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BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
LOCAL PUBLIC HEARING

In the Matter of)
Missouri-American Water)
Company's Request for)
Authority to Implement a) File No. WR-2024-0320
General Rate Increase for)
Water and Sewer Service)
Provided in Missouri Service)
Areas)

Tuesday, November 12, 2024
06:00 P.M.

VOLUME 6

MILLENNIUM STUDENT CENTER
17 ARNOLD GROBMAN DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MO 63121

KENNETH J. SEYER
REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

KAYLA HAHN, CHAIR
MAIDA J. COLEMAN
JASON R. HOLSMAN
GLEN KOLKMEYER
COMMISSIONERS

Reported by:

COLIN WALLIS
LEXITAS LEGAL

* * * * *

(The Comments portion of the hearing began at 7:22 p.m.)

REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right, let's go on the record. Today is November 12th, 2024. The time is 7:20 p.m. My name is Ken Seyer. I'm a judge with the Missouri Public Service Commission, and I will preside over this portion of the hearing.

The Commission has set this time for a local public hearing to give members of the public a chance to comment about Missouri-American Water's application for a general rate increase for water and sewer service, which is Commission File Number WR-2024-0320.

The Commission regulates the rates charged by public utility companies in Missouri to ensure that those rates are just and reasonable. The Commission also regulates the quality of service and safety of the operation of the public utilities. The Commission is composed of five commissioners. They are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. The Commission employs a staff of

1 engineers, accountants, attorneys, financial
2 analysts and specialists in the field of
3 utility regulation. With me this evening is
4 the Chair of the Commission Kayla Hahn. Also
5 joining us online is Commissioner Maida
6 Coleman, Commissioner Jason Holsman and
7 Commissioner Glen Kolkmeier.

8 The commissioners have not made any
9 decisions in this case and can not answer any
10 questions today, because they have to remain
11 impartial until after all the evidence is
12 presented at the evidentiary hearing in this
13 matter, which is scheduled to begin on
14 February 27, 2025. At this time, Chair Hahn,
15 would you like to make opening remarks?

16 CHAIRPERSON HAHN: Good evening, everyone.
17 Welcome to UMSL's campus. I am Kayla Hahn,
18 Chair of the Missouri Public Service
19 Commission, and I am joined online with my
20 fellow commissioners, and I want to thank you
21 on behalf of the entire commission for coming
22 out this evening. I know you can be doing
23 many, many different things with your time,
24 spending time with your family, or doing other
25 tasks, but really appreciate you coming and

1 participating, and we look forward to hearing
2 your comments so that we can better inform our
3 decision in this case. So, again, thank you
4 all for coming. Looking forward to hearing
5 from you.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
7 thank you. There are attorneys here tonight
8 representing the parties in this matter, and,
9 so, for the sake of the record, would each of
10 you identify yourselves and state which party
11 you're representing, beginning with
12 Missouri-American Water?

13 MR. LUFT: Thank you. Timothy Luft,
14 Missouri-America Water, and I provided
15 Mr. Wallis with my information.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: For the
17 Commission Staff?

18 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you, Judge. It's
19 Tracy Johnson for the Staff of Missouri Public
20 Service Commission and my information is also
21 with the court reporter already. Thank you.

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And for the
23 Office of the Public Counsel?

24 MR. CLIZER: John Clizer, my information
25 is with the court reporter.

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.

2 Are there any other attorneys here representing
3 the parties?

4 MR. COFFMAN: Yes, sir. Appearing on
5 behalf of the Consumers Council of Missouri and
6 AARP, my name is John Coffman.

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.
8 The way we proceed with this portion of the
9 hearing will be to call the names that are on
10 the sign-up list of the people that have signed
11 up to testify tonight. And we will call them
12 in the order that you signed up, so what I'd
13 like to do is call your name, and when I do, if
14 you'll step up to the microphone, I'll place
15 you under oath, ask you to state your name and
16 spell your name, and then you can offer your
17 comments.

