In the Matter of the Application of Jerry L. Countryman
Hearing before:
Judge Ken Seyer
October 03, 2022
Vol 01
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BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Evidentiary Hearing

Monday, October 3, 2022 9:00 a.m. - 9:55 a.m.

Missouri Public Service Commission 200 Madison Street, Room 310 Jefferson City, MO 65102 and WebEx

> VOLUME 1 Pages 1 - 45

In the Matter of the Application)
of Jerry L. Countryman for)
Change of Electric Supplier from)File No. EO-2022-0226
Empire District Electric Company)
d/b/a Liberty to White River)
Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.)

KENNETH J. SEYER, Presiding REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

RYAN A. SILVEY, Chairman SCOTT T. RUPP, Commissioner MAIDA J. COLEMAN, Commissioner JASON R. HOLSMAN, Commissioner GLEN KOLKMEYER, Commissioner

Stenographically Reported By: Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640

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Page 4 EXHIBIT INDEX Received JERRY COUNTRYMAN'S EXHIBITS: Two-page statement filed 7/12/22 Plat Mr. Country's original application LIBERTY'S EXHIBITS: Rebuttal Testimony of Jeffery Westfall WHITE RIVER'S EXHIBIT: Prefiled rebuttal testimony of Beau Jackson and Exhibit A STAFF'S EXHIBIT: Rebuttal Testimony of Alan J. Bax (The above-listed exhibits were retained by the Public Service Commission.)

Page 5 The following proceedings began at 9:00 a.m.: 1 2 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Let's bring this 3 proceeding to order and go on the record. Today is 4 October 3, 2022. The time is nine o'clock a.m. The Commission has set this time for an evidentiary hearing 5 in the case captioned as In the Matter of the 6 7 Application of Jerry L. Countryman for Change of 8 Electric Supplier from Empire District Electric Company 9 d/b/a Liberty to White River Valley Electric 10 Cooperative, Incorporated. It's the Public Service 11 Commission File No. EO-2022-0226. 12 My name is Ken Seyer. I am the Regulatory Law Judge presiding over this hearing. The hearing is 13 taking place in the Public Service Commission Hearing 14 Room, Room 310, of the Governor Office Building in 15 Jefferson City, Missouri. However, parties and 16 17 witnesses will also be participating over the internet via Cisco WebEx. 18 19 Mr. Countryman is here in Room 310, correct? 20 MR. COUNTRYMAN: That is correct. 21 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Let's have counsel 2.2 for the parties make their entries of appearance 23 starting with Liberty. 24 MS. CARTER: Good morning. Diana Carter for 25 the Empire District Electric Company d/b/a Liberty,

Page 6 1 mailing address 428 East Capitol Avenue, Suite 303, 2 Jefferson City, Missouri 65101. 3 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. For White River Valley Electric Co-op. 4 5 MR. HORTON: Good morning. Christiaan Horton 6 for White River Valley Electric Cooperative. Bar number 7 is 46003. Mailing address is 2805 South Ingram Mill, 8 Springfield, Missouri 65804. 9 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. And for the Staff of 10 the Commission. 11 MR. STACEY: Scott Stacey for Staff, 200 12 Madison Street, Jefferson City 65101. 13 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you. For 14 those in the hearing room, I ask everyone to silence any 15 cell phones and mobile devices. For those connected via 16 Cisco WebEx, I ask that you mute your microphone when 17 not speaking. For those in the hearing room, please be 18 cognizant of when your microphones are on indicated by a 19 lit green light at the base and when they are off. 20 When speaking into the microphones, you should 21 be within a few inches of the microphone for proper 2.2 amplification. 23 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: Judge, this is 24 Commissioner Holsman. I've joined. 25 JUDGE SEYER: I'm sorry. What?

Page 7 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: I said this is 1 2 Commissioner Holsman. I was just alerting you to my 3 presence. Okay. Let's go ahead and the 4 JUDGE SEYER: 5 other Commissioners, if they would identify themselves. 6 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: Good morning, Judge. 7 Chairman Silvey is here. 8 JUDGE SEYER: Good morning. All right. We 9 may have other Commissioners join us here shortly. 10 Mr. Countryman, you're not represented by an 11 attorney today, correct? 12 MR. COUNTRYMAN: That's correct. 13 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you. That is, of course, acceptable and not uncommon in cases such as 14 15 yours. Please don't be overly concerned about following our hearing procedures perfectly. When I can today, I 16 17 will assist you. 18 Today you may call witnesses to testify, 19 including yourself, and may offer other evidence for the 20 Commission to consider in reaching a decision on your 21 change of electric supplier request. You will also, 22 along with the other parties, be allowed to give an 23 opening statement. You do not have to give an opening statement, but an opening statement generally is an 24 25 opportunity for a party in the case to give the

Page 8

Commissioners and me a preview or a summary of what you expect the evidence to be today during the hearing and why that evidence will support your request to switch from Liberty to White River.

Please keep this in mind however. You are not 5 sworn in before you give your opening statement. 6 You 7 are not under oath and not subject to cross-examination 8 by the other parties. In other words, an opening statement by itself cannot substitute for testimony 9 10 under oath and other admitted evidence. The Commissioners cannot base their decision purely on 11 12 opening statements. You must still present evidence following the opening statements for the Commissioners' 13 consideration. Do you understand that? 14

15 MR. COUNTRYMAN: Yes, sir.

16 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you. Also, 17 you will be given the opportunity to cross-examine the 18 other parties' witnesses. That is, you may ask them 19 questions when they are through answering questions from their attorneys or after their prefiled testimony has 20 21 been admitted. These must be questions and not 2.2 statements by you. Do you understand what I mean by 23 that? 24 MR. COUNTRYMAN: Yes, sir.

