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1	STATE OF MISSOURI
2	PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
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4	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
5	
6	Procedural Conference
7	June 8, 2017
8	St. Louis, Missouri
9	Volume 1
10	
11	
12	Bertha Anderson, )
13	Complainant, )
14	vs. ) File No. WC-2017-0251
15	Missouri-American Water ) Company, )
16	)
17	Respondent. )
18	
19	
20	DANIEL JORDAN, Presiding SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE
21	
22	REPORTED BY:
23	AMANDA N. FARRAR, CCR
24	MIDWEST LITIGATION SERVICES
25	

	1 age 2
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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(The conference commenced at 3:01 p.m.)
3	JUDGE JORDAN: We will go on the record.
4	MS. ANDERSON: You want me to begin?
5	JUDGE JORDAN: I'm starting this
6	conference now, Ms. Anderson, and I'm going to do
7	that first by announcing which case we're talking
8	about.
9	The Commission is calling the action in
10	File No. WC-2017-0251, and that is the case of
11	Bertha Anderson, complainant, vs. Missouri-American
12	Water Company, respondent.
13	My name is Daniel Jordan. I'm the
14	regulatory law judge assigned to this action and I
15	am going to before anything else, did we lose
16	someone?
17	Ms. Anderson, are you still there?
18	MS. ANDERSON: Yes.
19	JUDGE JORDAN: Good.
20	Ms. Carter, are you still there?
21	MS. CARTER: I am.
22	JUDGE JORDAN: Ms. Payne, are you still
23	there?
24	MS. PAYNE: Yes, I am.
25	JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. I don't know

- 1 what's going on with our line, but it sounds like
- 2 we've still got everyone and that's what's
- 3 important.
- 4 Let's turn down our cell phones, if we
- 5 may. I won't require anyone to turn them off, but I
- 6 am silencing my cell phone right now so that we may
- 7 have no interruptions.
- 8 And with that, I would like to take
- 9 entries of appearance and also identify any
- 10 representatives of clients that are here. We'll
- 11 start with the complainant.
- Ms. Anderson, will you state your name
- 13 for the court reporter.
- MS. ANDERSON: Bertha Anderson.
- 15 JUDGE JORDAN: Thank you, Ms. Anderson.
- 16 And you are a customer of Missouri-American Water,
- 17 are you not?
- MS. ANDERSON: Yes, I am.
- JUDGE JORDAN: Very good.
- Next, for Missouri-American Water, will
- 21 counsel, please, enter an appearance.
- MR. LUFT: Tim Luft for
- 23 Missouri-American Water, and the court reporter has
- 24 my information.
- MS. CARTER: And Diana Carter with

1 Brydon, Swearengen & England, 312 East Capitol 2 Avenue, Jefferson City, Missouri, for 3 Missouri-American Water Company. 4 JUDGE JORDAN: Thank you, counsel. 5 Are there any representative -- any 6 other representatives of Missouri-American Water 7 with us today? 8 MR. LUFT: No. 9 JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. Thank you very 10 much. 11 Let's go next to staff. Will staff 12 counsel enter an appearance? 13 MS. PAYNE: Whitney Payne for the staff 14 of the Missouri Public Service Commission, and it's 15 P.O. Box 360, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101, and I 16 have with me here David Pratt and Jonathan Dallas. 17 JUDGE JORDAN: Very good. Thank you. 18 Now, OPC very seldom makes an appearance 19 in these actions, but I will ask whether OPC is on 20 the line because I don't see them in this room right 21 now. And I'm not hearing anything from the 2.2 Office of Public Counsel. 23 24 So, let me make sure everyone 25 understands what we're doing today. We're just

