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STATE OF MISSOURI

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Public Hearing

September 25, 2024

Branson, Missouri

Volume 7

In the Matter of the Request of ) File No.  
Liberty Utilities (Missouri Water) ) WR-2024-0104  
LLC d/b/a Liberty for Authority to )  
Implement a General Rate Increase )  
for Water and Wastewater Service )  
Provided in its Missouri Service )  
Areas )

JOHN CLARK, Presiding,  
SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE  
KAYLA HAHN, Chair,  
MAIDA J. COLEMAN,  
JASON R. HOLSMAN,  
JOHN MITCHELL,  
COMMISSIONERS.

(Starting time of the proceedings: 7:23 PM)

REPORTED BY: KAREN VEST, Registered Professional  
Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, and Certified  
Court Reporter within and for the State of Missouri

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## A P P E A R A N C E S

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P R O C E E D I N G S

IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGREED that these proceedings may be put into writing via shorthand by Karen Vest, RPR, CRR, a Registered Professional Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, and Certified Court Reporter in the state of Missouri, and thereafter be transcribed into English; and that such transcription shall constitute and be accepted as the official record of such proceedings.

(Whereupon, proceedings began at 7:23 PM on Wednesday, September 25, 2024, with appearances as noted.)

(Commissioners Hahn, Coleman, and Holsman appear by videoconference for this proceeding).

JUDGE CLARK: Good evening. Today is September 25th of 2024, and the current time is 7:23 PM.

Now the question-and-answer portion of the local public hearing just ended. If you had questions, I hope that you were able to get those questions answered.

1           The Missouri Public Service Commission  
2 has set aside this time today for a local public  
3 hearing in a case, File Number WR-2024-0104, which  
4 is a general rate case captioned as In the Matter of  
5 the Request of Liberty Utilities (Missouri Water)  
6 LLC doing business as Liberty for Authority to  
7 Implement a General Rate Increase For Water and  
8 Wastewater Service Provided in its Missouri Service  
9 Areas.

10           My name is John Clark. I'm the  
11 regulatory law judge overseeing this public hearing  
12 today.

13           The Missouri Public Service Commission  
14 regulates the rate charged -- rates charged by  
15 investor-run utility companies in Missouri to ensure  
16 that those rates are just and reasonable. The  
17 commission also regulates the quality of service and  
18 the safety of operations of investor-owned  
19 utilities.

20           Now the commission is made up of five  
21 commissioners: the commission's chair, Kayla Hahn,  
22 and the commissioners Maida Coleman, Jason Holsman,  
23 Glen Kolkmeyer, and John Mitchell. The  
24 commissioners are appointed by the Governor to a  
25 fixed term and confirmed by the Senate.

1           The commissioners employ a staff of  
2 engineers, accountants, attorneys, financial  
3 analysts, and other specialists in the area of  
4 utility regulation.

5           With me today to my left is  
6 Commissioner John Mitchell. Participating by Webex,  
7 uh, and also listening to this hearing are the  
8 chair, Kayla Hahn, and Commissioners Maida Coleman  
9 and Jason Holsman.

10           The court reporter to my right is  
11 taking down everything that is said so that the  
12 commission can review it later, um, if they want to,  
13 and any commissioners who are unable to attend will  
14 be able to review it as well.

15           Commissioner Mitchell, would you like  
16 to make an opening remark?

17           COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Thank you,  
18 judge.

19           And on behalf of the entire, uh,  
20 Missouri Public Service Commission, I would like to,  
21 uh, welcome you and thank you for being here  
22 tonight.

23           Um, this is a very important part of  
24 collecting information and hearing from the  
25 customers, um, and getting to know better what your

1 thoughts and feelings on this matter are.

2 As the judge said, uh, the court  
3 reporter will record your testimony so that it  
4 becomes part of the case record.

5 And as part of the case record, um, I  
6 want to reassure you that your comments, um, and  
7 testimony here tonight will be an important part of  
8 our deliberation in this case.

9 So again, thank you for being here.  
10 The entire commission, um, appreciates your effort  
11 to come out and let us know your thoughts.

12 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Commissioner.  
13 At this time I'm going to ask counsel present to  
14 enter their appearance for the record, starting with  
15 Liberty Water.

16 MS. CARTER: Diana Carter for Liberty  
17 Utilities (Missouri Water) LLC.

18 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Carter.  
19 On behalf of the commission staff?

20 MS. ASLIN: Casi Aslin for staff.

21 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Aslin. On  
22 behalf of the Office of Public Counsel?

23 MR. POSTON: Marc Poston for the Office  
24 of Public Counsel.

25 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Poston.

1 And there are a number of intervenors present in  
2 this case. Are any intervenors present? I hear or  
3 see none.

4 Now for those who would like to provide  
5 comments to the commission today, I'm going to call  
6 the names who signed up on this sheet in the order  
7 they appear.

8 When I call your name, please come down  
9 to the front and, uh, adjust the microphone so that  
10 you can speak to the commission.

11 At that time for the record I'm going  
12 to ask that you state and spell your name. I will  
13 also swear you in, since comments before the  
14 commission are taken under oath.

15 I'm going to try, uh, while there  
16 aren't an excess number of people that have signed  
17 up to talk tonight, so that everybody wants to talk  
18 can talk, I will probably limit the comments  
19 somewhat.

20 So at -- at some point if you're  
21 offering comments and it starts to get repetitive,  
22 um, I may let you know so that you can cede time to  
23 somebody else who wants to tell the commission  
24 something.

25 Um, also after you have made your

1 comments, please stay at the podium for just a  
2 second or two. I may have questions for you, one of  
3 the commissioners may have questions for you, or any  
4 of the attorneys here may have a question for you.  
5 They may not, but I want to give them an opportunity  
6 to ask if they do have one.

7 And for any commissioners or attorneys  
8 who have questions, I'm not gonna be asking if there  
9 are questions. Just go ahead and chime up and let  
10 me know, and I will take time to recognize you and  
11 you can ask your question.

12 Now the commission, and I'm -- I'm  
13 including myself in that today, we can't answer your  
14 questions. This is -- this is comment hearing. Um,  
15 during the Q-and-A portion you got a large number of  
16 facts from the company about this case. Those are  
17 facts which we're not allowed to hear yet.

18 Um, and part of the reason why is  
19 because we have to remain impartial until after the  
20 evidence is presented for this case at the  
21 evidentiary hearing.

22 So if you have questions, I would  
23 encourage you to talk to company representatives who  
24 are here or the staff or public counsel  
25 representatives that are here.



1 I also know that -- that these things  
2 can sometimes get a little emotional, so I'm going  
3 to ask that you give everybody who is speaking, um,  
4 their opportunity to speak and treat them as you  
5 would like to be treated.

6 Okay. With that in mind, I will call  
7 the first name. Kelly Krauch?

8 **THE WITNESS: Yes.**

9 (A member of the audience  
10 approaches the microphone.)

11 JUDGE CLARK: I said it right?

12 **THE WITNESS: You did. I'm impressed.**

13 JUDGE CLARK: I was a little surprised.

14 And would you state and spell your name for the  
15 record?

16 **THE WITNESS: Yes. My name is Kelly**  
17 **Krauch, and my first name is K-E-L-L-Y. Last name**  
18 **is K-R-A-U-C-H.**

19 JUDGE CLARK: Would you raise your  
20 right hand to be sworn.

21 (The witness is placed under oath  
22 by Judge Clark.)

