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STATE OF MISSOURI

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PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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Local Public Hearing

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November 4, 2009

Jefferson City, Missouri

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Volume 1

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In the Matter of the Small Company )

Rate Increase Request of Gladlo ) Case No. WR-2009-0418

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Water &amp; Sewer Company, Inc. )

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NANCY M. DIPPELL, Presiding,

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DEPUTY CHIEF REGULATORY LAW JUDGE.

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ROBERT M. CLAYTON III, Chairman,

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COMMISSIONER.

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REPORTED BY:

22

KELLENE K. FEDDERSEN, CSR, RPR, CCR

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MIDWEST LITIGATION SERVICES

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

2 JUDGE DIPPELL: This is File

3 No. WR-2009-0418, in the matter of the small company rate  
4 increase request of Gladlo Water & Sewer Company.

5 Good evening. My name is Nancy Dippell.

6 I'm the Regulatory Law Judge with the Commission, and it's  
7 my job to run our public comment part of this hearing.

8 Because we have such a small crowd, I'm going to kind of  
9 dispense with most of the preliminary stuff I usually read  
10 through because I know you-all have taken time out of your  
11 busy schedules to be here and we want to hear what you  
12 have to say.

13 With me this evening is the Chairman of our  
14 Commission, Robert Clayton. And we have five  
15 commissioners altogether. The other four will be looking  
16 at the comments. We're having them transcribed by the  
17 court reporter here with us, as well this is a video  
18 conference with our office in Jefferson City, and the  
19 conference is being streamed over the web and being  
20 recorded as well, just so that you know that.

21 It looks like in Jefferson City we have a  
22 representative of the Office of the Public Counsel,  
23 Christina Baker, and here in Rolla we have several members  
24 of our Staff.

25 This is an official hearing of the Missouri

1 Public Service Commission, and the statements and  
2 testimony of the witnesses, as I said, will be recorded by  
3 a court reporter and will be taken under oath or  
4 affirmation.

5                   The purpose of this hearing is to receive  
6 comments from the public regarding proposed rate increase.  
7 The company is not here to present witnesses this evening  
8 and will not answer any questions, nor will the  
9 Commissioner or I be answering questions. However, we do  
10 encourage if you didn't get all your questions answered  
11 earlier, for you to see our Staff that are here to make  
12 sure you leave with all your questions answered or at  
13 least some information on how to get those answers.

14                   When you're called to testify, if you could  
15 come forward to this chair over here so that the  
16 microphone can pick you up, and I'll just ask you to spell  
17 your name, you can give me your comments, and then after  
18 you've given some comments, there may be some questions  
19 for you. I just ask if you'd say at the chair until those  
20 questions are asked so we can make sure we get all the  
21 information we need.

22                   I think that's really about it.  
23 Commissioner, do you have any comments you'd like to make?

24                   COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: I just want to  
25 welcome our visitors or our speakers here today or those

1 who may be customers of the company. I appreciate your  
2 patience with our technical challenges. We are trying to  
3 webcast and make all of our hearings at both evidentiary  
4 hearings and local public hearings available on the  
5 Internet. Sometimes we have Commissioners that  
6 participate from Jefferson City, although I'm not sure if  
7 we have any tonight. It also enables Staff and other  
8 parties to participate from Jefferson City. We also  
9 record these events, and I believe that this event will be  
10 available by reviewing video, and we also have a  
11 stenographer that's here to take the testimony.

12 But because all the Commissioners do pay  
13 attention to the local public hearings, want to hear about  
14 what issues that you face in working with the utility,  
15 most of the Commissioners read the transcripts rather than  
16 view it, but this material will be available to all the  
17 Commissioners and it's made part of the record.

18 So I appreciate those of you who have come  
19 out tonight. I look forward to your comments. Thank you,  
20 Judge.

21 JUDGE DIPPELL: Thank you. I'm going to  
22 begin by letting the attorneys that are present make their  
23 entries of appearance, and I'll start with the Staff  
24 attorney.

25 MS. KLIETHERMES: Thank you, Judge. Sarah

1 Kliethermes, attorney for Staff of the Missouri Public  
2 Service Commission, 200 Madison Street, Jefferson City,  
3 Missouri 65102.

4 JUDGE DIPPELL: Thank you. And the Office  
5 of the Public Counsel.

6 MS. BAKER: Thank you, your Honor.  
7 Christina Baker, P.O. Box 2230, Jefferson City, Missouri  
8 65102. And I will state to everyone that's there, I know  
9 that I've gotten comments about the short notice of this  
10 hearing. I do appreciate everyone who is attending  
11 tonight.

12 JUDGE DIPPELL: Thank you. All right. I  
13 have one person signed up on our list, so we'll begin  
14 there. Debra Dowdy. Can I ask you to raise your right  
15 hand.

