In the Matter of:

MISSOURI-AMERICAN WATER COMPANY'S REQUEST FOR AUTHORITY, etc.

WR-2020-0344, VOL. VIII

January 26, 2021



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1	BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION		
2	STATE OF MISSOURI		
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4			
5	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS		
6	Public Hearing		
7	January 26, 2021		
8	Jefferson City, Missouri		
9	Volume 8		
10	WebEx		
11			
12			
13	In The Matter of Missouri-American)		
14	Water Company's Request for) Authority to Implement General) File No. Rate Increase for Water and Sewer) WR-2020-0344		
15	Rate Increase for Water and Sewer) WR-2020-0344 Service Provided in Missouri) Service Areas)		
16	Service Areas		
17			
18	JANA JACOBS, Presiding REGULATORY LAW JUDGE		
19	WILLIAM P. KENNEY		
20	JASON R. HOLSMAN, COMMISSIONERS		
21	COMMISSIONERS		
22			
23			
24	REPORTED BY:		
25	Beverly Jean Bentch, CCR No. 640 TIGER COURT REPORTING, LLC		

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PROCEEDINGS

JUDGE JACOBS: We will officially go on the record now. And the first thing I have to do in this kind of virtual hearing is to remind everyone to mute yourself if you are not addressing the Commission just to help us have a clear audio signal here today so we can all hear each other.

All right. Today is January 26, 2021. The Missouri Public Service Commission has set this time for a local public hearing in Case No. WR-2020-0344, which is captioned as In the Matter of Missouri-American Water Company's Request for Authority to Implement a General Rate Increase for Water and Sewer Service Provided in Missouri Service Areas.

The Commission has scheduled this local public hearing to give members of the public a chance to comment about Missouri-American's application to the Commission. This hearing is also being streamed from the Commission's website at psc.mo.gov. So be aware that your comments today are being recorded for the record and are also being broadcast out on the interwebs for everyone to hear.

The Missouri Public Service Commission regulates the rates charged by investor-owned public utility companies in Missouri to ensure that those rates

2.5

are just and reasonable. The Commission also regulates the quality of service and safety of the operations of public utilities. The Commission is made up of five commissioners. The commissioners are appointed by the Governor to fixed terms and are confirmed by the Senate. The commissioners are Chairman Ryan Silvey, Commissioner William Kenney who's here with us today, Commissioner Scott Rupp, Commissioner Maida Coleman and Commissioner Jason Holsman who is also with us here today.

The commissioners employ a staff of engineers, accountants, attorneys, financial analysts and other specialists in the field of utility regulation. My name is Jana Jacobs. I'm a Regulatory Law Judge, and I'll preside over this hearing this afternoon. As I mentioned before, we also have with us Commissioner Kenney and Commissioner Holsman.

This is an official hearing of the Missouri Public Service Commission, and the statements and testimony of witnesses will be recorded by a court reporter and must be given under oath or affirmation. All of the commissioners, even those who are not here today, will have the opportunity to read all of the witnesses' remarks, and the Commission values your comments and input in this case.

The Commission may make comments or ask

questions at anytime in this proceeding today. So I 1 want to make sure that the commissioners are aware they 2 are invited to speak up and interrupt me at any time if 3 there's something that they need to say or if they have 5 a question for anyone here. 6 All right. I'll begin by asking counsel to 7 enter their appearance for the record. Could we hear 8 from counsel for Missouri-American Water first, please? 9 MR. LUFT: Yes. Thank you, Judge Jacobs. Timothy Luft for Missouri-American Water, 727 Craig 10 11 Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63141. 12 JUDGE JACOBS: Thank you very much, Mr. Luft. 13 And could we hear from counsel for the Commission staff, 14 please? 15 MR. PRINGLE: Thank you, Judge. Pringle, Staff Counsel Department, Missouri Public 16 17 Service Commission. My business address is 200 Madison 18 Street, Suite 800, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102. 19 JUDGE JACOBS: Thank you very much, 20 Mr. Pringle. And could I also hear now from the Office 21 of the Public Counsel, please? 22 MR. HALL: Good afternoon, Judge. Thank you. 23 Caleb Hall appearing on behalf of Missouri's Office of the Public Counsel. Our office address is 200 Madison 24 Street, Suite 650, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102. 2.5