23 JUDGE CLARK: And what would you like  
24 to tell the commission this evening?

25 /

\* \* \* \* \*

KELLY KRAUCH,

of lawful age, having been called as a witness and being first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

Oh. Well, first, thank you for allowing me to speak tonight. The last time I did this was in 2015, so it's been a while.

Um, I wanted to just go over some of the facts and information that our subdivision specifically, um, has gone through over the last several years and what this rate increase would look like to our small area.

Um, so one of the shuttles that we had, um, in 2021, we had six outages where our well would go down and we would have no water. Sometimes it would be a couple hours. Sometimes it could be a couple days.

Um, in 2022 we had four. 2023 we had four. One was a major outage with multiple days, um, that I know where they did work as quickly as they could to get a new pump in, but it was coming from St. Louis so it was kind of a mess.

Um, and then so far in 2021 -- or 2024, I believe there's been two outages.

1           So what I'd like to start kind of going  
2 into is the -- based off of the numbers that were  
3 proposed from Liberty on Liberty's documents, um,  
4 the rate increase that they would be proposing for  
5 the sewer, our sewer would be over 181 percent of  
6 our current rate. And for water, it would be 131  
7 percent over our current rate.

8           Right now our average bill is about \$72  
9 per month, waste sewer and water. The average that  
10 would --

11           JUDGE CLARK: Did you say \$72?

12           **THE WITNESS: Yes.**

13           JUDGE CLARK: Thank you.

14           **THE WITNESS: Yes. The average that**  
15 **Liberty is proposing is approximately \$193. That's**  
16 **an additional estimated amount of \$121 a month.**

17           For Rose -- we're actually neighbors  
18 over here. Um, when we were talking about the cost  
19 of what that is, for about 193 would be more than  
20 her electric bill. And that's just for sewer and  
21 water.

22           Um, I struggle deeply with the sewer  
23 and the septic system. Um, I have to -- I get to  
24 work from home. I have an office in my home, so I  
25 have been working from home for the last five

1 years.

2           During that time I had a septic truck  
3 come to the house one time, and the only time that  
4 was to remove the filter. I have not seen a truck  
5 there to pump our tank in -- since 2020 is the last  
6 time that I know someone was out to pump our septic  
7 system.

8           When I called to ask, Liberty staff  
9 does not know what I'm talking about. They're like,  
10 "What? What do you mean, pump your system?"  
11 Somebody has to come pump the tank every couple  
12 years to make sure we don't have backups.

13           Um, the removal of the filter is also  
14 concerning. Um, there's a reason they have the  
15 filters within these systems to help avoid clogs,  
16 clogged --

17           JUDGE CLARK: So they were removing,  
18 not replacing the filter?

19           THE WITNESS: Correct. They removed  
20 all of the filters.

21           One of the gentlemen in our  
22 neighborhood at the very end of the road had a  
23 septic backup that came into his basement. And  
24 following -- we were working with Dave Spratt, um,  
25 on what would we do with the situation.

1                   And following that situation with that  
2 neighbor, Liberty trucks or a septic truck came out  
3 to every household, lifted our tank. We each have  
4 an individual septic tank that then feeds into a  
5 heat shield, if that makes sense.

6                   JUDGE CLARK: Yes.

7                   THE WITNESS: Um, and so they came in,  
8 took the lids off, removed the filter, left.

9                   I was told at one point, I believe it  
10 might be in a conversation Dave Spratt and I had,  
11 when he spoke with Liberty trying to figure out when  
12 our tanks were pumped because I couldn't get an  
13 answer.

14                   Um, and I believe they informed him  
15 that my gate was locked when they tried to come. I  
16 don't have a lock on my gate. I've never had a lock  
17 on my gate.

18                   I actually have a very large double  
19 panel gate to make sure that the septic truck could  
20 get back there in the event we ever needed that to  
21 happen. Additionally I'm home all the time because  
22 I work from home.

23                   Um, so through my research, um, I  
24 pulled the docket and a lot of the documents from  
25 the docket, um, for this particular case to see what

1 the basis was for the request for the increase.

2 In one of the documents that was filed,  
3 in one of the initial, um, earlier cases that was  
4 then combined was a 2023 asset management capital  
5 improvement plan by Liberty.

6 This plan outlines, um, what they want  
7 to do, what they have done, um, with each of our  
8 properties, um, from putting in the generators to  
9 the amounts budgeted.

10 What I'm struggling with is on page 6,  
11 7, and 8 of this document, it lists that the amount  
12 budgeted for repairs was 16.82 million.

13 The amount spent on repairs was 5.6  
14 million, leaving what I would consider a surplus of  
15 11.2 million dollars.

16 Where's that 11.2 million? And we're  
17 talking about increasing the rate at 180 percent  
18 when there's 11.2 million dollars that wasn't used.

19 Um, in March of 2022, DNR opened -- or  
20 PSC, one of you guys opened up an investigation into  
21 Liberty due to a multitude of issues. Um, that is  
22 its own separate document.

23 I could spend hours up here, which I  
24 know you don't have time to do and I'm sure you have  
25 access to it. But this document was incredibly

1 concerning. Um --

2 JUDGE CLARK: Is that also in the case  
3 file?

4 THE WITNESS: Yes. The file number on  
5 this order or staff report is WO-2022-0253.

6 So from this document and the document  
7 of their plan, I was able to look and see, according  
8 to this report, Liberty has 12,600 customers  
9 approximately. Of that, 40 households is what our  
10 subdivision is in comparison to the 12,600.

11 So less than 1 percent. It's actually  
12 less than half of a percent of 12,600. And compared  
13 to, say, Bolivar, which has 4,600 customers, that's  
14 40 percent.

15 So to ask our subdivision our smaller  
16 area to pay the same dollar amount doesn't seem  
17 reasonable. We're -- we have less wear and tear.  
18 Um, we have less people using facilities.

19 So that would generally not be -- we  
20 shouldn't have to pay for -- I understand the basis  
21 behind it, but it's very much a struggle when we're  
22 talking about 181 percent.

23 That's a week's worth of groceries for  
24 some families, and we have quite a few families in  
25 our area who do not have a great income. They might

1 live in a trailer. That kind of money would be  
2 detrimental to a lot of these families.

3 Um, one of the struggles that I found  
4 in reviewing documentation was we have in Valley  
5 Woods 4,100 feet of main line with four pumps and  
6 6,200 feet of sewer line. Bolivar, for example, has  
7 500,000 feet of main line, 24 pumps, and 400,000  
8 sewer line.

9 Would -- my opinion, but I feel like  
10 there would be more of a pro rata potentially if  
11 there's this much cost, um, there should be  
12 allocations as to what those values are if that's an  
13 option.

14 Um, because we're -- the difference is  
15 catastrophic compared to what we have for a line,  
16 what it would take to replace our lines versus what  
17 it would take to replace the city of Bolivar.

18 Um, there is land that is in our  
19 subdivision, um, 2.1 acres that is known as green  
20 space that is owned by Liberty. Um, until this  
21 evening I don't believe they were aware that they  
22 were the owners.

