

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of the Tariff Filing of Aqua)	
Missouri, Inc. to Implement a Rate)	<u>Case No. WR-2007-0021</u>
Increase for Water Service Provided to)	Tariff No. JW-2007-0015
Customers in its Missouri Service Areas.)	

PUBLIC COUNSEL’S REQUEST FOR LOCAL PUBLIC HEARING

COMES NOW the Office of the Public Counsel and for its Request for Local Public Hearing states as follows:

1. On July 12, 2006, Aqua Missouri, Inc. filed revised tariff sheets to implement a rate increase for water service in several of its service areas. The proposed rate increase, on average, is approximately 63 percent.

2. The rate increase was agreed to by Aqua Missouri and the Staff of the Commission. Staff has been ordered to file a Disposition Agreement reflecting the agreement between Staff and Aqua Missouri no later than July 21, 2006. Public Counsel did not join in the agreement.

3. Pursuant to 4 CSR 240-3.635, Public Counsel requests a local public hearing. The service territories affected by this increase are fairly spread out, and it would be unnecessarily expensive to hold a local public hearing in each area. Holding one local public hearing in Branson and one in Sedalia would mean that most customers would have to travel less than about forty miles to attend a hearing.¹ Case No. SR-2006-0023 also affects the rates of

¹ The customers in the Rankin Acres area would have to travel fifty miles to Branson, but the proposed increase for those customers is just over ten percent – the smallest proposed increase for any of the areas. There are ninety customers in the Rankin Acres area.

customers in the Sedalia area, so the Commission could hold the local public hearings in these two cases concurrently. The following table shows the location of the areas involved in Case Nos. WR-2007-0020, WR-2007-0021, SR-2007-0022, and SR-2007-0023, as well as the approximate number of customers in each area and the amount of the proposed increase.

SYSTEM	# OF CUSTOMERS	LOCATION	% INCREASE
Jefferson City-Sewer	1,621	Jefferson City	35.62%
Maplewood-Sewer	383	Sedalia	60.93%
Ozark Meadow-Sewer	16	Laurie	-70.42%
Jefferson City-Water	480	Jefferson City	56.39%
Lakewood Manor-Water	34	Shell Knob, Barry County	143.25%
LTA-Water	98	Branson	68.73%
Ozark Mountain-Water	434	near Shell Knob, Barry County	69.43%
Rankin Acres-Water	90	Republic	10.70%
Riverside Estates-Water	252	Branson	29.16%
Spring Valley-Water	121	Ozark	82.40%
White Branch-Water	192	Warsaw	77.33%

4. Public Counsel understands that Aqua Missouri's rate increase request has been pending for quite some time, and is not requesting local public hearings for the purpose of delay. But when an increase of this magnitude is under consideration, affording customers the opportunity to speak to the Commission at a hearing is a critical part of the process. Public Counsel would not object to the Commission scheduling the hearings promptly, so long as customers are given sufficient notice.

WHEREFORE, Public Counsel respectfully requests that the Commission schedule local public hearings.

Respectfully submitted,

OFFICE OF THE Public Counsel

/s/ Lewis R. Mills, Jr.

By: _____

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been mailed, emailed or hand-delivered to the following this 19th day of July 2006:

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