JUDGE JACOBS: Thank you very much, Mr. Hall.
Do we have any intervenors in this case for whom counsel
would like to enter an appearance today? Okay. Doesn't
seem like we have any intervenors present. I have a
list of people who have registered to make comments
today. So what I'm going to do is call on those folks
in the order that their names are listed. And then
after I've gone through those people, I will also give
any additional people who are with us here today a
chance to make comments. So when I call your name,
you'll need to go ahead and try to unmute your line. My
understanding is for those of you who are calling in
using an ordinary phone and you dialed in today, you may
need to press *6 to make sure that your line is not
muted. For those of you who are using a smart phone
application or a computer application through the
internet to connect, then you would look for that mute
symbol on your screen and make sure that's indicating
that you're not muted when it's time for you to address
the Commission.
All right. So also one more point. Because

All right. So also one more point. Because the company operates in different locations around the state, it may be helpful when introducing yourself to the Commission to simply let the Commission know where you're receiving services and whether you're a water

and/or sewer customer.

2.5

All right. So the Commission is here today to hear comments from the public. So the Commission won't be able to answer your questions today because they have to remain impartial until after all the evidence in the case has been presented. There will be an evidentiary hearing in this case where that information will be formally presented to the Commission.

The Commission has not made a decision in this case. The Commission is interested in hearing your comments and will consider those comments, along with the other evidence in the case when the Commission makes its decision. If you have questions after the hearing today, you can use the same email address that you used to register for this hearing and that email address is mawccomments@psc.mo.gov. That should be included in any written materials that you may have received in this case and also anything that's posted at the Commission's website. So if you look up case information, you should be able to find that.

Okay. So it looks like we can proceed now to taking comment formally. I don't know if I've mentioned that testimony is received by oath or affirmation. So the first thing I'll do is ask you to raise your right hand and swear to tell the truth today in this hearing

```
and then you're going to identify yourself and spell
 1
 2
    your name. All right. So it looks like I have one name
 3
     today for a person who is registered. That's Mr. Paul
 4
                   I apologize if I did not get that last
    Polychronis.
    name correct, sir. Do we have a Mr. Polychronis with
 5
 6
    us?
 7
              MR. POLYCHRONIS: Yes, I'm here.
 8
               JUDGE JACOBS: Thank you, sir. Would you like
 9
     to raise your right hand, please, sir. Thank you.
10
               (Witness sworn.)
11
               JUDGE JACOBS: All right. Could you state and
12
     spell your name, sir, for the record?
13
               MR. POLYCHRONIS: Okay. Do you need a middle
14
    name?
15
               JUDGE JACOBS: I think usually just first and
     last is acceptable. So I'll leave the middle name up to
16
17
    you.
18
              MR. POLYCHRONIS: Okay. First name is Paul.
19
     That's P-a-u-l. Last name Polychronis.
20
     P-o-l-y-c-h-r-o-n-i-s.
21
               JUDGE JACOBS: Thank you very much, sir.
22
     Sounds like we might have some feedback on somebody's
23
     line.
24
               MR. POLYCHRONIS: Is it coming from mine?
2.5
               JUDGE JACOBS: It looks like you're using
```