23 Um, we pulled the documentation from  
24 Christian County from the GIS tax records, and they  
25 are the owners. There has been no maintenance to



1 that land ever by Liberty except for one walkway or  
2 driveway area that they use.

3 So 2.1 acres is a lot of -- lot of  
4 land, lot of grass, lot of trees. And a lot of  
5 critters is the best way I can describe that. I  
6 don't want snakes. There's a lot of them.

7 When it's not maintained, those  
8 critters get over there. We have a lot of farms  
9 near us. And then they start to come up into our  
10 homes and they start to come up into our property.

11 So a couple of our neighbors, Brian and  
12 Jason and some of the other, um, people have taken  
13 it upon themselves to mow it, all the time, so that  
14 it is maintained.

15 Um, there's also picnic tables down  
16 there. So at one point, I believe, prior to Liberty  
17 acquiring the property, it was used as a park area.  
18 So families and kids go down there and have a great  
19 place to go sled riding.

20 There's safety concerns with it not  
21 being taken care of or even with one of our people  
22 taking care of it, if something happens and they get  
23 hurt, who does that fall on if there's something  
24 that goes wrong?

25 Um, billing issues. I have with me, if

1 you would like to see them, bills that have been a  
2 disaster, to say the least.

3 Um, on June 5th I received a bill when  
4 I believe Liberty switched to their new billing  
5 system. And that bill charged me a meter size of  
6 one inch at a flat rate for the sewer \$126.47. My  
7 rate has been \$42 for quite some time, so I said,  
8 "Whoa, what is this?"

9 Um, contacted Liberty. The gentleman I  
10 spoke to was very kind, but he couldn't help me. He  
11 said, "I don't know. I have to escalate this. I  
12 will find out and we will -- somebody will get back  
13 to you within a week."

14 And I said, "Oh, well, this bill is  
15 coming due. If I don't pay it, they're gonna shut  
16 me off, and I can't have that -- I mean have  
17 access."

18 He said there was nothing he could do  
19 and I would just have to hope they got back to me  
20 sooner.

21 Um, a couple of days later I received  
22 another bill for the exact same billing cycle. This  
23 one charged me a meter at five-eighths with a flat  
24 rate of \$50.59. Better, but still wrong.

25 Again, same exact billing cycle, from

1 March 25th, 2024, through April 25th, 2024. So two  
2 bills received within a very short time, within  
3 days.

4 The next month I received a bill. They  
5 increased my meter again to one inch and billed me  
6 this time 105.39 just for the sewer.

7 So at this point I contacted David  
8 Spratt because I was getting nowhere with calling  
9 customer service. Everyone I spoke to was -- they  
10 just couldn't do anything.

11 It had to be escalated up to someone,  
12 but I could never speak to the person that it was  
13 supposed to be escalated to. So I contacted Mr.  
14 Spratt, talked to him, told him what was going on.  
15 He jumped on it, got involved, and was able to do  
16 whatever he did magically and they finally fixed my  
17 bill.

18 Um, so the next three -- or the next  
19 two bills were correct. But as of today, I have not  
20 received a bill for this month.

21 The bills are due approximately the  
22 25th, which would be today. But even online it  
23 shows my balance as zero.

24 So I don't have a bill for the last 30  
25 days that has been paid. It doesn't show that I

1 have a bill.

2 Um, one of the other neighbors had  
3 called to see what was going on, and they said, "Oh,  
4 we don't know. We're having billing problems. Be  
5 prepared to pay two bills next month."

6 That's brutal, especially when you are  
7 living on a budget and you're trying to figure out  
8 how to make it work.

9 Um, the first time that I did call, the  
10 gentleman that I spoke with, um, struggled with  
11 believing that I didn't change my meter size -- or  
12 my -- he said, "Well, you have new -- a new -- you  
13 have the meter line in, right?"

14 No, I haven't changed the lines. I  
15 promise I haven't dug up my yard. It is exactly as  
16 it has been since I moved here in 2012.

17 JUDGE CLARK: And I hate to rush you at  
18 all, but we do want to give a lot of people an  
19 opportunity to speak as well.

20 THE WITNESS: Sure. I'm almost done.  
21 Last page here.

22 So the big concern that I have is that  
23 in the document, the second document that I  
24 presented to you, um, it discusses their billing  
25 issues. It discusses the fact that they're charging

1 for, um, water pumped versus -- and the gallons not  
2 matching the amounts that have been pumped.

3 JUDGE CLARK: And that's the 0253 case  
4 you mentioned?

5 THE WITNESS: That is -- yes.

6 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you.

7 THE WITNESS: Yes. So within that they  
8 are -- the amount that they're charging people is  
9 more than the amount that is showing that was  
10 pumped.

11 It's impossible for me to know how they  
12 got to this point where they said we need to file a  
13 rate increase when the billing system, the amount  
14 that they have, it's not trusted right now. It  
15 can't be trusted.

16 So how can -- the struggle is how we  
17 can be charged for the negligent billing and  
18 negligent financial structure and how they're doing  
19 it. Their own data is wrong.

20 And I will wrap it up. I have a lot  
21 more, but I won't do it.

22 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for your  
23 comments. I've got one quick question for you, and  
24 I'm going to go back to something you said at the  
25 very beginning when you were pointing out the

1 outages.

2           You said six in '21, four in '22, four  
3 in '23, and two this year so far to date. One of  
4 those you indicated was a multiday, um, outage, I  
5 believe in '23.

6           **THE WITNESS: Yes.**

7           JUDGE CLARK: Um, did you ever find out  
8 what the outages were about? And while you said  
9 that they were waiting on a pump to arrive, how did  
10 you find out what the cause of the outages were?

11           **THE WITNESS: So the only reason we**  
12 **know about the pump is because Rose and James live**  
13 **next door to the well house.**

14           **And so when someone came out to look at**  
15 **it, Brian would go over there and say, "Hey, what's**  
16 **going on?"**

17           **We were never communicated with by**  
18 **customer service. We couldn't even actually get**  
19 **them on the phone because it was weekend.**

20           **So that happened on a Saturday. Um, we**  
21 **were out of water all day Saturday till very late in**  
22 **the evening I believe Sunday and/or Monday.**

23           JUDGE CLARK: Did you -- um, did  
24 Liberty do anything to mitigate that, such as  
25 bottled water?

1 THE WITNESS: No. And when we don't  
2 have water, we can't flush our toilets.

3 So we were bringing in water from some  
4 farms down the road. They were -- I have a friend  
5 who has a farm, and they brought me buckets so we  
6 could flush our toilets, because that was the only  
7 way to do that. Can't bathe obviously because you  
8 have no water, cook.

9 But no, Liberty is -- while these folks  
10 seem super kind and they've been wonderful tonight,  
11 it -- the structural system when you try to reach  
12 someone, we don't get local people.

13 Or if they are local, they may be in  
14 Joplin and they don't know where we live or who we  
15 are. They don't get to see our face.

16 So it feels like we're not a priority.  
17 We're smaller. We're only 40 customers out of  
18 12,600.

19 So it just -- the rate -- the rate  
20 increase feels predatory. I can't imagine somebody  
21 who could say, "Sure, let's pay 181 percent more."  
22 And expect that somebody wouldn't be flabbergasted  
23 by that amount, so.