16 (Witness sworn.)

17 JUDGE DIPPELL: And could you spell your  
18 name for the court reporter.

19 MS. DOWDY: It's D-e-b-r-a, D-o-w-d-y.

20 JUDGE DIPPELL: And I'll just ask, in  
21 Jefferson City, can you hear Ms. Dowdy?

22 MS. BAKER: Yes, we can hear fine.

23 JUDGE DIPPELL: I started to say, just go  
24 ahead and pull that microphone a little bit closer so that  
25 they can hear you. All right. Go ahead with your

1     comments.

2                     MS. DOWDY:   Well, I'm a distraught  
3     customer, upset, simply because for the last year and a  
4     half we've had nothing but no service, unable to reach  
5     anybody.   Paid our bill every month even though they  
6     didn't cash the checks, whatever, we sent our money.

7                     And then recently had an outage, it's not  
8     been too long ago, that I called.   Couldn't get ahold of  
9     anybody.   Of course, everything's managed from out of  
10    state now, which I don't agree with, and got a young kid.  
11    Didn't know much.   Stated he'd checked into it and call me  
12    back.   Well, he didn't.   He wouldn't answer his phone  
13    after a couple hours I tried calling him to see, because  
14    if I had to haul water, I needed to go do it.

15                    And then it's just been an on and off  
16    thing.   And we had good service up until a certain point  
17    until Gladlo, I guess, transferred stock to some other  
18    kid, which we didn't know.   Just not had good service.   I  
19    boiled my water for almost a year because I'm at the top  
20    of the hill, and my -- I don't have the water pressure  
21    everybody else has.   So whenever you're having trouble  
22    with the pump or whatever, you have less water pressure.  
23    I buy my drinking water.

24                    And I'm just real frustrated that you're  
25    going to make me pay for a pump that they should have been

1 maintaining and replacing probably a long time ago.  
2 Maintenance, you just -- you know, if we'd have had some  
3 communication, it might have been different, but haven't  
4 had no communication.

5 I did call up Missouri Public Service  
6 Commission. I have their number memorized by now. And,  
7 of course, you know, the billing process now is they don't  
8 send the bills out until the 10th. I've asked for her to  
9 e-mail it to me, which she does, but sometimes it's like  
10 the 10th, 11th, maybe the 12th, and it's due by the 15th.  
11 Well, I use online bill pay so I don't have to use stamps,  
12 I don't have to write checks. It's just more -- I'm  
13 trying to save paper and stuff.

14 So by the time that it goes through my  
15 bank, it takes one day to process and one day for them to  
16 get the check out. And so she hasn't charged me a late  
17 fee at this point. I say she because I think her name's  
18 Karen. I'm not sure. I've talked with her before. But  
19 it is a \$5 charge if it's not there by the 15th, but so  
20 far she has not done that.

21 But I think that if -- the way it was  
22 before, we got the bill on the 1st of the month and it was  
23 due by the 15th. We always paid it when we got it. But I  
24 just think that that's not a good time frame to be able to  
25 pay your bill.

1 JUDGE DIPPELL: The call you made to the  
2 person that you weren't satisfied with the results from,  
3 was that -- has that been this calendar year?

4 MS. DOWDY: Yes.

5 JUDGE DIPPELL: Has that been --

6 MS. DOWDY: 2009, yes, it has, yeah. Just  
7 recent -- well, it's not been too far back, and I've  
8 called Missouri Public Service after that the next day  
9 because it was -- yeah, and talked to Steve, I think. Is  
10 that what his name is? Steve.

11 And, you know, it's just what it is, and I  
12 understand that, but I am disgruntled because I don't feel  
13 that I should have to pay a surcharge plus have my rate  
14 increased at the same time when I have not had good  
15 service for over a year.

16 JUDGE DIPPELL: Commissioner, did you have  
17 some other questions?

18 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: You bet I've got  
19 questions. Ms. Dowdy, thank you very much for coming out.  
20 And may I just say, I've attended a lot of public hearings  
21 in my time on the Commission, and I've encountered a lot  
22 of unhappy customers, and their disposition has not been  
23 the disposition you've displayed tonight, and they have  
24 faced far less in difficulties in terms of service  
25 problems, billing problems, boiling water, poor



1 communication. I don't know if I've heard it nearly this  
2 bad, and yet you sit here and you've got a smile on your  
3 face. I appreciate your patience with this whole process.