25 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Do the parties have

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1	Page 9 Page 9
2	MR. HORTON: White River does not.
3	MR. STACEY: Staff does not, Your Honor.
4	MS. CARTER: Nothing from Liberty. Thank you.
5	JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. As far as the order
б	of witnesses, we will follow the order filed by the
7	parties in their Joint List and Order of Witnesses.
8	Mr. Countryman will testify first on behalf of
9	himself, followed by Jeffery Westfall for Liberty, Beau
10	Jackson for White River, and then Alan Bax for the Staff
11	of the Commission.
12	All right. So at this point I'll take opening
13	statements. Mr. Countryman, would you like to give an
14	opening statement?
15	MR. COUNTRYMAN: Yes, sir.
16	JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead. You know what? If
17	you'd like, you can also stand at the podium if you'd be
18	more comfortable doing that.
19	MR. COUNTRYMAN: I believe I'll do it from
20	here, sir.
21	JUDGE SEYER: All right.
22	MR. COUNTRYMAN: My name is Jerry Countryman.
23	The only statement I have is everything I have presented
24	to the Commission verbally or written I believe to be
25	the truth to the best of my knowledge. I have two

Page 10 exhibits with me today I'd like to give the Judge. 1 And 2 other than that, why, we can proceed on, sir. 3 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. Ms. Carter, would you like to give an opening statement? 4 MS. CARTER: Thanks, Judge. Just briefly. 5 6 There has been prefiled testimony in the case and that 7 prefiled testimony establishes the facts. The direct 8 testimony from Mr. Countryman is the same as his 9 application and it sets just one reason for support for 10 his request for a change of supplier and that's the convenience of having one electric supplier for his two 11 12 adjacent parcels. There was then rebuttal testimony filed by 13 Liberty, White River Cooperative, and also the Staff of 14 15 the Commission, and all three of these pieces of rebuttal testimony are in substantial agreement with 16 17 each other that the request should not be granted based 18 on the applicable statute and the ten-factor test that 19 the Commission has traditionally applied in these 20 situations. And then there was no surrebuttal testimony 21 filed by Mr. Countryman. 22 I won't go through all ten of the factors. Those are established by Commission order. The statute 23 393.106, that's known as Missouri's anti-flip-flop 24 25 statute, and that's what's applicable here that there

Page 11
would need to be a reason that's in the public interest
to grant the change of supplier other than a difference
in rates. But then those ten factors that the
Commission has traditionally applied help to determine
what may be in the public interest in these sorts of
cases.

Again, I won't go through all ten. One I would like to note is the efforts that the current supplier has established -- has gone through to solve or mitigate problems, and in this case the Commissioners will hear or you'll see in the prefiled testimony that there's been no mitigation or nothing has taken place because there have been no problems stated.

There's nothing for Liberty to address. They 14 15 haven't been given that opportunity, because again the only stated reason by Mr. Countryman is the convenience 16 17 of having the same electric supplier for his two 18 adjacent parcels. Liberty, being consistent with the Commission's prior holdings, did not grant 19 20 Mr. Countryman's request and is opposing it here before 21 the Commission. Nothing personal certainly to 2.2 Mr. Countryman and we understand that it would be 23 convenient for him to have one supplier for those two parcels, but the statute is clear that there has to be a 24 25 reason, sufficient cause to grant that. As is explained

1	Page 12 in the rebuttal testimony of Liberty's witness Jeff			
2	Westfall, Liberty's other customers are harmed. When			
3	there's a change of supplier granted, the smaller the			
4	customer base the more costs that have to be borne by			
5	the remaining customers.			
6	Also, we have the statute in place in Missouri			
7	so that electric suppliers can rely on that continued			
8	service once it is established. White River is the			
9	established supplier for the one parcel and Liberty is			
10	the established provider for the other parcel, and by			
11	the statute they are both entitled to continue providing			
12	that service.			
13	Again, we have Jeff Westfall here to testify			
14	for Liberty. Also in attendance by WebEx is Charlotte			
15	Emery. Mr. Westfall is Liberty's Senior Director of			
16	Electric Operations for Transmission and Distribution,			
17	and Ms. Emery is our Director of Regulatory. Be happy			
18	to answer any questions and otherwise we'll just present			
19	Mr. Westfall when it is our turn for testimony.			
20	JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you, Ms.			
21	Carter. Do the Commissioners have any questions for Ms.			
22	Carter?			
23	CHAIRMAN SILVEY: No questions at this time,			
24	Judge.			
25	COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: No questions, Judge.			