24 JUDGE CLARK: Well, thank you very much  
25 for your comments. I appreciate them.

1                   **THE WITNESS: Thank you for having me.**

2                   (End of witness testimony.)

3                   JUDGE CLARK: Brian Corban?

4                   (A member of the audience  
5                   approaches the microphone.)

6                   JUDGE CLARK: Please state and spell  
7 your name for the record.

8                   **THE WITNESS: My name is Brian,**  
9 **B-R-I-A-N. Last name is Corban, C-O-R-B-A-N.**

10                  JUDGE CLARK: And would you raise your  
11 right hand to be sworn.

12                  (The witness is placed under oath  
13                  by Judge Clark.)

14                  JUDGE CLARK: Please go ahead.

15                  \*    \*    \*    \*    \*

16                  BRIAN CORBAN,  
17 of lawful age, having been called as a witness and  
18 being first duly sworn, was examined and testified  
19 as follows:

20                  I'll be brief. Thank you for seeing us  
21 and the other folks here in the audience.

22                  During the question-and-answer session,  
23 we addressed the green space area, the 2.15 acres  
24 that Liberty was unaware that they owned.

25                  You know, at this point all I ask is



1 that what you had addressed to me as the -- the  
2 remedy that you planned on taking forward, uh, just  
3 be restated for the record.

4 Is that -- is that a fair enough  
5 question to ask?

6 JUDGE CLARK: Well, this is a local  
7 public hearing to take comments from the public.  
8 It's not evidentiary in the manner that you mean.

9 In other words, um, it sounds like what  
10 you're wanting Liberty to do is to read a commitment  
11 back onto the record and, um, that's unfortunately  
12 not what they're here for today.

13 **THE WITNESS: Okay.**

14 JUDGE CLARK: I'm here to take public  
15 comment. I mean if you want to tell me what your  
16 understanding of it is, that's fine --

17 **THE WITNESS: Okay.**

18 JUDGE CLARK: -- but I'm not gonna  
19 ask -- I'm not gonna make Liberty comment at this  
20 time.

21 **THE WITNESS: My understanding of this**  
22 **2.15 acres is that Liberty was number one not -- not**  
23 **aware that they owned it, either according to the**  
24 **Christian County tax records and, you know, they pay**  
25 **it every -- pay it every year.**

1           Also that they have acknowledged that  
2 they did not own it, that they were unaware that  
3 they owned it and that they did plan to take steps  
4 to remedy that to where that area would be  
5 maintained as Ms. Krauch had talked about.

6           The people that use that park, uh, it  
7 needs to be maintained. We recently went down and  
8 cut down two dead trees, uh, for the simple fact  
9 that had we not, at some point those trees could  
10 have fallen.

11           Whether they fell and made no noise or  
12 whether they fell and hit somebody, um, nobody in  
13 the subdivision wants that to happen, whether it be  
14 a child or adult or hit somebody's vehicle.

15           You know, in taking that into  
16 consideration it kind of takes the liability off of  
17 Liberty. So at this time I don't really have  
18 anything else to address to say --

19           JUDGE CLARK: And I believe Ms. Krauch  
20 also said that some of the neighbors were mowing the  
21 space, is that correct?

22           THE WITNESS: That's correct. Myself  
23 and another small handful, five or six, pitch in to  
24 help trim, uh, maintain by mowing the area. You  
25 know, with the use of our -- our own equipment, our

1 own money, time, gas.

2           **Whatever it takes to be able to**  
3 **maintain that area and keep it a safe area, you**  
4 **know, for people in the subdivision that do want to**  
5 **go down there and utilize that area.**

6           JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Corban, thank you  
7 very much for your comments.

8           **THE WITNESS: Thank you.**

9                           (End of witness testimony.)

10           JUDGE CLARK: George Kamm? Is there a  
11 George Kamm present?

12                           (A member of the audience  
13 approaches the microphone).

14           JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Kamm, would you  
15 please state and spell your name for the record?

16           **THE WITNESS: George Kamm, G-E-O-R-G-E,**  
17 **K-A-M-M.**

18           JUDGE CLARK: And would you raise your  
19 hand to be sworn.

20                           (The witness is placed under oath  
21 by Judge Clark.)

22           JUDGE CLARK: Please go ahead.

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GEORGE KAMM,

of lawful age, having been called as a witness and being first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

Um, some of the issues that we have have already been expressed about the upkeep and that type thing of the properties and stuff. Um, I did talk to Mr. Bruce Robinson, who is the manager from -- from Liberty, and he's agreed to come and look at our situation.

We live at Holiday Hills, um, and they've owned the property or they've taken service about -- since about 2018.

But we have had our roads resurfaced, and now the repairs that they've done, which are approximately seven of, um, are quite unsubstantial, uh, as far as putting the roads back to the same quality that they were before the, uh, leaks appeared.

In front of our house there was a leak that we had for about three and a half weeks a year ago. And, um, I called twice with no response and finally somebody showed up and -- and it has really made a mess of the road.

1 I also have talked with Mr. Eric  
2 Larson, uh, who is with Liberty. And he explained  
3 to me that I -- I had a grave difference between the  
4 water rates, um, that Liberty had sent out to the  
5 public versus what the state commission, um, the  
6 Public Service Commission had need, um, and he  
7 explained to me that they were trying to make a  
8 level field for everybody.

9 Um, so my numbers don't jibe with  
10 anything that -- that I had prepared, what we got to  
11 Liberty about two weeks ago. Our rates at Holiday  
12 Hills were gonna be substantially greater than  
13 anybody else's, which according to the document that  
14 I have here, it doesn't -- it doesn't seem to be  
15 that way.

16 He also explained to me that once the  
17 commission has made a decision, that -- that there's  
18 no repercussion, that we can't come back and make  
19 any other argument.

20 Which I would like to have some input  
21 from -- I guess from the commission before a  
22 decision is made so that we could at least evaluate,  
23 um, as -- as a group meeting -- of the group meeting  
24 all the service people from -- for Liberty Water or  
25 the customers for Liberty Water.

1 That's all I have, sir.

2 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank you, Mr.

3 Kamm. As I said, we're not here to answer questions  
4 today.

5 Um, I will tell you that the way that  
6 this generally runs is that the company files a rate  
7 case. Then the parties engage in what's called  
8 discovery and are allowed to request information  
9 from each other. And then there's an evidentiary  
10 hearing.

11 And after the evidentiary hearing, the  
12 commission will make a decision based on the  
13 evidence that's presented.

14 It's these local public hearings where  
15 we get to hear from the public, so there's no point  
16 at which -- um, at which the public works at  
17 Liberty's requests and -- and votes or approves or  
18 anything.

19 That's decided by the commission after  
20 an evidentiary hearing or if there is a -- or if the  
21 parties are able to reach an agreement.

22 **THE WITNESS: The only other thing that**  
23 **I would add is that a lot of us are retired. And I**  
24 **would like to have that -- not only in Holiday Hills**  
25 **but all of the customers across the board, uh, these**

1 rate increases, some of them are as high as 180  
2 percent.

3 Um, it -- it's going to put a real  
4 burden on somebody that's on a fixed income with  
5 limited sources of income. So I would like to -- I  
6 would like the commission to take that into  
7 consideration also.