4 I want to be clear on a couple of things  
5 here. First of all, are you boiling your water at this  
6 time?

7 MS. DOWDY: Uh-huh.

8 CHAIRMAN CLAYTON: And you mentioned at  
9 least one outage. How many outages have you faced?

10 MS. DOWDY: Oh, I've had lots. Over the  
11 last year and a half, probably six or seven.

12 CHAIRMAN CLAYTON: Six or seven outages?

13 MS. DOWDY: Yeah.

14 CHAIRMAN CLAYTON: You mentioned you're at  
15 the top of the hill.

16 MS. DOWDY: Well, they call it the top of  
17 the hill. Whenever I call for service, they always say --  
18 whenever I say, well, you know, we -- our water pressure  
19 is nothing. Well, you're at the top of the hill, so it  
20 takes farther for that pump to pump that water up there.  
21 I'm thinking, it never did before. We've lived there for  
22 over 20 years, and we had good service.

23 CHAIRMAN CLAYTON: So the problems just  
24 they really began when the transfer of the company  
25 occurred?

1 MS. DOWDY: Uh-huh.

2 CHAIRMAN CLAYTON: Did we approve the  
3 transfer?

4 Well, I understand your frustration. How  
5 has your interaction with the Staff of the Commission  
6 been?

7 MS. DOWDY: They listen to what I have to  
8 say, and they was sympathetic, but there wasn't much they  
9 could do either at that point, I mean, you know, so -- and  
10 then I -- I voiced my complaints to them here tonight,  
11 too, but, yeah. You know, it is what it is, and I  
12 understand that.

13 CHAIRMAN CLAYTON: Well, no, I'm not sure  
14 if it is what it is. I had a friend say that today and I  
15 didn't understand when he said it, and I'm not sure if I  
16 accept it here.

17 It is not the type of service that the  
18 Commission wants to hear about, especially when you're  
19 looking at a rate increase.

20 MS. DOWDY: Right.

21 CHAIRMAN CLAYTON: But I'll tell you, the  
22 norm that I have seen has been people are unhappy with  
23 rate increases, but generally the service is pretty good  
24 or the problems are minimal. So, you know, it costs money  
25 to treat the water, pump it --

1 MS. DOWDY: I understand that.

2 CHAIRMAN CLAYTON: -- all the other issues,  
3 but to be getting the rate increase and still be boiling  
4 your water?

5 MS. DOWDY: They're going to put a thing in  
6 to see if it's safe for me to use. I just am -- I'm a  
7 nurse, so, you know, if it's not running like it should  
8 be, you know, you know you're getting all that junk out of  
9 the pipes and everything else because it's just sitting  
10 there, and so I'm just overcautious. I have grandkids  
11 that come and, you know, I hate for them to get sick.

12 CHAIRMAN CLAYTON: Well, I don't think I  
13 have any other questions. I think you have -- you have  
14 painted a picture that I think it's pretty clear on what  
15 you're facing, and I think the Commission's going to have  
16 to redouble its efforts in making sure this company is  
17 doing what it's supposed to be doing.

18 Our charge is to make sure the companies  
19 provide safe and adequate service at just and reasonable  
20 rates, and at least on the first part of that it doesn't  
21 seem like we've accomplished what we're supposed to be  
22 doing. I appreciate you coming out tonight.

23 MS. DOWDY: Thank you.

24 JUDGE DIPPELL: Just one moment, Ms. Dowdy,  
25 before you leave. Ms. Baker, did you have any questions?

1 MS. BAKER: No, I have no questions. I do  
2 appreciate your comments.

3 MS. DOWDY: Thank you.

4 MS. KLIETHERMES: Likewise, no questions.

5 JUDGE DIPPELL: Thank you, ma'am, very  
6 much, and I appreciate you being patient. I know you've  
7 been here a long time tonight.

8 MS. DOWDY: Oh, I just got here early. I  
9 wanted to make sure I was here.

10 JUDGE DIPPELL: Is there anyone else who  
11 would like to testify?

12 (No response.)

13 JUDGE DIPPELL: Are you sure? All right,  
14 then. I don't believe we have anyone else here to  
15 testify. I do appreciate you both coming out and  
16 participating, and I guess that concludes this hearing.  
17 We can go off the record.

18 WHEREUPON, the public hearing was  
19 concluded.

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## 1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2 STATE OF MISSOURI )  
3 ) ss.  
4 COUNTY OF COLE )

5 I, Kellene K. Feddersen, Certified  
6 Shorthand Reporter with the firm of Midwest Litigation  
7 Services, do hereby certify that I was personally present  
8 at the proceedings had in the above-entitled cause at the  
9 time and place set forth in the caption sheet thereof;  
10 that I then and there took down in Stenotype the  
11 proceedings had; and that the foregoing is a full, true  
12 and correct transcript of such Stenotype notes so made at  
13 such time and place.

14 Given at my office in the City of  
15 Jefferson, County of Cole, State of Missouri.

16 \_\_\_\_\_  
17 Kellene K. Feddersen, RPR, CSR, CCR  
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