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speaker phone or some system like that.
 1
 2
               MR. POLYCHRONIS: Let me try this. I
 3
     apologize.
               JUDGE JACOBS: Well, you're okay. You're okay
 4
 5
                 It appears to be a problem when I'm
 6
     speaking. Let's see if you can give your testimony.
                                                           Ιf
 7
    you just want to go ahead and let us know what community
 8
    you are receiving service in, if that's the case, and
 9
     then just proceed with your comments, sir.
10
               MR. POLYCHRONIS: Okay. I live in
11
    Warrensburg.
                   I'm a water customer, my family and I.
12
    And I just want to say I've been involved in a lot of
    public service enterprises over the years, and I have a
13
14
    really positive appraisal of the Missouri-American Water
15
    Company and I'm in support of their desire to change
16
     their rates. I think they do a really great job.
17
               I think the type of thing that they do, they
    do it so well they become invisible and taken for
18
19
    granted. And they're constantly battling kind of a
20
    public perception. Like, for instance, in Warrensburg,
21
    decades ago our water used to kind of have a bad taste.
22
     I guess it had some sulfur in it. They fixed that a
23
     long time ago.
24
               I think Warrensburg water tastes great and I
    drink it all the time, but there's still this mythology
25
```

that people say Warrensburg water tastes bad, which is just kind of strange. It's that leftover attitude. So an enterprise like them, it's like when they do something right no one remembers, when they do something wrong no one forgets.

The water purity, which is so much better than that. You know, there's this fad of people buying bottles of water. I can't wait for that to end, because public water systems produce water by the gallon at I think less than a penny a gallon. So I just really appreciate what they do and I'm sympathetic to the challenges they face.

When you're taken for granted and become invisible in that way, people start to resent the money they pay for it as though the water comes out of their faucets by magic. I think that's all I want to say for now.

JUDGE JACOBS: Thank you very much, sir.

MR. POLYCHRONIS: All right. Thank you.

JUDGE JACOBS: Were there any questions? Now I'm getting --

MR. HALL: Mr. Polychronis, you tried to mute yourself but didn't. Could you please try again? When you're not muted, I think that's causing feedback with the judge's line.

JUDGE JACOBS: Thank you, Mr. Hall. Does anyone have any questions for Mr. Polychronis? It doesn't appear that we have any questions for you, sir. Thank you very much for your testimony today.

2.5

So I do have a list of folks who had registered to participate in a hearing but didn't indicate when they expected to attend. And so I'm going to go through that list now and see if any of those folks are with us here today. Do we have a Mr. David Parr on the line today who would like to speak? I'm going to go through these fairly quickly. I trust that you will speak up, unmute and assert yourself if you are any of these folks. Julie and Terry Hayes? Barbara Yusen? That's Y-u-s-e-n. Bruce Kondracki? Phillip Mitchel? Clarissa Cobb-Fritz? Jasmine Jones? Nancy Norton?

Okay. So if any folks out there, if you are one of those individuals, please speak up. Otherwise, the floor is now open for anyone else who has joined us here today and would like to make comments on the record to the Commission. So I'm going to wait and see if there's anyone who speaks up. If you are gifted in the use of WebEx and you know how to raise your hand, you could try that as well. Those of you who are on just a phone line, once again, perhaps you'll need to press *6

to make sure you are not muted. I'm just going to pause here for a minute to see if anybody speaks up to make additional comments.

2.5

I have noticed in listening to some of these hearings that have been taking place over the past few days that sometimes it takes a little while for people either to figure out how to unmute themselves or work up the confidence to decide that they're going to actually speak up. It doesn't look like we have any additional folks so far who would like to speak up at this point.

The floor is open if any comments would like to be made from the Commission at this point before I close the hearing. Okay. The window is going to be closing on the possibility to make remarks to the Commission here today, but there are, of course, numerous additional local public hearings scheduled in this case. I would like to thank all of our participants today for their testimony. That would be Mr. Polychronis, I believe, if I kept track.

If anyone who is with us would like to submit written comments, you can provide those at the email address that I had provided before. It's mawccomments@psc.mo.gov, mawccomments@psc.mo.gov. You can also contact the Office of the Public Counsel. And if you have concerns about your service, you can also

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1
     reach out to the Public Service Commission's customer
     service line at 1.800.392.4211. All right. So I
 2
 3
    believe that we've done everything we can do here this
     afternoon. I thank you all for being here. We are now
 4
 5
     off the record. Thank you so much. Have a good
 6
     afternoon.
 7
               (Off the record.)
 8
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1	CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER		
2			
3	I, Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640,		
4	Certified Court Reporter with the firm of Tiger Court		
5	Reporting, LLC, within the State of Missouri, do hereby		
6	certify that I was personally present at the proceedings		
7	had in the above-entitled cause at the time and place		
8	set forth in the caption sheet thereof; that I then and		
9	there took down in Stenotype the proceedings had; and		
10	that the foregoing is a full, true and correct		
11	transcript of such Stenotype notes so made at such time		
12	and place.		
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14			
15	Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640		
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