8 JUDGE CLARK: And what you're telling  
9 me is -- you're telling me that if you're retired,  
10 if you no longer have any income coming in that's  
11 not social security or pension or something like  
12 that, there's no way to absorb a rate increase?

13 THE WITNESS: Well, the only -- the  
14 only thing that you have is our 2.1 percent increase  
15 in our social security which everybody's after, so  
16 that -- that soon disappears.

17 Um, on a fixed income where those are  
18 the only two things that you have as income, it does  
19 make it very difficult, um, to budget for that extra  
20 increase.

21 JUDGE CLARK: That's been said at other  
22 public hearings on this case, and I will note it for  
23 this one.

24 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

25 JUDGE CLARK: And thank you for your

1 comments, Mr. Kamm.

2 (End of witness testimony.)

3 JUDGE CLARK: Larry -- is it Cardin?

4 **THE WITNESS: Cathey.**

5 JUDGE CLARK: Larry Cathey.

6 **THE WITNESS: Just like a girl.**

7 (A member of the audience

8 approaches the microphone.)

9 JUDGE CLARK: And Mr. Cathey, would you  
10 state and spell your name for the record?

11 **THE WITNESS: Larry Cathey, L-A-R-R-Y,**  
12 **C-A-T-H-E-Y.**

13 JUDGE CLARK: And would you raise your  
14 right hand to be sworn.

15 (The witness is placed under oath  
16 by Judge Clark.)

17 JUDGE CLARK: Go ahead, please.

18 \* \* \* \* \*

19 LARRY CATHEY,

20 of lawful age, having been called as a witness and  
21 being first duly sworn, was examined and testified  
22 as follows:

23 Most of what I was gonna say I can't  
24 say because of the (indistinct) so I'm going to  
25 condense it.



1 I represent 62 families that's on a  
2 well that they're wanting to increase. Of those 62  
3 families, half are retirees on a fixed income.  
4 Eight are medically retired and on a fixed income.

5 This increase is absurd. Now I know  
6 they need to recoup money, and I think they said  
7 they can, but not at this rate. This is stupid.  
8 It's stupid for the people, and it's also stupid for  
9 the state.

10 Part of this request, I got a list of  
11 all the names and addresses that would help a  
12 customer. There's six things on this list on their  
13 website. Five of those help the company. It don't  
14 help the customer, at all.

15 It saves them money. It saves them  
16 time. Does that come back to the customer? No,  
17 they want to increase. That's not fair. Not to --  
18 not to the 12,000 people, not to the 62 families  
19 that's on my well.

20 JUDGE CLARK: Well, what are the five  
21 things that you believe benefit Liberty but not  
22 the --

23 **THE WITNESS: The whole list, and I**  
24 **don't want to go into them. And it's public -- it's**  
25 **public knowledge.**

1 I mean they want to put in meters that  
2 can be monitored at their office. Great. That  
3 saves them money because they don't have to have  
4 somebody come out and be on salary to read them.  
5 They don't have to pay for gas for the vehicle.  
6 That saves them money.

7 But does it save the customer money?  
8 No. It gives us an increase because they want to  
9 put them in.

10 Again, stupid. I'm fine with what I've  
11 got. All I'm asking for is quality water and it to  
12 be distributed. They don't have to pay the state  
13 for the -- for the product that they sell.

14 They sell a product. That product  
15 already belonged belongs to the state and these  
16 people. He's just providing distribution. And  
17 checking the quality every once in a while.

18 Now I -- I've got no problem with our  
19 well. We got fantastic crews that work on them. I  
20 know most of them personally.

21 I (indistinct) to apologize for Steve  
22 because he scared the crap out of me today. We had  
23 a outage and it was at a bad time.

24 JUDGE CLARK: Do you have frequent  
25 outages?

1 THE WITNESS: No. No, we don't.

2 The -- the well was part of a subdivision that was  
3 built by Tommy Bilyeu, who is the assessor for  
4 Christian County. He's also a Baptist minister.  
5 He's also a good citizen.

6 His son took it over when Tommy died.  
7 Both of them have a degenerative eye problem and  
8 almost blind. He's also a pastor.

9 So they sold it to Water Technologies.  
10 Water Technologies sold it to Liberty. We've never  
11 had a whole lot of problems with outages to the  
12 pump.

13 Pump's 18 years old. 20 years in May,  
14 okay. They put it in as fast as they could. They  
15 had to pull more cases than they planned on. The  
16 first pump didn't fit and had to get another one.  
17 They got it done as quick as they could.

18 They provided everybody that wanted it  
19 water. They came out with cases of water, and so we  
20 got no problem with that.

21 We got a problem with this much raise  
22 is what we got a problem with. I would recommend  
23 you look at what New York did with their request.  
24 They cut it by 56 percent and prorated it over a  
25 three-year period.

1 JUDGE CLARK: You said -- you said New  
2 York?

3 THE WITNESS: Yes. They cut it by 56  
4 percent and prorated it over a three-year period.  
5 I've done a lot of research too, not just on your  
6 website. On a lot of websites.

7 I've got some other information, but  
8 like I say, I can't -- I can't say it.

9 I'm just saying that the 62 families  
10 that we're on -- it's not gonna affect me that much.  
11 I'm retired military. Both my wife and I are  
12 retired. I've had two companies. I was in the Army  
13 29 years. I'm okay monetarily.

14 But I got some people I'm probably  
15 gonna have to help pay. This is an absurd request.

16 JUDGE CLARK: You said of your 62  
17 neighbors, about half of them --

18 THE WITNESS: Yeah.

19 JUDGE CLARK: -- are retired or on a  
20 fixed income?

21 THE WITNESS: Yes. And eight of them  
22 are military retired. Two of them are (indistinct),  
23 I guess you would call it. Can't move without a  
24 wheelchair.

25 JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Cathey, thank you for

1 your comments.

2 **THE WITNESS: Are you through with me?**

3 JUDGE CLARK: I'm sorry?

4 **THE WITNESS: Are you through with me?**

5 JUDGE CLARK: I don't have any further  
6 questions.

7 **THE WITNESS: Okay.**

8 JUDGE CLARK: But I appreciate you  
9 staying in case I did.

10 **THE WITNESS: Thank you.**

11 (End of witness testimony.)

12 JUDGE CLARK: Is there a Jason Simmons?

13 (A member of the audience  
14 approaches the microphone.)

15 **THE WITNESS: Jason --**

16 JUDGE CLARK: Please state -- you knew  
17 what I was going to ask you to do. Please go ahead.

18 **THE WITNESS: Jason Simmons.**

19 **J-A-S-O-N, S-I-M-M-O-N-S.**

20 JUDGE CLARK: And raise your right hand  
21 to be sworn.

22 (The witness is placed under oath  
23 by Judge Clark.)

24 JUDGE CLARK: Please go ahead.

25 **THE WITNESS: Sure.**

\* \* \* \* \*

JASON SIMMONS,

of lawful age, having been called as a witness and being first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

I've been a resident of the Valley Woods subdivision for 19 years now. My wife and I lived out there for quite some time.

When we initially purchased our home back in the day, one of the biggest things is we looked at was our utilities, what it was gonna cost. Because we were basically -- you know, our income wasn't the greatest, so we had to look at everything.