18 Tonight, because of the number of people
19 that have signed up, we're going to try to
20 limit comments to three minutes per person.
21 And then, once you're finished with your
22 comments, if you will remain there at the
23 microphone, I would appreciate it in case any
24 of the commissioners or the attorneys have
25 questions for you. Okay. All right, so the

1 first name on the list, and I do apologize
2 ahead of time if I butcher some names tonight.
3 Jim Moriarty. All right, Mr. Moriarty, before
4 you start testifying, I'd like to place you
5 under oath.

6 (Jim Moriarty sworn.)

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.
8 And, again, if you could state and spell your
9 name.

10 MR. MORIARTY: My name is Jim Moriarty.
11 That's spelled M-o-r-i-a-r-t-y. I'm a
12 customer, and I live in Warson Woods, and I'm
13 here to testify tonight that this company
14 should not get any increase until it provides
15 what I think the Commission called in the
16 handouts, adequate service, and the Public
17 Counsel called good service. And I don't think
18 the company is providing either of these. And
19 I want to point, first of all, to two
20 documents.

21 This is a document I printed off the
22 website today. It talks about advanced
23 metering infrastructure. And in two places,
24 they say it's going to improve the customer
25 experience, and that's hogwash because last

1 November, when I tried to get my water shut
2 off, it took three crews to get my water shut
3 off. A third crew actually replaced the curb
4 shutoff. In the process, they moved my meter
5 from a basement to a meter pit in the front
6 yard. And I stress my concern about being able
7 to read my meter, and they said, oh, you can
8 get all this information online.

9 When I couldn't find the information
10 online, I called the so-called customer service
11 number. Let me tell you some of the responses
12 I've gotten. I've been hung up on so many
13 times by the customer service, I think it's
14 part of their training.

15 The first time, one of the times I called,
16 I said, I wanted to shut off the water, and
17 they said, well, it will be two weeks. I said,
18 that's not adequate, and they said we'll refer
19 it to the local office. And they wouldn't give
20 me the number of the local office, and I never
21 got a call from the local office. So, two
22 weeks later, they showed up later and finally
23 got the water shut off, and they moved my meter
24 from the basement.

25 Let me tell you what the experience is in

1 trying to read a meter in a pit. You got to
2 get virtually on your hands and knees; you got
3 to remove the lid from the cover from the pit;
4 then, you got to reach into a dark pit and lift
5 the lid on the meter; and then you may have to
6 wipe off the screen just to see what it's
7 reading. And you're going to do all this in
8 the daytime, obviously, because it's a dark
9 pit. You're not going to see anything at night
10 unless you got a flashlight. You're going to
11 do all this and then -- while not dropping your
12 glasses or your flashlight or whatever you got
13 into the pit because you may never get it back.

14 The other thing it says on this thing, it
15 says, "Enhances our ability to quickly detect
16 and notify customers of leaks." That's more
17 hogwash. I experienced in January of this
18 year, the last three days of January, I used
19 almost 3,000 -- over 3,000 gallons of water. I
20 was never notified by the company, and that's
21 ten times of what my normal usage is. So, I
22 figured it out: it was a faulty valve. I
23 quickly repaired the valve. The manufacturer
24 replaced it free of charge, and it was -- I
25 think it was the third day I finally got it

1 stopped.

2 This document I printed out today. First
3 of all, let me tell you about this second
4 document. Oh, it's a flier that I got. It's
5 dated October 17. This was e-mailed to me by
6 the water company, and it says, "The AMI meters
7 are high-tech water meters that allow customers
8 to track their up-to-the-hour water meter."
9 Well, this thing I printed out today, this is
10 the daily 30-day report and the 24-hour report.
11 They never agree. The 24-hour never adds up to
12 the 30 days. The 30 days has never got 30 days
13 on it. I don't think in the year I've been
14 checking this, that I've ever seen a 30-day
15 report that had 30 days. It's usually 28, 29,
16 and the last day is always a zero. And I know
17 that's false.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Moriarty,
19 you are bumping up against your time limit, so
20 if you could kind of conclude your comments.