1	Page 13 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you, Chairman. And I			
2	apologize. Do the Commissioners have any questions for			
3				
	Mr. Countryman following his opening statement?			
4	COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: No questions, Judge.			
5	Commissioner Holsman.			
б	JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you.			
7	Mr. Horton, would you like to give an opening statement			
8	on behalf of White River Valley Electric Cooperative?			
9	MR. HORTON: I would, very briefly. White			
10	River filed rebuttal testimony, and in that rebuttal			
11	testimony we included an Exhibit A which I think is a			
12	really nice illustration of the aerial view of the			
13	property in question how the services come in from both			
14	Liberty and White River. And as much as White River			
15	would love to serve Mr. Countryman, we believe that the			
16	existing statutory framework and Commission regulations			
17	prohibit that, and that's essentially our position in			
18	this case. We'd love to serve him but we don't feel we			
19	have the legal right to serve him.			
20	I will have Beau Jackson providing some			
21	testimony in relation to this Exhibit A and being able			
22	to field some questions about line extension and what it			
23	would look like if we were to bring services in. He is			
24	the manager of engineering and development for White			
25	River. Beyond that, that probably will conclude the			

Page 14 1 testimony that I would intend to offer in the case. 2 Thank you. 3 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Do the Commissioners have any questions for Mr. Horton? All right. 4 5 Mr. Stacey, would you like to make an opening statement on behalf of the Commission or Staff of the Commission? 6 7 MR. STACEY: Yes, Your Honor. Thank you. Good morning, Your Honor and Commission. May it please 8 9 the Commission. My name is Scott Stacey, and I'm 10 counsel for Staff. 11 Mr. Alan Bax for Staff is here and has 12 submitted testimony on the issue at hand which is whether it is in the public interest for a reason other 13 than a rate differential for the Commission to order a 14 change of electric service provider from Empire District 15 16 Electric Company, Liberty, to White River Valley 17 Electric Cooperative for Jerry Countryman's asserted 18 reason having only one electric service provider for his 19 two adjacent real estate parcels. The issue standard is 20 set forth in Sections 393.106 and 394.314 of the Revised 21 Statutes of Missouri. 22 The answer to that question is no. 23 Mr. Countryman owned a parcel of land that his parents gave him since 1977, which was serviced by Liberty from 24 25 then on. He inherited another portion of the property

Page 15 in 2010, which had been serviced by White River and has 1 2 continued to service said property. 12 years later Mr. Countryman files his application to change suppliers 3 with one reason that he prefers to have one provider. 4 The Commission found in Smith vs. Union, 5 EC-2007-0106, that customer preference by itself is not 6 7 a sufficient reason to find that it's in the public 8 interest to change suppliers. The burden of proof in 9 this matter is on Mr. Countryman to show that there is a 10 reason for changing suppliers other than a differential in rates that is a public benefit. Mr. Bax will testify 11 12 that Mr. Countryman admitted to him that he wanted to change suppliers as Liberty's costs were going up. Even 13 14 if Mr. Countryman had not stated one of the reasons being a rate differential, Mr. Countryman would have to 15 show other reasons than this preference which would 16 include the Commission's ten-factor test on whether the 17 18 reasons are within the public interest. 19 Mr. Bax will further testify that he did an 20 investigation with Liberty and White River, as well with

20 investigation with Liberty and White River, as well with 21 Mr. Countryman in regards to this test. Whether 22 customers' needs cannot be adequately be met by the 23 present supplier with respect to either the amounts or 24 quality of power, there is no indication of either 25 service related or safety concerns noted in the

Page 16 Whether there are health or safety issues 1 application. 2 involving the amounts or quality of power, there is no reported incidents. One alternative a customer has 3 4 considered, including an alternative with the present 5 supplier, Staff is unaware of any possible alternatives being discussed such as territorial agreement. 6 Whether 7 the customer's equipment has been damaged or destroyed 8 as a result of a problem with the electric supply, Staff is not aware of any claims by Mr. Countryman of damaged 9 10 equipment as a result of the related service provided.

11 The effect of the loss of the customer would have on the present supplier, in its response Liberty 12 13 mentions a negative impact thrust on its remaining customer base should the change of supplier request be 14 approved. Whether the change of supplier would result 15 in duplication of facilities, especially in comparison 16 with the alternatives available from the present 17 18 supplier in comparison that should include, there would 19 be duplicate facilities and extend facilities and costs 20 associated with removing Liberty. The overall burden on 21 the customer caused by the inadequate service, including 2.2 any economic burden not related to the cost of 23 electricity itself and any burden not considered with respect to factor six, Mr. Countryman has not indicated 24 25 experiencing any service-related or safety concerns

Page 17 regarding electric service received from either Liberty 1 2 or White River. What efforts have been made by the 3 present supplier to solve or mitigate problems Mr. Countryman has not alleged experiencing any service 4 5 related or safety issues. The impact that this Commission's decision may have on economic development 6 7 on an individual or a cumulative basis Mr. Countryman has received safe and reliable service from Liberty 8 9 since the 1970s. Liberty mentions the negative impact 10 on its customer base should the application be approved. The effect of granting of authority for the change of 11 12 suppliers might have on any territorial agreements between the two suppliers in question or on the 13 negotiation of territorial agreements between the 14 electric service providers, there are no existing 15 16 territorial agreements between Liberty and White River 17 that include the parcel at 451 North Countryman Road, 18 Ozark, Missouri nor the greater property as a whole. 19 Based on the investigation conducted by Mr. Bax, 20 responses from Liberty and White River, and lacking of 21 information from Mr. Countryman's application and 2.2 testimony, other than to have one supplier and cost 23 going up with his current supplier, Mr. Countryman's request is not in the public interest and Staff requests 24 25 the Commission deny Mr. Countryman's application. Thank

1 you.

25

JUDGE SEYER: Thank you, Mr. Stacey. Do the Commissioners have any questions for Mr. Stacey? All right. Hearing none. You may be seated. Thank you. CHAIRMAN SILVEY: Judge, I'm sorry, this is Chairman Silvey. I do have a question. JUDGE SEYER: All right. Go ahead, Chairman.

8 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: Thank you. Mr. Stacey, you 9 pointed out the statutory hurdles that Mr. Countryman 10 would need to clear in order for this Commission to find 11 in his favor. At any point in the process before this 12 hearing, were those statutory hurdles explained to 13 Mr. Countryman as to what his burden of proof would be?