Plus we had issues with our children that we had to go to, so we had to go to hospitals and this kind of stuff, you know, so it was very huge for us.

Now, you know, 19 years later I'm a real estate agent myself. I work here in Branson, Missouri, and I'm active with that. And this type of stuff affects a lot of people. Not only does it affect people, but it affects the property value of the people.

I believe that, uh, there may be work

1 that needs to be done, that kind of stuff. And  
2 since I've lived there for 19 years, not one pipe  
3 has been repaired. Or I mean ripped up, new piping.  
4 No meters have been replaced that I remember.

5 Um, the baffles, they have been taken  
6 out. The filters have been taken out of our -- out  
7 of our septic tank, and that's basically to extend  
8 the life of them having to get somebody to come over  
9 there and pump out our tank. Because the gray water  
10 just comes out of the top and goes down to the  
11 sewage treatment plant.

12 The sewage treatment plant, every time  
13 you go down there, it smells horrible. I don't know  
14 what's going on with it. You barely ever see  
15 anybody down there unless the truck is coming down  
16 real quick, going down to their well house and  
17 shooting back out the property -- go ahead.

18 JUDGE CLARK: Would you -- I'm not sure  
19 I understand, and I apologize, but --

20 THE WITNESS: No problem.

21 JUDGE CLARK: -- when you say runs  
22 downhill to the treatment plant --

23 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

24 JUDGE CLARK: -- can you -- can you  
25 give me a clearer idea of what you mean?

1 THE WITNESS: So basically the way the  
2 property is developed, you have first and second  
3 phase, I believe. I don't know if there's a third  
4 phase. I think it was a second, might have been a  
5 third on that side.

6 We sit up more at the top of the hill.  
7 Everything the way I understand comes down and  
8 drains through into a pipe and comes down underneath  
9 back on everybody's property and there's a sewer  
10 treatment plant back off to the right-hand corner of  
11 the development.

12 That was supposed to be for the water,  
13 the gray water, for that to run off and for that  
14 treatment plant to be, um, taken care of.

15 And I don't know what they do with the  
16 water. I don't know where it goes. But anytime you  
17 go down there, it just smells horrible, which is,  
18 you know, apparent of something like that as far as  
19 that's concerned. You're gonna have smells and  
20 everything else.

21 Um, the biggest issue is that the  
22 baffles were taken out of the septic tanks. I don't  
23 know what kind of damage that has caused to our  
24 septic tanks, if any. I don't know. Haven't had it  
25 inspected (indistinct) being inspected.



1 Uh, but those are there in place for a  
2 reason. It's not to basically, uh, prolong the time  
3 period of how long it takes for them to come out and  
4 to pump our tank to get what we pay for, the service  
5 that we pay for.

6 Um, the biggest thing I think too is  
7 the lady that came down earlier before you guys came  
8 in, she's a Merriam Woods lady, you know, talking  
9 about people with fixed incomes, things of that  
10 nature, people with medical or retired.

11 This is predatory, 180 percent as far  
12 as inflation. I can see some inflation, but I like  
13 to see the inflation in something done in order to  
14 have that inflation in place.

15 I don't feel that they take care of our  
16 system the way they should. There's multiple  
17 families that live in our community, in our area and  
18 neighborhood.

19 And, uh, we went through all of our  
20 storage water that we had backed up in case  
21 something were to happen so we could flush our  
22 toilets, as many other people did too while they  
23 were waiting for the service.

24 Since we've been there, our water  
25 quality has just really gone to -- what's the best

1 word I can say -- um, downhill.

2 Um, they taste of the water when I  
3 first moved there was -- was pretty decent well  
4 water. It was good.

5 Lance Harris was really, um, on top of  
6 everything because he didn't want to, uh, put  
7 chlorine into our system. Because once you do that,  
8 you're gonna have to stick with the chlorine.

9 When I take a shower and get out of the  
10 shower, I feel like I just jumped out of a pool. I  
11 stink. My body smells like chlorine. I can smell  
12 the chlorine coming from my skin.

13 I don't feel that that's safe for  
14 people, for children. If you look into it,  
15 chlorine, you know, is definitely -- it affects  
16 people. It affects their health.

17 Um, but the biggest thing here is, you  
18 know, not going out and getting new gizmos and  
19 gadgets to make their job easier, you know. It's to  
20 provide a service for the community of the people  
21 and for us to pay for that service and feel good  
22 about paying for that service.

23 I don't feel good about paying for the  
24 service because the service isn't working as it  
25 should.

1           So we have a -- we have a break in the  
2 system somewhere. It sounds like people are trying  
3 to make it all work. That's usually how it always  
4 sounds, everybody sounds great. But where's the  
5 follow-through? That's what I want to see. Where's  
6 the follow-through?

7           So my biggest thing is the people that  
8 are on fixed incomes, the people that don't -- that  
9 can't speak for themselves, um, for the -- for the  
10 children, for the families, things of that nature.  
11 Our water quality, I think, is huge.

12           Um, during all that, nobody came out  
13 and gave anybody water. Somebody else said that  
14 they did, and that's awesome. Good job. At least  
15 they had some water.

16           We didn't get anything, you know. We  
17 had a second house. We were lucky, we were  
18 fortunate. We can go down there and get water and  
19 bring it back to our other home so we can flush our  
20 toilets and use it and do the different stuff that  
21 we have to do and boil and cook and that kind of  
22 stuff. But for other people, they don't have it  
23 like that.

24           So my biggest thing is if there's gonna  
25 be a price, you know, hike as far as that's

1 concerned, let's see what it is, let's see what it's  
2 about, and let's see if it's really worth, you know,  
3 the price hike of what they're talking.

4 Because the 180 percent, that's  
5 predatory. And this almost feels like a slum lord  
6 type situation that we're working with right now  
7 (indistinct) and to have that kind of a price hike,  
8 um, it just doesn't make sense.

9 It doesn't make sense to me. I'm sure  
10 it doesn't make sense to any of you up here on the  
11 board. If there was something major, that might be  
12 a different story.

13 Um, but we don't see it. We -- we  
14 haven't seen anything major. We haven't seen the  
15 effects as far as what they're talking about, our  
16 bill.

17 We haven't had a bill for two months.  
18 Our bill has been through the roof. My wife takes  
19 care of everything. I basically bring the check  
20 home. She does too because she takes care of all  
21 the bills.

22 Um, and she's -- she's been dealing  
23 with a lot of that. Kelly, uh, made a great point  
24 as far as the bills. There's so much stuff she said  
25 well, and I wish you could have been up here a

1 little bit longer to talk, because she's got herself  
2 together.

3 So as far as that's concerned, our  
4 bills have been all over the place. And like I  
5 said, we haven't received a bill for two months, so  
6 who knows what this bill's gonna be.

7 But, uh, there was one bill, I believe,  
8 for over \$300 at one point. Um, and it didn't make  
9 sense to me at all. My wife tried calling. It  
10 didn't make sense to the people on the other side of  
11 the phone. They didn't know what was going on  
12 either.

13 They were passing her around. She's  
14 busy. She don't have time during the day to be  
15 talking and going through stuff and back and forth.

16 The only answer that we -- that we got  
17 out of it was basically they're changing their  
18 system, and because they're changing their system,  
19 everybody else has to change in order to change with  
20 their system.