1 having a conference, a procedural conference. 2 part is on the record because when I'm talking to 3 the parties I always want everything to be on the 4 record. We will discuss procedure. We could get a 5 little bit into substance, the substantive issues 6 that are before the Commission, but we won't be 7 deciding anything, I won't be taking any evidence, 8 and I haven't decided, nor will I decide anything on 9 the basis of what happens today. The parties can also discuss the possibilities for settlement, which 10 11 the law encourages. The law encourages settlement, 12 and for that reason the line will be open after I'm 13 done with my on-the-record part and the room is 14 available till 5:00. I don't remember whether the 15 line is available till 5:00, but I think it is. 16 you will have some time after I'm gone to talk about 17 sensitive information you wouldn't really want me to What else? I will have staff lock up this 18 hear. 19 room when -- staff here in St. Louis lock up the 20 room when the parties are done with it. 21 Remember also that mediation is a 2.2 possibility here. The Commission has trained 23 mediators. All the regulatory law judges are 24 trained in civil mediation. So, that's a 25 possibility, if the parties can't work something out

1 themselves. 2 If the parties don't settle, like, 3 today, which you don't have to, then I will want the 4 parties to file -- staff to coordinate and the parties to file a proposed procedural schedule that 5 6 will move this case towards hearing. The reason 7 being that we don't decide this case without having 8 a hearing first. This is what we call a contested 9 case, meaning a formal contest, and it is kind of like a circuit court trial, a little bit relaxed 10 11 since there's no jury, but it is an evidentiary 12 proceeding and I want to make sure that all the 13 parties are aware of the rules governing the 14 evidence that will be admissible at the hearing. 15 I'm going to give you a citation and if 16 you're not familiar with it already, definitely 17 write it down. In the Revised Statutes of Missouri take a look at Section 536.070. That's 536.070. 18 19 Now, I am not an administrative -- I'm 20 an administrative lawyer. I'm not an engineer. not an accountant. I'm not an economist. 21 2.2 remember those things when you talk to me. 23 And that's where we're at right now to 24 begin with. Any questions on what we're doing here today from anyone? 25

1	Any questions, Ms. Anderson?
2	MS. ANDERSON: No.
3	JUDGE JORDAN: Very good.
4	And staff, are we clear on where you're
5	at? Staff, staff counsel?
6	MS. PAYNE: I'm sorry. What?
7	JUDGE JORDAN: Any questions as to what
8	we're doing today.
9	MS. PAYNE: No, no. Not at all. Thank
10	you.
11	JUDGE JORDAN: Very good. Very good.
12	Missouri-American?
13	MR. LUFT: No.
14	JUDGE JORDAN: All right, then.
15	MR. LUFT: Thank you.
16	JUDGE JORDAN: To begin with, discussing
17	this complaint on the record is a little bit
18	awkward. It doesn't need to be, but it might be
19	because the entirety of the staff report is highly
20	confidential. The cover page is not, but the
21	contents are. The reason it's highly confidential
22	is because the statutes require us to keep certain
23	information about a customer's account confidential,
24	but I think that's only amounts due, I think that's
25	only billing. But as to any information we gather

- 1 from a public utility, we have to keep that
- 2 confidential until we decide to release it. So, I'm
- 3 going to go ahead and ask Missouri-American do you
- 4 mind if I discuss certain things on the record and
- 5 that would be the incident, the background incident
- 6 that precipitates this complaint?
- 7 MR. LUFT: I do not.
- 8 JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. Then let's get
- 9 into the substance of this complaint.
- To clarify, Ms. Anderson, I understand
- 11 that you seek an award of damages for what happened
- 12 to your basement; is that correct?
- MS. ANDERSON: That is correct.
- JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. To begin with,
- just so that we're clear, you understand that the
- 16 Commission does virtually nothing to control the
- 17 Metropolitan Sewer District. Okay? We don't
- 18 regulate them because the people who live there vote
- 19 for the -- vote for the board. That's their
- 20 control. So, we don't have a lot of control over
- 21 MSD. Though, looking at the staff report, it looks
- 22 like their involvement was marginal or tangential.
- 23 I don't really understand that and I'll get into
- 24 that later. But we don't regulate the Metropolitan
- 25 Sewer District.