MR. STACEY: I believe we sent all the 14 15 documentation to him and they're all addressed within not only the Staff's rebuttal testimony and as well as 16 the Staff's memo, and White River and Liberty both also 17 submitted those ten factors as well. So he had an 18 19 understanding of what those ten factors were. And he mentioned in his testimony, Mr. Countryman that is, that 20 21 he knows about the ten factors and that they should think -- or that the Commission should think outside the 2.2 23 box as his -- and he agrees that his request does not meet the requirement of those factors. 24

CHAIRMAN SILVEY: Okay. Thank you, sir.

Page 19 1 Thank you, Judge. 2 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. All right. 3 Mr. Countryman, since you have the burden of proof today, we'll hear your evidence first. It's my 4 5 understanding that you'd like to testify on your own 6 behalf but you have no other witnesses to call, correct? 7 MR. COUNTRYMAN: That's correct, sir. 8 JUDGE SEYER: All right. I am going to ask 9 you to shift to the witness stand. Would you raise your 10 right hand to be sworn in, please. 11 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you 12 give in this hearing shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? 13 14 MR. COUNTRYMAN: T do. 15 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you. 16 JERRY COUNTRYMAN, 17 having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows: 18 19 **OUESTIONS** BY JUDGE SEYER: 20 21 Would you please state and spell your name for 0. the record? 2.2 23 Sir? Α. 24 0. Would you please state your name for the 25 record and spell your first and last name, please?

Page 20 1 Jerry L. Countryman, J-e-r-r-y L. Countryman, Α. 2 C-o-u-n-t-r-y-m-a-n. 3 Q. All right. And you are the same Jerry L. Countryman who filed an application for change of 4 electric service provider on February 25, 2022, that is 5 the subject of this evidentiary hearing? 6 7 Α. Yes, sir. 8 Q. You mailed a two-page statement to the Commission that was received and filed with the 9 10 Commission on July 19, 2022. You actually -- It's dated 11 July 14, correct? 12 Α. Correct. Would you like that statement to be admitted 13 0. into evidence as part of your direct testimony? 14 15 Yes, sir. Α. 16 0. Now, do you have a copy of that? Yes, sir. 17 Α. 18 Okay. And could you hand that to the court Q. 19 reporter just to make sure that it has all the applicable information on there? 20 21 Α. Yes, sir. 22 Q. All right. And it is marked as Exhibit 1, 23 Do you need that to refer to? correct? 24 Α. Sir? 25 Do you need to have that in front of you? Q.

Page 21 1 No, that's fine. I don't need it. Α. I've qot a 2 copy. 3 0. Do you have a copy right there in front of you at the witness stand? 4 No. May I get it? 5 Α. Yeah, go ahead. 6 0. 7 Α. Thank you. Yes, sir, I've got it now. 8 JUDGE SEYER: All right. So since you don't 9 have an attorney, I'm just going to turn it over to you 10 and you can testify as to what you believe the Commissioners should know about your situation that 11 12 would support your case for the change of electric supplier. 13 14 MR. COUNTRYMAN: Yes, sir. 15 The only thing I can say is my letter of 14 July 2022, which they received the 19th, I tried to 16 17 state the facts as I seen them. My additional property 18 being inherited, I inherited an extra utility company. 19 So since then, why, I've been trying to figure out what I could do about it. I inquired with both utility 20 21 companies about the possibility of changing out, and it came down to about the elements and this and that. 2.2 So I 23 realized I needed to contact the Commission. And they sent me an application for change of 24 25 service and sent the information regarding the elements.

Page 22 Looking through the elements, the statutes, my particular situation does not fall that I can see in the elements. The only thing that I have is I'm paying two base rates for two utilities for property I own that's adjacent in one property.

6 I inherited this property out of the trust 7 from my folks. Since then I have established a trust 8 with all this property in it to my sons. So I'm trying 9 to clear up things where it's down to one thing, one utility, et cetera. So that's why I submitted this. I 10 made a statement too that sometimes you have to think 11 outside the box from the elements. The statutes are 12 there. You have to follow those. But I do know that 13 there should be some sort of latitude in the statutes 14 15 for the Commission to act on this particular situation. 16 That's kind of my stance on that, sir.

17JUDGE SEYER: All right. Mr. Stacey, do you18have any questions on cross-examination?

MR. STACEY: Yes, Your Honor. First, Staff
does not have an objection to the admission of his
statement that he sent.

JUDGE SEYER: Let's just go ahead and address that. Do the attorneys for Liberty or White River have any objection to the admission of Exhibit 1, the two-page statement that Mr. Countryman filed in July?

Page 23 No objection from Liberty. 1 MS. CARTER: 2 MR. HORTON: No objection from White River. 3 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Then Exhibit 1 is 4 admitted into evidence. (COUNTRYMAN EXHIBIT 1 WAS RECEIVED INTO 5 6 EVIDENCE AND MADE A PART OF THIS RECORD.) 7 MR. STACEY: Thank you, Your Honor. Good 8 morning, Mr. Countryman. 9 MR. COUNTRYMAN: Morning. 10 CROSS-EXAMINATION 11 BY MR. STACEY: 12 0. You stated in your direct testimony, your letter from July 19, 2022, that you filed with the 13 Missouri Public Service Commission, you stated in that 14 letter that you knew the Commission had specific 15 elements that must be met for a change of service 16 17 request; is that correct? 18 Α. That is correct. 19 You further stated that your request for 0. 20 change of service provider or service supplier was not 21 within those elements, correct? 2.2 Α. That's correct. And for the Commission to think outside of the 23 0. 24 box? 25 Α. That's correct.

