entry of a
- 7 Commission order appointing the receiver as an interim
- 8 receiver authorizing the general counsel and to
- 9 expedite the matter; with which we agree.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Well, I do have some
- 11 concerns about whether there's actually enough basis in
- 12 the record at this point to -- for the Commission to
- 13 make a decision, both as a matter of law and as a
- 14 practical matter, in that the Commission is probably
- 15 going to want to know something about what's actually
- 16 going on in this situation before they sign off on an
- 17 interim receiver.
- I'm thinking it may be appropriate to have
- 19 a -- have an evidentiary hearing in which Staff could
- 20 present the basis for the appointment of a receiver.
- 21 MR. WESTEN: Okay. Staff has the ability to
- 22 do that and can do that. I don't necessarily think we
- 23 need to, but I absolutely understand the concern of the
- 24 Commission.
- 25 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. The statute, I

- 1 believe requires ten days notice for any hearing unless
- 2 there's an emergency threat to the health and public
- 3 safety sort of thing.
- 4 MR. WESTEN: Yes.
- 5 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Do we have ten days in this
- 6 case --
- 7 MR. WESTEN: I --
- 8 JUDGE WOODRUFF: -- or is there some sort of
- 9 emergency that we need to do it faster?
- 10 MR. WESTEN: It depends on how you want to
- 11 define emergency, Judge. Staff believes and has
- 12 pursued the receivership because we do not believe and
- 13 feel we have ample evidence to show that the companies
- 14 have not provided and are not currently providing safe
- 15 and adequate service. At this point in time, I
- 16 personally do not know and I do not -- I do not think
- 17 anyone on Staff knows, because they would have
- 18 mentioned to me if anyone was without water. If there
- 19 was a situation currently at the system that required
- 20 an immediate response, that being said, that could
- 21 happen at any time.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: I understand.
- MR. WESTEN: It is serendipitous that this
- 24 past winter no frozen pipes occurred that we did not
- 25 ave customers without water for the longer period than

- 1 the 14 days for that one customer.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Is there a particular
- 3 concern about the pipes -- about pipes freezing?
- 4 MR. WESTEN: Well, it -- we're no longer in
- 5 the cold months, but --
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Sure.
- 7 MR. WESTEN: -- the pipes are not buried --
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay.
- 9 MR. WESTEN: -- much below grade, so there
- 10 was certainly an opportunity for that to occur. You
- 11 know -- I mean, is there an actual desperate emergency
- 12 occurring now? No. Could there be? Yes. And if
- there's any confusion about who is responsible, which
- 14 there has been, that will linger longer than it should.
- 15 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. Today's the 19th.
- 16 Ten days from now would be Saturday the 29th. So we'd
- 17 be looking at a hearing the first week of May.
- 18 MR. SMITH: Is it the holiday?
- 19 JUDGE WOODRUFF: May 8th is a holiday.
- MR. SMITH: Okay.
- 21 JUDGE WOODRUFF: So we'd be before that.
- 22 MR. WESTEN: Staff has -- I don't think Staff
- 23 has any objection to a hearing taking place the first
- 24 week in May. I actually think, based on request for
- 25 availability dates, the first days in May were

- 1 available for most of Staff --
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay.
- 3 MR. WESTEN: -- and that that is probably
- 4 still the case. I would be -- it would be low for me
- 5 to -- and it would be remiss for me to say I am a
- 6 little concerned -- based on the previous experiences
- 7 of the Staff, that if we delay any longer there, you
- 8 know, could always be an emergency or there could be a
- 9 problem --
- 10 JUDGE WOODRUFF: I understand.
- 11 MR. WESTEN: -- that could crop up in this
- 12 time that we won't be able to address.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. Well, of course, if
- 14 there is some sort of emergency that does arise, file
- an appropriate pleading and the Commission will deal
- 16 with it as necessary.
- 17 MR. WESTEN: Thank you, Judge.
- 18 JUDGE WOODRUFF: If we need to move the
- 19 hearing fast -- sooner than then, we can. I don't
- 20 actually have my Commission calendar with me, but I'm
- 21 looking at May 1st is a Monday or May 2nd is a Tuesday.
- 22 One of those two days that would -- I'm assuming one
- 23 day would be sufficient for this?
- MR. WESTEN: Your Honor, I think one day
- 25 would be more than sufficient.

- JUDGE WOODRUFF: All right.
- 2 MR. WESTEN: Unless the parties --
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Unless something happens
- 4 sooner.
- 5 MR. WESTEN: Right. Or the companies decide
- 6 to appear and decide to contest the case, then I can't
- 7 predict how long it would take.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: Sure. That seems unlikely
- 9 at this point, but.
- MR. WESTEN: I would hope so.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: I'll need to go upstairs and
- 12 check the calendar, but I'll look for a day on either
- 13 the first or the second.
- MR. WESTEN: Yes, Judge.
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: And then I'll issue an order
- 16 and send it out.
- 17 MR. SMITH: Judge, would -- I'd like to just
- 18 check internally and see -- I believe those days would
- 19 be available for Office of Public Counsel. If we could
- 20 send a communication and CC in all the parties as to a
- 21 conflict --
- JUDGE WOODRUFF: That would be fine.
- 23 MR. SMITH: -- as to a conflict, if any. But
- 24 I don't believe those days will be of conflict.
- 25 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. Anything else we need

Τ	to take up and discuss while we're on the record?		
2	MR. WESTEN: I have nothing else other than		
3	to say there are examples of very good orders, which if		
4	the Commission decides it wants to issue an order in		
5	the interim, we think that order from the case here		
6	it is; SO-2014-0052 is a perfect example of the type of		
7	order that would be appropriate for this case.		
8	JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. That was 0052.		
9	MR. WESTEN: 0052.		
10	JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. I will take a look at		
11	that. All right. Anything else while we're on the		
12	record?		
13	MR. WESTEN: Thank you, Judge.		
14	JUDGE WOODRUFF: All right, then. With that		
15	we are adjourned. You can stay here and discuss this		
16	further if you'd like. And I will be leaving.		
17	(Off the record.)		
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1	CERTIFICATE
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