21 MR. MORIARTY: In my dealings with the
22 customer service department, I've been told
23 everything that is -- that we can't answer your
24 question is the responsibility of the metering
25 department, but they don't have a number for

1 the metering department, and they never call
2 you. Other times they told me it was -- it's
3 web services; that's who responsible for that,
4 but they don't have a number. And the last
5 time I went through this I asked for a
6 supervisor, and I asked her what state are you
7 in? She wouldn't tell me, because I -- from an
8 experience, I've gotten them in North Carolina;
9 I've gotten them in New Jersey; never a local
10 person. So, the customer service doesn't
11 exist. Any questions?

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Yes,
13 Mr. Clizer?

14 MR. CLIZER: Mr. Moriarty, over here.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: To your
16 right, Mr. Moriarty.

17 MR. CLIZER: You mentioned two documents,
18 and you appear to have several other in your
19 hand. Would you like to have any of those
20 documents offered to the record for this case?

21 MR. MORIARTY: Yes, I would.

22 MR. CLIZER: You know, I'll just go ahead
23 and move that Hearing Exhibits, and for the
24 sake of the record, can we just do it as one,
25 the exhibit?

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All his
2 documents?

3 MR. CLIZER: Yeah.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Yes. That
5 would be fine. If that's all right with you,
6 Mr. Moriarty.

7 MR. MORIARTY: Who do I provide them to?

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: You can
9 provide them to me. My question is, is that
10 your only copy --

11 MR. MORIARTY: Yeah.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Because I
13 don't know that I have --

14 MR. MORIARTY: I can make copies and
15 provide to them anybody --

16 MR. CLIZER: If you would prefer not to --

17 MR. MORIARTY: All the parties --

18 MR. CLIZER: Sorry, sir. If you would
19 prefer to keep the original copies, please feel
20 free to either send them to the Commission
21 Staff or the OPC, a copy of the documents you
22 referenced and you --

23 MR. MORIARTY: You'll share them with all
24 the parties?

25 MR. CLIZER: We will have them entered as

1 a public comment record.

2 MR. MORIARTY: That would be great, thank
3 you.

4 MR. LUFT: Mr. -- one question. Were you
5 here when I said there's people out front who
6 can answer any question that you have right now
7 if you need it? So, right now, out front,
8 Mr. Moriarty, they will pull up your account
9 and they can answer any question.

10 MR. MORIARTY: Yeah, I would be happy to
11 ask them, I don't understand why I can't get
12 somebody on the telephone to answer the
13 questions or call me back. And I don't like
14 being hung up on, because I don't swear except
15 at the auto attendant.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
17 thank you, Mr. Moriarty.

18 MR. MORIARTY: Thank you.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Next on our
20 list is Christina Kuntzman. Kuntzman.

21 MS. KUNTZMAN: Hello, my name is Christina
22 Kuntzman. The last name is K-u-n-t-z-m-a-n.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Before you go
24 any further, I'd like to place you under oath.
25 Thank you.

1 (Christina Kuntzman sworn.)

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.

3 All right, go ahead.

4 MS. KUNTZMAN: Low-income households
5 depend on reliable and affordable water.
6 Disruptions to household budgets threaten their
7 jobs, education and health. The proposed
8 increases will have a disproportionate burden
9 on, especially black and brown families. Many
10 of our member congregations provide direct
11 assistance in the form of food and help with
12 bill and rent payments.

13 On a daily and weekly basis, they see the
14 risk facing community members to sustain
15 themselves even with the assistance. Across
16 the traditions of our congregation, we affirm
17 the values of considering the wellbeing our of
18 neighbors as a measure of the health of our
19 communities. We believe in increasing not
20 decreasing the equity in our region and state.