1	Q.	Page 24 Okay. Now, you've had the 451 North
2	Countryma	an Road since 1977; is that correct?
3	Α.	That's correct.
4	Q.	And Liberty provided service there since 1977?
5	Α.	No, sir.
6	Q.	Who provided first?
7	Α.	Empire is the one who put the service in.
8	Q.	Empire is also known as Liberty?
9	Α.	That's correct.
10	Q.	Now, you received the other adjoining property
11	in 2010;	is that right?
12	Α.	Sir?
13	Q.	You received the other property in 2010?
14	Α.	Correct.
15	Q.	And that was serviced by White River?
16	Α.	Correct.
17	Q.	And you did not file an application for change
18	of servio	ce provider at that time?
19	Α.	No, sir.
20	Q.	In fact, you waited 12 years to file the
21	applicati	ion?
22	Α.	That is correct.
23	Q.	Now, you spoke with Mr. Alan Bax on the phone
24	a while a	ago; is that correct?
25	Α.	Yes, sir.

Page 25 1 You told Mr. Bax that you wanted to change the 0. 2 supplier? 3 Α. Correct. And you wanted to change from Liberty to White 4 Q. 5 **River**? 6 Α. Correct. 7 Q. And you also indicated that you wanted to 8 change from Liberty to White River because Liberty's rates were going up; is that correct? 9 10 Α. That's correct. MR. STACEY: Nothing further, Your Honor. 11 12 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Ms. Carter, do you 13 have any questions on cross-examination for 14 Mr. Countryman? 15 MS. CARTER: Mr. Countryman, I'd like to thank 16 you for coming to Jeff City and for participating in the 17 process. I do not have any questions for you today. Thank you. 18 19 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Horton, any questions on 20 behalf of White River? 21 MR. HORTON: I have basically one question. 22 CROSS-EXAMINATION 23 BY MR. HORTON: Mr. Countryman, thank you again as well for 24 0. putting your application forward. The thought that I 25

Page 26 had is have you ever thought about combining your real 1 2 estate parcels there at the farm to make one contiguous 3 parcel? Has that ever been part of your thoughts on how you would hold that title to that real estate? 4 Sir, my long range plans right now is five to 5 Α. eight years that barn you see on that one that's in the 6 7 property I inherited, I'm looking at making that a 8 one-bedroom apartment for myself, because I've got all 9 this property in my trust now to my kids and I'll be 10 vacating the house by that time. So that's one reason I 11 was trying to get this down to one electric utility. 12 0. Do you have the anticipation that you'll need new service connections or new meters for anything that 13 you're wanting to do with this property in the near 14 15 future? I didn't understand you, sir. 16 Α. 17 0. Are you going to be requiring new or additional electric services for either the barn or the 18 19 home that's being serviced right now by Liberty --20 THE STENOGRAPHER: Wait a minute. Will you 21 try your question again. 22 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Countryman, what she's 23 saying is she'd like for him to complete his question so she can record it and then you can go ahead and answer. 24 So Mr. Horton, go ahead, if you'll repeat that question. 25

Page 27 1 MR. HORTON: Sure. 2 BY MR. HORTON: The question was, do you anticipate new 3 Q. service needs there at your property either at the barn 4 5 or at the home? 6 Α. Yes, sir. 7 Q. I believe you said that you might be needing some additional electric service if you convert the barn 8 9 into a livable space for you? 10 Yes. Α. But the barn right now does have electric 11 0. service and I believe that White River is your electric 12 supplier for the barn; is that true? 13 14 Α. That's true. MR. HORTON: I don't have any further 15 16 questions. 17 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you, 18 Mr. Horton. Are there questions from the Commissioners? 19 COMMISSIONER RUPP: Judge, this is 20 Commissioner Rupp. I joined late but I have no 21 questions. 22 JUDGE SEYER: Is Commissioner Kolkmeyer on as 23 well? 24 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Yes, Judge. I'm 25 here.

Page 28 1 All right. Thank you. JUDGE SEYER: 2 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: And I have no 3 questions. 4 Okay. All right. JUDGE SEYER: 5 QUESTIONS BY JUDGE SEYER: 6 7 0. Mr. Countryman, before we went on the record 8 before the hearing started you were also showing me the 9 plat? 10 Yes, sir. That's the other exhibit I'd like Α. 11 to give you. 12 0. Okay. So it is something that you filed with 13 your application originally back in February? 14 Α. Yeah. But you'd also like it marked as an exhibit? 15 0. I'm not sure what date I submitted that to the 16 Α. 17 Commission. I submitted that same thing, yes, sir. 18 Q. Okay. So that has been marked as Exhibit 2. Α. 19 Yes, sir. 20 Would you -- You made some markings on it 0. 21 yourself? 2.2 Α. Yes, sir. 23 There's a blue dashed line and I believe a red 0. dashed line? 24 25 Yes, sir. Α.