21 Well, I'm sorry, their system is broke  
22 and it needs help. It's not working. It's not  
23 working for us. It's not working for a lot of the  
24 other people.

25 And 180 percent, you know, price --

1 excuse me, price, um, increase as far as that's  
2 concerned just doesn't make sense to me as well, and  
3 I don't think it makes sense to anybody else in this  
4 room.

5 And if it doesn't make sense to anybody  
6 else in this room, I would like to hear about it  
7 because it don't make sense to me.

8 So again, thank you for your time, um,  
9 and that's all I have to say.

10 JUDGE CLARK: I do have one quick  
11 question for you.

12 THE WITNESS: Sure.

13 JUDGE CLARK: Because I heard from Ms.  
14 Krauch that the -- that the baffles were removed as  
15 well.

16 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

17 JUDGE CLARK: How long ago were they  
18 removed?

19 THE WITNESS: Oh, jeez, my memory is  
20 not the greatest, so I'll do the best that I can.

21 I believe those were removed two and a  
22 half, three years ago. Sounds about right. I  
23 believe so.

24 Yeah. Yeah. '20, okay '22, I guess.  
25 I would go with her, not me, yeah. She's got it

1 together.

2 JUDGE CLARK: Well, you're the one  
3 testifying.

4 THE WITNESS: Well, I'm doing the best  
5 that I can, but that's about right. We all live in  
6 the same area, so I believe that's correct.

7 JUDGE CLARK: Well, you're doing great.

8 THE WITNESS: All right.

9 JUDGE CLARK: I believe the  
10 commissioner has another question for you.

11 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

12 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Mr. Simmons,  
13 thank you for your information and your comments.  
14 It's very helpful.

15 I'm -- I'm trying to visualize, um, how  
16 the wastewater collection system -- treatment  
17 system --

18 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

19 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: -- is actually  
20 put together. And I think what I understand is you  
21 have a septic tank that provides some preliminary  
22 treatment, effluent from that septic tank that flows  
23 by gravity to some sort of central treatment system.  
24 Is that --

25 THE WITNESS: Not --

1 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: -- generally  
2 right?

3 THE WITNESS: Not really, no.  
4 Basically you have a septic system. Your septic,  
5 um, you have loose lines, laterals that will come  
6 out and usually typically in your yard.

7 Uh, in this case we don't have that.  
8 So there's a distribution box where it comes in and  
9 then it goes into a septic, which goes through the  
10 baffle -- or excuse me, not the baffle -- yeah, I  
11 believe it is the baffles, into the filter and goes  
12 down through -- into the tank.

13 And those filters, they look like when  
14 you pull them out are just a bunch of balls. And  
15 they're about this tall.

16 And I seen them do it, I seen them pull  
17 them out and said you don't need that. And they put  
18 them in the car and took off.

19 But the gray water that comes off that  
20 because we don't have those leach lines, that all  
21 goes into a main, as I understand it, so everybody  
22 in the neighborhood, um, all that gray water goes  
23 into that. All the solids sit into the tank.

24 The gray water is then gone down into  
25 the treatment plant. Then at the treatment plant,



1 at the very end there's a quite enormous size  
2 treatment plant.

3 Um, but I've never seen anybody down at  
4 that treatment plant. Not once have I seen anybody  
5 at that treatment plant.

6 Um, so I'm not sure really where it  
7 goes, uh, if the treatment plant is actually, um,  
8 taken care of or if that water is trickled in to the  
9 main ring.

10 I really don't know. I haven't been in  
11 there so I don't know what it looks like. But, um,  
12 I'm curious to see what they do with that water, how  
13 that's taken care of, because I haven't seen  
14 anything that's been done with it.

15 So we're all supposed to get our septic  
16 tanks pumped, um, and my understanding is every  
17 three years depending on how it's taken care of.

18 I think we might have had our tank  
19 pumped maybe three times through the whole 19 years  
20 that we've been there, um, and we've actually done  
21 it ourselves, uh, pumped it ourselves and pumped the  
22 tanks.

23 So that's how I understand how the --  
24 how the sewer system works. And, uh, to answer your  
25 question, hopefully I did.

1 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: And just so I  
2 understand a little more of the logistics, you --

3 **THE WITNESS: Sure.**

4 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: -- the tank's  
5 on your property --

6 **THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.**

7 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: -- (indistinct)  
8 tank?

9 **THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.**

10 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: But Liberty is  
11 charged, uh, with maintaining that tank from time to  
12 time.

13 **THE WITNESS: That's how we pay for it,  
14 yes, sir, that's correct.**

15 So each property out there and, um,  
16 there's quite a few Kelly gave the number, I don't  
17 remember exactly what it was, um, but there's quite  
18 a few properties out there and each property  
19 individually has their own septic tank and they're  
20 all fed into that line that goes down to the  
21 treatment center.

22 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Okay.

23 **THE WITNESS: And then their  
24 responsibility, Liberty Utilities' responsibility is  
25 to pump that tank and to take care of that tank**

1 because they're responsible for the tank is how I  
2 understand the public paid for them, but we have a  
3 machine other than the baffles being taken out.

4 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Your  
5 understanding is the tank is supposed to be pumped  
6 every three years, but that's not happening.

7 THE WITNESS: Yes, that's fair, that's  
8 fair.

9 Now our -- I believe our tank -- well,  
10 I say that. I don't know if they pump our tank or  
11 if they pull the baffles out because (indistinct)  
12 baffles but (indistinct) that's what I remember when  
13 they were in the backyard, they fixed the lid  
14 because I had damage on the lid and the filters were  
15 taken out. And they put the lid back on and fixed  
16 the lid.

17 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Thank you.  
18 That helps me.

19 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

20 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you very much,  
21 Mr. Simmons.

22 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

23 (End of witness testimony.)

24 JUDGE CLARK: Tom and Cheryl Lovato?

25 MEMBER OF PUBLIC: I'm Tom. This is my

1 wife Cheryl. And we have no comments to make. Most  
2 of them have already been answered or questions have  
3 been done by our neighbors. Thank you all very  
4 much.

5 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you very much.

6 That's the last name I have on the list  
7 here. Is there anybody who wanted to speak who was  
8 unable to sign up?

9 (A raised hand is seen from the  
10 audience).

11 JUDGE CLARK: Yes, ma'am. Come on up.

12 (A member of the audience  
13 approaches the microphone.)

14 JUDGE CLARK: And would you please  
15 state and spell your name for the court reporter.

16 **THE WITNESS: Yes. My name is Katelyn**  
17 **Sullivan. K-A-T-E-L-Y-N and S-U-L-L-I-V-A-N.**

18 JUDGE CLARK: And we'll go ahead and  
19 have you sworn.

20 (The witness is placed under oath  
21 by Judge Clark.)

22 JUDGE CLARK: What would you like to  
23 tell the commission?

24 \* \* \* \* \*

25 /

1 KATELYN SULLIVAN,  
2 of lawful age, having been called as a witness and  
3 being first duly sworn, was examined and testified  
4 as follows:

5 I would just -- uh, on the billing,  
6 when they switched over trying to like -- their  
7 customer service in registering it back, I could not  
8 get an account number because they had to change  
9 their account number.