21 Since our congregations' members and
22 neighbors continue struggling with the impacts
23 of lead pipes and no filter knowledge to deal
24 with it, as well as proposed rate increase,
25 Metropolitan Congregations United does not

1 support the current proposal for the rate
2 increase this fast, especially by American
3 Water. Thank you.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
5 thank you. If you wouldn't mind sticking
6 around? Any questions from the commissioners?
7 All right, thank you. All right, next on the
8 list is Patricia Louis. All right,
9 Ms. Lewis --

10 MS. LEWIS: I'm Patricia Lewis.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.
12 Ms. Lewis. You've got your right hand raised.
13 I appreciate that.

14 (Patricia Lewis sworn.)

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.
16 And I see your last name is spelled L-e-w-i-s;
17 is that correct?

18 MS. LEWIS: Let me start this out.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Lewis?
20 Am I correct that your name is spelled
21 L-e-w-i-s.

22 MS. LEWIS: I'm deaf.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.

24 MS. LEWIS: I'm reading your lips.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: That's fine.

1 MS. LEWIS: This bag is full of all the
2 horrible things that the water company has done
3 to my house, my property, my street, my
4 neighborhood. There has been three
5 subcontractors come in the neighborhood, and
6 all three of them would not restore what they
7 tore up. Now, we get a fourth one who wants
8 total access to all of your pipes. What mess
9 is this one going to make? Right now, with all
10 of these problems, the water company owes me 15
11 to 20,000 dollars. And until they come through
12 with it, their water is not going to come any
13 further. The senior citizens are getting a 3.2
14 COLA raise. The water company doesn't even
15 deserve a fraction of it. Thank you.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.
17 Next on the list is Michelle Wilson-Bernard.

18 MS. LEWIS: Under three minutes.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Wilson
20 Bernard, would you raise your right hand,
21 please?

22 (Michelle Wilson-Bernard sworn.)

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.
24 Would you go ahead and state and spell your
25 name, please?

1 MS. WILSON-BERNARD: Michelle,
2 M-i-c-h-e-l-l-e Wilson-Bernard, W-i-l-s-o-n,
3 Bernard, B-e-r-n-a-r-d.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
5 thank you, go ahead.

6 MS. WILSON-BERNARD: Hello. I am a
7 community activist in the 241 footprint, which
8 is includes the Normandy area. I and do thank
9 you for hosting this public hearing, too. I
10 don't really have prepared comments, so if I
11 start to ramble, especially if I go over that
12 five minutes, you know, please stop me, as I am
13 sure you will.

14 I really -- I have a lot of complaints
15 about utilities but not Missouri-American
16 Water. One of the reasons I remain living in
17 the state of Missouri is because of water
18 and weather. I am very pleased with the
19 quality of Missouri-American Water. I've had
20 water in places like Chicago when I was 19. I
21 never, upon returns, I never ever drank their
22 water before. It was very highly chlorinated.
23 Missouri is known for excellent water, and I'm
24 very pleased with the quality of water.

25 And, usually, my biggest concerns about

1 water are quality and safety. And I did have
2 one question related to safety because with
3 this new administration coming in, there's been
4 talk about possibly eliminating the flu- --
5 fluoride in the water, which is very much a
6 concern of mine. I hope that that's something
7 that would not happen here. If you have any
8 thoughts on that or any comments, you know,
9 please express them, because, again, water is
10 my go-to beverage.

11 And, so, that was the main question I had
12 was about the fluoride in the water, and do you
13 think that that's something that would ever
14 develop, and if that's something you thought
15 could happen, what measures do we, as citizens,
16 can take to voice our opinion against that.

17 And, again, I do thank you for coming and
18 hosting the meeting here. I really had no
19 specific comments about the rate increases,
20 because, again, my focus is on quality and
21 safety. I do -- I'm not looking for a well.
22 I'm not looking to go to a country where they
23 have to walk for miles to get water. So, I
24 thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON HAHN: Ms. Bernard,

1 in response, this is where government can be a
2 little bit confusing to average folks. The
3 Public Service Commission doesn't necessarily
4 regulate the level of fluoride in your water.
5 That is regulated by our State Department of
6 Natural Resources, which is our delegated
7 agency of authority from the Environmental
8 Protection Agency. And I know that's not
9 intuitive, but I just wanted to provide
10 clarification that we wouldn't have any
11 knowledge of changing rules or regulations
12 relating to fluoride at -- from the federal
13 level.