1	Q. What does the blue line?
	-
2	A. The blue line is the Liberty electric line
3	coming down and going to the house. The green line at
4	the bottom that goes all the way across is White River
5	that supplies the barn.
6	Q. Okay. And those are the lines as they
7	currently exist?
8	A. Sir?
9	Q. Those are the lines as they currently exist
10	today?
11	A. Yes.
12	JUDGE SEYER: Okay. This is going to be kind
13	of difficult to let the other attorneys see that
14	exhibit. Ms. Carter, do you need to see that exhibit?
15	MS. CARTER: I do not. That's okay, Judge.
16	Liberty doesn't have an objection to that being
17	admitted.
18	JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Horton?
19	MR. HORTON: We have no objection either.
20	JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Stacey, would you like to
21	take a look at it?
22	MR. STACEY: No, Your Honor. No objection.
23	JUDGE SEYER: All right. Then that exhibit,
24	it's marked as Exhibit 2. It's one page. That will be
25	admitted into evidence.

Page 30 (COUNTRYMAN EXHIBIT 2 WAS RECEIVED INTO 1 2 EVIDENCE AND MADE A PART OF THIS RECORD.) 3 JUDGE SEYER: If you'll hand that to the court 4 reporter, please. 5 Thank you, sir. MR. COUNTRYMAN: JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Countryman, if you'll step 6 7 down and take your place back at the table. 8 MR. COUNTRYMAN: Thank you, sir. 9 (Witness excused.) 10 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Countryman, would you have 11 any objection to your original application that you 12 filed in February being marked as an exhibit and would you like to offer that into evidence? 13 MR. COUNTRYMAN: I have no objection on that, 14 15 sir. 16 JUDGE SEYER: How about, Mr. Stacey, would you 17 have any objection to that? 18 MR. STACEY: No, Your Honor. 19 JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Carter? 20 Thank you. MS. CARTER: No objection. 21 JUDGE SEYER: And Mr. Horton? 22 MR. HORTON: None here. 23 All JUDGE SEYER: Let's get that marked. It has been marked as Exhibit 3 and it is eight 24 right. pages long. Exhibit 3 is admitted into evidence. 25

Page 31 (COUNTRYMAN EXHIBIT 3 WAS RECEIVED INTO 1 2 EVIDENCE AND MADE A PART OF THIS RECORD.) 3 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Mr. Countryman, just 4 to confirm, you don't have any further evidence to 5 present? 6 MR. COUNTRYMAN: No, sir. 7 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Then Ms. Carter, you 8 may call your first witness. 9 MS. CARTER: Thanks, Judge. Liberty calls 10 Jeff Westfall who is appearing by WebEx. 11 JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Mr. Westfall, would you 12 raise your right hand, please. 13 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you give in this hearing shall be the truth, the whole 14 15 truth, and nothing but the truth? 16 THE WITNESS: I do. 17 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. Go ahead, Ms. 18 Carter. 19 MS. CARTER: Thank you. 20 JEFFERY WESTFALL, 21 having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified 2.2 as follows: 23 DIRECT EXAMINATION 24 BY MS. CARTER: 25 0. Jeff, if you'll please state your full name

Page 32 1 and spell it for the court reporter. 2 Α. It is Jeffery Westfall, J-e-f-f-e-r-y W-e-s-t-f-a-l-l. 3 By whom are you employed and in what capacity? 4 Q. I'm employed by Liberty Utility Service Corp. 5 Α. I am the Central Region Senior Director of Electric 6 7 Operations for Transmission and Distribution. 8 Q. And are you testifying today on behalf of the 9 Empire District Electric Company d/b/a Liberty? 10 Α. Yes. When did you first come to work for Empire? 11 Q. December 4, 1989. 12 Α. 13 Q. Did you prepare and prefile rebuttal testimony in this case? 14 15 Yes, I did. Α. And has that been marked Exhibit 100 for 16 0. identification? 17 18 Α. Yes, it has. 19 Do you have any corrections for that prefiled Q. 20 rebuttal testimony? 21 Α. I do not. 22 Q. If I asked you those same questions today, 23 would your answers be substantially the same? 24 Α. Yes. 25 Q. And are all of those answers true and correct,

Page 33 to the best of your information, knowledge, and belief? 1 2 Α. Yes. MS. CARTER: I would offer Exhibit 100 for 3 4 admission and tender Mr. Westfall for cross-examination. JUDGE SEYER: All right. Is there any 5 6 objection to Mr. Westfall's direct testimony coming into 7 evidence? 8 MR. STACEY: No objection from Staff, Your 9 Honor. 10 MR. HORTON: No objection from White River. 11 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Countryman, any objection? 12 MR. COUNTRYMAN: No, sir. 13 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Then Exhibit 100 is admitted into evidence. 14 15 (LIBERTY'S EXHIBIT 100 WAS RECEIVED INTO 16 EVIDENCE AND MADE A PART OF THIS RECORD.) 17 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Horton, do you have any 18 questions for Mr. Westfall? 19 MR. HORTON: I do not. 20 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Stacey? 21 MR. STACEY: I do not, Your Honor. 22 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Countryman, do you have any 23 questions for Mr. Westfall? 24 MR. COUNTRYMAN: No, sir. 25 JUDGE SEYER: Any questions from the

Page 34 1 Commissioners? All right. Hearing none. Thank you for 2 your testimony, Mr. Westfall. You're excused. 3 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 4 (Witness excused.) JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Carter, do you have any 5 further witnesses to call? 6 7 MS. CARTER: We do not, Judge. Thank you. 8 JUDGE SEYER: Then Mr. Horton, call your first 9 witness. 10 MR. HORTON: Okay. At this time I would call 11 Beau Jackson as my witness representing White River 12 Valley Electric Cooperative. 13 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Mr. Jackson is 14 appearing via WebEx. Mr. Jackson, would you raise your 15 right hand, please. Thank you. 16 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you 17 give in this hearing shall be the truth, the whole 18 truth, and nothing but the truth? 19 THE WITNESS: I do. 20 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. Go ahead, 21 Mr. Horton. 22 BEAU JACKSON, 23 having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified 24 as follows: 25 DIRECT EXAMINATION