1 We also don't actually give awards of damages to customers, at least we don't do an order 2 3 to pay, and I want to get into that later also. 4 This is a little weird because your remedy might be 5 in circuit court, and I say might be for a couple of 6 reasons. Number one, I'm not going to give anyone 7 legal advice and say, you know, your better strategy 8 is to do this or do that. That's not what I do. 9 But the last time I checked this out, and it's been 10 a few years, the law was split amongst the three 11 districts of the court of appeals as to where you go 12 when you have this kind of situation. That is to 13 say, you may be -- you may be seeking, but the law 14 may be telling you to come here first, and there are 15 three ways that this may work out. Maybe you go 16 straight to circuit court or maybe you come to us 17 and we make the findings of fact, but we can't give you a remedy. We make the findings of fact, you go 18 19 to circuit court for the remedy. The third 20 possibility, and this came out of the southern 21 district, is you take your pick. Now, like I say, 2.2 it's been a while since I looked at this law and I 23 haven't decided and the Commission hasn't decided which way this is to go, but I want all the parties 24 25 to understand that that is kind of an issue.

1 The last time we had a complaint like 2 this involving the facts, Ms. Anderson, the complainant ended up dismissing. She had a lawyer. 3 4 She dismissed. She went to circuit court. You may 5 do the same. You may not do the same. I'm not 6 saying which is right or wrong. I just need to 7 raise that issue for you. 8 So, I know that's a little confusing. 9 The state of the law may be very confused. haven't looked at it for a while. 10 11 Ms. Anderson, your desire was for 12 damages; is that correct? 13 MS. ANDERSON: Yes. 14 JUDGE JORDAN: Including punitive 15 damages? 16 MS. ANDERSON: Yes. 17 JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. Well, let me turn now to Missouri-American and the answer that it 18 19 filed. We had this discussion recently as to the 20 content of answer. So, I'm not going to repeat that discussion. I will say that I would anticipate if 21 2.2 there is a proposed procedural schedule filed, I'd 23 anticipate that it would have an amended answer 24 citing all the bases and facts and law for a defense 25 to the complaint, and those are not in there right

- 1 now. So, I would anticipate seeing those. So, I
- 2 don't want to say anything more than that right now
- 3 because we've had that discussion.
- 4 Any questions from Missouri-American on
- 5 where I'm at with that?
- 6 MS. CARTER: No, Judge.
- JUDGE JORDAN: All right. Now let's
- 8 turn to the staff report. Here's what I noted about
- 9 the staff report. What I noted, well, first of all,
- 10 that the entirety -- and I must correct myself on
- 11 the record here. The cover of the staff report is
- 12 also highly confidential, but we've already decided
- 13 that we can talk about some of this stuff on the
- 14 record.
- 15 Is that as I look at the staff report, I
- 16 don't see any -- I don't see any law. I don't see
- 17 any standard that might apply to Missouri-American
- 18 Water and, so, there's really no discussion here as
- 19 to whether they complied with any law or did not
- 20 comply with any law.
- MS. PAYNE: That's correct, Judge.
- 22 Staff determined that, as stated in its report, that
- 23 Missouri-American wasn't in violation of any of the
- 24 statutes or rules which gives the PSC authority to
- 25 make any determination in this.

1 JUDGE JORDAN: Well, what statutes and 2 other legal authorities might those be? What did -what is staff looking at here? 3 4 MS. PAYNE: The entirety. 5 JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. 6 MS. PAYNE: I apologize if I'm 7 misunderstanding, but we determined that they 8 weren't in violation. 9 JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. Well, in violation 10 of what would be my question, and I guess your 11 answer is going to be anything? 12 Exactly. I mean, I'm sorry MS. PAYNE: 13 that it's so general, but it basically is that there 14 is no law or provision that would apply to this that 15 Missouri-American would be in violation of based on 16 our investigation. 17 JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. Well, I recall reading something in the statutes about safe and 18 19 adequate service. 20 MS. PAYNE: Correct. And we determined 21 that they were providing safe and adequate service. 22 JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. Safe and adequate 23 instrumentalities and facilities, I quess that's 24 your idea also that they're in compliance with that? 25 MS. PAYNE: Yes.