10 I could not get it even from like the  
11 customer service. You have to wait for your bill.  
12 We hadn't had a bill for I think six weeks to two  
13 months at that point.

14 And then about five days later, I got a  
15 disconnection notice.

16 JUDGE CLARK: So -- I'm sorry.

17 **THE WITNESS: Yeah.**

18 JUDGE CLARK: So you received no bill,  
19 but you received a disconnection notice?

20 **THE WITNESS: Correct. The -- it did**  
21 **not show a balance or anything on their system when**  
22 **they were switching over. And then we received a**  
23 **disconnection notice five days later.**

24 JUDGE CLARK: Did you contact them?

25 **THE WITNESS: Yes.**

1 JUDGE CLARK: Do you want to tell me  
2 about that?

3 THE WITNESS: So I contacted them and,  
4 um, was told that it hadn't been paid, that that  
5 bill was past due and we hadn't received anything.  
6 The online account hadn't shown anything and we,  
7 um, didn't have a printout sent out.

8 We get one usually every month around  
9 the district. It's stated from the 1st for 30 days,  
10 usually the 25th, 26th.

11 So, um, have a issue again in August,  
12 had not received August, um, bill. It finally came  
13 in about a week after it usually does, paid it.

14 And then for, um, September I called  
15 September 17th. We had not received the bill for  
16 this month. And I was told that I should expect to  
17 pay double next month.

18 And that is going to be forwarded on to  
19 a supervisor and part of our billing. And then when  
20 I asked to see the supervisor, I was told they were  
21 unavailable.

22 And I would get a call back in about a  
23 week or so. I still have yet to get a call.

24 JUDGE CLARK: So your situation is  
25 still ongoing?

1                   **THE WITNESS: Yes.**

2                   JUDGE CLARK: And you understand that  
3 if you don't -- if you're unable to reach a  
4 satisfactory solution with Liberty, you can file a  
5 complaint with the commission?

6                   **THE WITNESS: Yes.**

7                   JUDGE CLARK: Do you have other  
8 comments?

9                   **THE WITNESS: Yes.**

10                  JUDGE CLARK: Go ahead.

11                  **THE WITNESS: On the yellow divider you**  
12 **usually just have like someone will come out and set**  
13 **out a sign. We have had five outages, you know, at**  
14 **least five last year and I believe one this year on**  
15 **there.**

16                         Literally it's just a sign. You  
17 can't -- you don't get any door notices or anything.  
18 It's just a sign entering your neighborhood.

19                         If you don't see them on other areas  
20 our service it's just entering our road. Because  
21 our -- well, in services about 40 households around  
22 there.

23                         JUDGE CLARK: Is it a big sign?

24                         **THE WITNESS: Yeah, it's like on the**  
25 **road, just like one of the fold-out signs.**

1 JUDGE CLARK: Okay.

2 THE WITNESS: That gets put on there.  
3 So that is all.

4 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: I have a  
5 comment. About how frequently do you have a boil  
6 order and do you know what, you know, what the  
7 back -- what the cause of those boil orders are?

8 THE WITNESS: I believe we, um, go out  
9 of memory at least two or three last year without a  
10 pump issue, especially when we had the multiple day  
11 outage where we weren't provided any water or  
12 anything.

13 So I was -- I have two small kids.  
14 They, you know, go through a lot of water and  
15 everything else that was coming out of my budget. I  
16 live in a six-person household. Water goes through  
17 quite fast, so.

18 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: And -- and the  
19 only notice you got for the boil order is a sign --

20 THE WITNESS: Yeah.

21 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: -- on the road.

22 THE WITNESS: Yeah, it says boil  
23 advisory on it.

24 No -- as per their paper here, it says  
25 understanding boil advisories that they will put,



1 you know, by phone, put a sign, and release a door  
2 hanger.

3 It just says boil advisory, you know,  
4 lets us know. Doesn't tell us for how long or  
5 anything else. It just has the boil advisory on it.  
6 (Indistinct) walk to the sign.

7 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Thank you.

8 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you very much for  
9 your comments, Ms. Sullivan.

10 **THE WITNESS:** Thank you.

11 (End of witness testimony.)

12 JUDGE CLARK: Is there anyone else who  
13 wanted to sign up to speak and was unable to? Okay.  
14 I see no hands.

15 COMMISSIONER MITCHELL: Again, the  
16 entire, um, commission would like to thank you for  
17 your time and effort in coming out to share your  
18 thoughts and comments with us.

19 You know, we really appreciate it.  
20 This is one of the few chances that we get to hear  
21 from the public, um, to come to a better  
22 understanding of -- of what your thoughts and  
23 opinions are.

24 It's important because, um, it helps us  
25 to, um, make more fair and balanced decisions as we

1 move forward. So your efforts are -- are very much  
2 appreciated.

3 So thank you again and have a good  
4 evening.

5 JUDGE CLARK: I just want to say  
6 quickly, because I know for a lot of you it's late  
7 and you're anxious to get home.

8 But I know some of you mentioned that  
9 you knew people that couldn't be here today or  
10 couldn't attend one of the hearings. That doesn't  
11 preclude friends and neighbors from offering  
12 comments.

13 If you know someone who was unable to  
14 attend, they can still offer comments on this case  
15 by contacting the PSC. There's an email address,  
16 PSC -- that stands for Public Service Commission.  
17 PSC at PSC -- just info at psc.mo.gov by contacting  
18 the Office of Public Counsel.

19 And Mr. Poston down here to my left  
20 represents the public counsel. They've been very  
21 gracious about, uh, helping people file comments  
22 with the commission.

23 Or you can go to the Public Service  
24 Commission's web page, and there's a link there to  
25 offer comments. That may be the easiest way.

1 Um, if you do that, um, it may ask you  
2 because there are a number of cases at any time  
3 before the commission, they'll ask you the case  
4 number. The case number for this one again is  
5 WR-2024-0104.

6 And again, I would like to thank  
7 everybody who took the time to come in and offer  
8 comments today. So I would like to thank you for  
9 your participation and have a safe drive home, and  
10 we'll go off the record. This hearing is now  
11 adjourned.

12 (Whereupon, the proceedings were  
13 concluded at 8:27 PM on Wednesday,  
14 September 25, 2024.)

15 (No exhibits were marked during  
16 the course of these proceedings.)

17 \* \* \* \* \*

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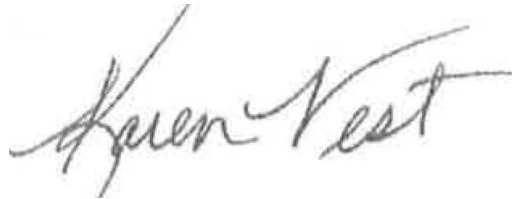
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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

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## 1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2  
3 I, Karen Vest, Registered Professional  
4 Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, and Certified  
5 Court Reporter within and for the State of Missouri,  
6 do hereby certify that I was personally present at  
7 the taking of the proceedings as set forth in the  
8 caption sheet hereof; that I then and there took  
9 down in stenotype the proceedings had at said time;  
10 and that the foregoing is a full, true, and accurate  
11 transcription of such stenotype notes so made at  
12 such time and place, all to the best of my skill and  
13 ability.

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Missouri CCR No. 846

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