Page 35 1 BY MR. HORTON: 2 Q. Can you please state and spell your name for 3 the record? 4 Α. Sure. It's Beau Jackson, B-e-a-u J-a-c-k-s-o-n. 5 Mr. Jackson, what is your present job title at 6 0. 7 White River? 8 Α. Vice President Chief Engineering Officer. And are you familiar with the engineering that 9 0. 10 White River does in relation to its distribution lines 11 and systems? 12 Α. Yes. 13 0. You had an opportunity to review the application in this case that was filed by 14 Mr. Countryman; is that accurate? 15 16 Α. Yes. 17 0. And you worked on a response to that 18 application that we filed in this case under your 19 verification sworn testimony that the information in the response of White River Valley Electric was truthful and 20 21 accurate; is that true? 22 Α. Yes. And just to give a little background in the 23 0. rebuttal testimony that was filed that you verified, you 24 had included an Exhibit A to that rebuttal testimony. 25

Page 36 1 Do you have that Exhibit A in front of you? 2 Α. I do. In review of that Exhibit A, can you explain 3 0. 4 to us the nature of the services that are being provided by both White River and Liberty to the Countryman 5 property? 6 7 Α. So in the exhibit highlighted in blue line is 8 Empire's existing facilities coming in serving the home White River's existing line runs east and 9 in question. 10 west represented by the brown line, solid line. And for us to be able to serve this Mr. Countryman's home that 11 12 currently is served by Empire, or Liberty, is represented by the dashed line coming off an existing 13 pole and extending the lines for service in coming in 14 15 routing similar to Empire but coming from the south. It would require probably around about two to three poles 16 17 in addition to some retirement from Empire's side of their facilities. 18 19 What kind of an estimated span of feet are we 0. talking about for that line extension for White River to 20 21 serve the Countryman home that Liberty is now serving? 22 Between 300 to 500 feet. Α. 23 And you've evaluated White River's position to 0. serve that structure; is that accurate? 24 25 Α. Yes.

Page 37 And you've concluded based on the information 1 0. 2 that you have at this time, the application that was 3 filed by Mr. Countryman, that it's not property that we 4 can serve; is that accurate? Based on the statute, yes. 5 Α. Okay. Although you'd like to serve it, 6 Q. Yes. 7 you believe that the law prohibits White River from 8 serving the Countryman home; is that true? 9 That is correct. Α. 10 MR. HORTON: I don't have any further 11 questions for Mr. Jackson. 12 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Ms. Carter, do you have any questions on cross-examination? 13 14 MS. CARTER: No questions. Thank you. JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Stacey, any questions? 15 16 MR. STACEY: Maybe just a couple, Your Honor. 17 Good morning, Mr. Jackson. 18 THE WITNESS: Morning. 19 CROSS-EXAMINATION 20 BY MR. STACEY: 21 Q. There's no territorial agreement between 22 Liberty and White River in that area; is that correct? 23 That is correct. Α. What would the cost be associated if White 24 0. 25 River was ordered to put the line and poles and other

Page 38 services in? 1 2 Α. Depending on the route but estimated between 8 3 to \$10,000. Would that have an effect on other White River 4 0. customers in reference to how much would their bills go 5 up or is there potential for? 6 7 Α. Well, being that it's adding to serve an 8 addition I would not say it would impact the resident 9 membership rates. 10 MR. STACEY: All right. Nothing further, Your 11 Honor. JUDGE SEYER: All right. Mr. Countryman, do 12 you have any questions for Mr. Jackson? 13 14 MR. COUNTRYMAN: No, sir. 15 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank you. Are 16 there any questions from the Commissioners? 17 All right. Hearing none. Thank you for your 18 testimony, Mr. Jackson. 19 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 20 (Witness excused.) 21 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Horton, do you have any other witnesses to call? 2.2 23 MR. HORTON: I do not. 24 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Horton, would you like to 25 offer that Exhibit 300 into evidence -- I'm sorry, not

Page 39 200, I believe. 1 300. 2 MR. HORTON: That would be fine if we could 3 make that part of the record. I realize that there was not a prefiled exhibit on our part which was 4 5 intentional. It may be better just to have it part of the record and labeled as Exhibit 200 if it can be and T 6 7 would offer it for that purpose. 8 JUDGE SEYER: Okay. That would be the prefiled rebuttal testimony with Exhibit A, total of six 9 10 Is there any objection to that? pages. 11 MR. STACEY: No objection from Staff. 12 MS. CARTER: No objection from Liberty. 13 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Countryman? No, sir, no objection. 14 MR. COUNTRYMAN: JUDGE SEYER: Then that Exhibit 200 will be 15 admitted into evidence. 16 17 (WHITE RIVER'S EXHIBIT 200 WAS RECEIVED INTO 18 EVIDENCE AND MADE A PART OF THIS RECORD.) 19 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Stacey, call your first 20 witness. 21 MR. STACEY: Staff calls Alan Bax. 22 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Mr. Bax is here in the hearing room. Mr. Bax, would you raise your right 23 24 hand, please. Thank you. 25 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you

Page 40 give in this hearing shall be the truth, the whole 1 2 truth, and nothing but the truth? 3 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir. 4 JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. MR. STACEY: Good morning, Mr. Bax. 5 6 MR. BAX: Good morning. 7 ALAN BAX, 8 having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified 9 as follows: 10 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. STACEY: 11 12 Q. Will you please state and spell your name for 13 the record? Alan J. Bax, A-l-a-n J. B-a-x. 14 Α. 15 By whom are you employed? 0. I'm employed by the Missouri Public Service 16 Α. 17 Commission. 18 Q. What is your position there? Α. 19 Staff engineer. 20 Have you prepared and filed testimony in this 0. 21 proceeding? 2.2 Α. Yes. 23 Specifically rebuttal testimony filed on 0. August 22, 2022, as set forth in Exhibit 300? 24 25 Α. Yes.