1 JUDGE JORDAN: And how about 2 Missouri-American Water's Tariff, Missouri No. 13, 3 page R-11 discusses contributory negligence on the 4 part of the company? 5 MS. PAYNE: Well --6 JUDGE JORDAN: Here's where I'm --7 here's what I'm thinking of. I'm not trying to be 8 mysterious here, because I have -- I have some 9 unclarity. I would like clarity on a certain background here because I see that there's mention 10 11 of Metropolitan Sewer District was digging through 12 its contractor. I mean, its contractor was digging 13 and then there was this burst pipe, but I also see 14 that it's -- staff reports it is not the fault of 15 the contractor. That's what I recall from the 16 report. Am I correct about that? 17 MS. PAYNE: Well, I mean, what it comes 18 down to is the actual report that was filed by 19 Missouri-American stated that the cause of the leak, 20 the cause of the breakage was from corrosion. 21 JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. A longitudinal 22 fracture caused by corrosion? 23 MS. PAYNE: Exactly. 24 JUDGE JORDAN: In a pipe? 25 MS. PAYNE: Yes.

1 JUDGE JORDAN: Which got into the storm 2 sewer and because it's MSD, well, that also goes 3 into everyone's basement? 4 MS. PAYNE: If you can hold on one 5 second. 6 JUDGE JORDAN: Sure. 7 MS. PAYNE: Let me confer very quickly. 8 Okay. I'm sorry about that, Judge. 9 JUDGE JORDAN: No problem. 10 MS. PAYNE: The actual breakage, the 11 pipe was a Missouri-American pipe. 12 JUDGE JORDAN: Right. 13 However, that water flooded MS. PAYNE: 14 the storm system and that was why the storm drain 15 backed up. 16 JUDGE JORDAN: Right, because that's 17 how --18 MS. PAYNE: Or at least that's staff's 19 understanding based on the report that was provided 20 by Missouri-American. 21 JUDGE JORDAN: Yeah. Because MSD's 2.2 system, it's just built that way, if I understand 23 correctly. 24 So, anyway, here's what I'm getting to: 25 I see an allegation that the leak was caused by a

- 1 longitudinal break along the pipe due to corrosion.
- 2 Okay. Is that safe and adequate service?
- MS. PAYNE: By staff standards that has
- 4 been determined to be normal, yeah, a normal
- 5 situation, normal scenario.
- JUDGE JORDAN: Okay.
- 7 MS. PAYNE: As long as they repair it,
- 8 then staff has always determined that they're still
- 9 providing safe and adequate service.
- JUDGE JORDAN: Yeah, that's my inquiry.
- MS. PAYNE: Okay.
- JUDGE JORDAN: That's my inquiry because
- 13 I didn't see any of those standards cited in the
- 14 report. So, I didn't even know whether staff had
- 15 considered the provisions that I've just cited to
- 16 you.
- 17 MS. PAYNE: I apologize, Judge. I will
- 18 be more thorough in the future. But that was what I
- 19 was getting at with the fact that they were not in
- 20 violation is that we determined that they were
- 21 providing safe and adequate service based on the
- 22 standards of that statute and the nature of this
- 23 particular incident.
- 24 JUDGE JORDAN: Yeah. I haven't decided
- 25 anything and I'm not going to decide anything based

- 1 on what we discuss today. I just need to clarify
- 2 that issue.
- 3 MS. PAYNE: Absolutely. And staff is
- 4 happy to provide a more thorough legal analysis if
- 5 the Commission would prefer.
- JUDGE JORDAN: Yeah. That sounds pretty
- 7 good. That sounds like a good idea. So, if we get
- 8 a proposed procedural schedule out of this and
- 9 probably even if we don't, maybe a supplement to the
- 10 staff report would be helpful.
- MS. PAYNE: Absolutely.
- JUDGE JORDAN: Great. And, you know,
- 13 while we're on the -- while we're on the topic, I'll
- 14 ask Missouri-American Water whether it's formulating
- 15 a position as to these standards and how the facts
- 16 apply?
- 17 MR. LUFT: There have been no allegation
- 18 of contributory negligence -- no facts to support
- 19 that.
- JUDGE JORDAN: Right, right.
- MR. LUFT: So, I don't know how -- it's
- 22 difficult to defend, but, you know, main breaks
- 23 happen all the time. That's part of having a public
- 24 water system. This pipe, I think, was 1950s
- 25 vintage. You're going to have main breaks,

- 1 particularly when you have a large contractor in the
- 2 area that's driving trucks up and down the street
- 3 doing a ton of work on a major project. And so,
- 4 this was an unfortunate incident that was -- but
- 5 we've seen this time and time again where, whoa,
- 6 there just happens to be a contractor in the area
- 7 and next thing you know we have a main break. So,
- 8 this is not unusual.
- 9 JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. Well, that will be
- 10 helpful background. If we go to hearing, we can
- 11 develop that more perhaps and perhaps in an amended
- 12 answer.
- MR. LUFT: Sure, absolutely.
- JUDGE JORDAN: That would be helpful
- 15 because I think this is the first time that I've
- 16 heard anything about a major construction project
- 17 that's going on that may have been -- may have
- 18 caused this leak. So, that would be helpful. That
- 19 would be helpful.
- Okay. That pretty much wraps up my
- 21 inquiry, and I appreciate the parties stepping up to
- 22 fill in the facts on this.
- 23 So, I will most likely put out an order
- 24 to file a proposed procedural schedule and I will
- 25 probably set a ten-day timeline.

1 Staff, would that be time enough for you 2 to coordinate this kind of thing? 3 MS. PAYNE: Absolutely, Judge. I might 4 note that based on prior determinations by the Commission, we do not have the ability to award 5 6 monetary damages or determine liability. 7 Well, you know, those are JUDGE JORDAN: 8 two different things. An award of monetary damages 9 I'm pretty sure the Commission cannot do. were a violation, you know, the Commission could 10 11 levy a fine, but that would not be damages to 12 Ms. Anderson, that is correct. 13 MS. PAYNE: Correct. 14 JUDGE JORDAN: Now, as to whether we 15 make a determination of liability, different issue. 16 Under the case law that I discussed, if you have an 17 administrative remedy, including the findings of fact, even if you can't make the conclusions of law, 18 19 we may have to do something first. Ms. Anderson can always dismiss her complaint. 20 21 the last one involving this incident -- I believe it 2.2 was this very incident. I think nine houses flooded 23 from this main break. -- that complainant chose to 24 In any event, I think that the main break dismiss.

might be something that the Commission wants to hear

25

1	more about and the Commission has a duty to
2	investigate these things any way. So, that's where
3	I'm coming from on that.
4	So, your argument, I note that.
5	MS. PAYNE: Okay. Thank you, Judge.
6	JUDGE JORDAN: Sure thing.
7	Well, what else can I do for the parties
8	while we're all together on the line here?
9	Ms. Anderson, anything more?
10	MS. ANDERSON: Do you want me to tell
11	how I feel or get to the end of?
12	JUDGE JORDAN: It comes through pretty
13	clearly in your complaint. It sounds like you've
14	had a lot of damage from the backup that went up
15	through MSD's system. Is that correct?
16	MS. ANDERSON: That's correct.
17	JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. I think we all get
18	the picture on that.
19	MS. ANDERSON: Okay.
20	JUDGE JORDAN: Anything more from
21	Missouri-American?
22	MR. LUFT: I don't have anything.
23	Diana, do you?
24	MS. CARTER: No, Judge.
25	JUDGE JORDAN: Okay. And anything more

1	that staff wants to throw in before we go off the
2	record?
3	MS. PAYNE: Nothing further.
4	JUDGE JORDAN: Okay, then. Well, thanks
5	very much for your attention and I appreciate your
6	input. I think with that I will adjourn this
7	conference and we will go off the record.
8	(The conference concluded at 3:21 p.m.)
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1	CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
2	
3	I, Amanda N. Farrar, a Certified Court
4	Reporter for the State of Missouri, do hereby
5	certify that the foregoing transcript was taken by
6	me to the best of my ability and thereafter reduced
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