Page 41 1 Do you have any changes or corrections to make 0. 2 to this document set forth in Exhibit 300? 3 Α. I do not. If I were to ask you the same questions in 4 Q. this document today, would your answers be the same? 5 6 Α. Yes, they would. 7 Are those questions and answers true and Q. 8 correct, to the best of your knowledge and belief? 9 Yes, they are. Α. 10 MR. STACEY: Your Honor, I offer Exhibit 300 to be admitted into evidence. 11 12 JUDGE SEYER: Are there any objections? 13 MS. CARTER: No objection from Liberty. No objection from White River. 14 MR. HORTON: 15 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Countryman? 16 MR. COUNTRYMAN: I have no objection. 17 Thank you. Then Exhibit 300 is JUDGE SEYER: admitted into evidence. 18 19 (STAFF'S EXHIBIT 300 WAS RECEIVED INTO 20 EVIDENCE AND MADE A PART OF THIS RECORD.) 21 MR. STACEY: Staff tenders Mr. Bax for cross-examination. 2.2 23 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Mr. Countryman, I'm going to give you the opportunity first this time to ask 24 25 any questions of the witness. Do you have any

Page 42 1 questions? 2 MR. COUNTRYMAN: I have copies of what Mr. Bax 3 has submitted, and I have no further questions to him. 4 JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Carter, do you have any questions for the witness? 5 6 MS. CARTER: No questions. Thank you. 7 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Horton? 8 MR. HORTON: No questions from White River. JUDGE SEYER: Any questions from the 9 10 Commissioners? 11 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: No questions, Judge. 12 Thank you. Commissioner Holsman. 13 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Mr. Bax, you're excused. 14 15 THE WITNESS: Thank you, Judge. 16 (Witness excused.) 17 JUDGE SEYER: All right. Do the parties have 18 any further witnesses they'd like to call today? 19 MR. STACEY: No more witnesses from Staff, 20 Your Honor. 21 MS. CARTER: Nothing else from Liberty. Thank 2.2 you. 23 MR. HORTON: No other witnesses or evidence 24 from White River. 25 JUDGE SEYER: And none from you,

Page 43 1 Mr. Countryman, correct? 2 MR. COUNTRYMAN: That's correct, sir. 3 JUDGE SEYER: Are there any other matters that need to be addressed before we adjourn? 4 MR. STACEY: None from Staff, Your Honor. 5 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Countryman? 6 7 MR. COUNTRYMAN: No, sir. 8 JUDGE SEYER: In the procedural schedule there are deadline dates for briefs. Do the parties still 9 10 wish to submit briefs? MR. HORTON: White River does not. We would 11 12 be fine submitting the matter on the record created 13 today. 14 MS. CARTER: Same for Liberty. 15 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Stacey? MR. STACEY: I believe we can base it on the 16 17 record today, Judge. 18 JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Countryman, do you 19 understand the question I asked? 20 MR. COUNTRYMAN: No, sir. Would you repeat 21 that? 22 JUDGE SEYER: Way back when a few months ago 23 the parties submitted a joint procedural schedule including a date for today's evidentiary hearing. 24 25 MR. COUNTRYMAN: Yes, sir.

1	Page 44 JUDGE SEYER: Also in that schedule were dates
2	to submit briefs, and briefs are just a summary of what
3	the evidence was today and how that evidence supports a
4	particular party's position. It's kind of a formal
5	document. What I'm asking the parties is do they still
6	wish to submit those briefs or do they want to waive
7	briefs and not write these briefs, not submit them to
8	the Commission and just submit the case on the record to
9	the Commissioners? So far all the other parties would
10	like to waive that. I suspect that you weren't planning
11	on writing a brief.
12	MR. COUNTRYMAN: No, sir, let the evidence as
13	shown.
14	JUDGE SEYER: Then we will waive submission of
15	briefs. And is there anything further before we
16	adjourn? All right. Then this evidentiary hearing is
17	adjourned and we'll go off the record.
18	CHAIRMAN SILVEY: Thank you, Judge.
19	MS. CARTER: Thank you.
20	MR. HORTON: Thank you, Your Honor.
21	MR. STACEY: Thank you, Your Honor.
22	MR. COUNTRYMAN: Thank you, Your Honor.
23	(Thereupon, the hearing adjourned at 9:55 a.m.)
24	
25	

1	Page 45 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
2	STATE OF MISSOURI)
3	COUNTY OF COLE)
4	I, Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640, do
5	hereby certify that I was authorized to and did
6	stenographically report the foregoing Public Service
7	Commission evidentiary hearing and that the transcript,
8	pages 1 through 44, is a true record of my stenographic
9	notes.
10	I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
11	employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties,
12	nor am I a relative or counsel connected with the
13	action, nor am I financially interested in the action.
14	Dated this 16th day of October, 2022.
15 16	Beverly Jean Bentch
17	Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640
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