14 So thank you so much for your comments and
15 your concern. We can definitely take that into
16 consideration moving forward. Thank you.

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
18 the next name on the list is Debra DeCone; is
19 that correct? I'm going to assume that's
20 incorrect. And what is your last name?

21 MS. DECOU: DeCou, D-e-Capital C-o-u. And
22 my first name is Debra.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.

24 MS. DECOU: D-e-b-r-a.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And you've

1 got the right hand raised. I appreciate that.

2 (Debra DeCou sworn.)

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right, go
4 ahead.

5 MS. DECOU: I'm basically here to use my
6 voice to say that I am opposed to this rate
7 hike, due to it being a monopoly and to second
8 Mr. Moriarty's comment about poor customer
9 service. I had a water leak at my home. I am
10 new to Missouri. I moved here from New York,
11 and so I didn't know many people, and I had an
12 extreme water leak in my house. Could not find
13 the shutoff valve. Had to find somebody to
14 come to help, a plumber, and, in the process, I
15 contacted Missouri-American Water. And they
16 told -- I said, can someone please shut the
17 water off from the street, and they said, no,
18 that's your responsibility. So, I had to hire
19 someone to come to my home, and then find out
20 that he didn't have the correct implement to go
21 to the street and shut the water off for my
22 house. I don't think that was appropriate.

23 And we also are paying a service fee every
24 month for this. So, what is that service fee
25 for? If you can't call the company that you

1 are paying for services and get help. So,
2 that's basically my comment.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
4 thank you, Ms. DeCou. Next on the list is Mark
5 Corwin (sic). All right. So, it's not -- is
6 Mark, correct? I assume it's not.

7 MS. CORWIN: It is Martha.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Martha.

9 MS. CORWIN: Yeah.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Is Corwin,
11 correct?

12 MS. CORWIN: Yeah.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.
14 50/50.

15 (Martha Corwin sworn.)

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead,
17 Ms. Corwin.

18 MS. CORWIN: I just wanted to say that I
19 am very opposed to this hike. It's not that
20 there's a hike. It's the cost that they're
21 actually proposing. I think it's exorbitant.
22 I don't think there's been a lot of
23 transparency that I'm aware of of exactly how
24 that's going to be spent. Like a lot of people
25 that attended this meeting tonight, I live in

1 North County. Obviously, I'm not from these
2 here parts originally, but I do call it home
3 now and have for some time. And I'm really
4 disappointed about this because one of the
5 things I noticed living in North County is that
6 whenever they have all of this construction
7 from the utilities, whether it's MSD or
8 American Water or whatever, and it's certainly
9 for the state, it seems like certain areas of
10 St. Louis get all of that construction way
11 before those in North County ever see it.

12 And, you know, rather it's clean water,
13 you know, some people -- I agree with her, the
14 lady that spoke earlier that said the quality
15 of the water was not the problem. I appreciate
16 the fact that I like the water and I think it's
17 appropriate. But I also don't feel like I
18 should pay exorbitant rates for or have to beg
19 for because I find that to be a basic human
20 right, rather than a monopoly company agrees
21 with that or not. So, I'll leave that one.

22 I would just tell you something, because I
23 wasn't prepared for the meeting. I didn't know
24 about 15 minutes before when my bestie over
25 there grabbed me and ran; but I will tell you

1 how I communicate is through story. That's
2 where my background is, where I come from.
3 And, so, I'm not going to talk to you about why
4 I feel like it's not appropriate the amount
5 that they're asking for.

6 I feel like it's not appropriate because
7 the girl that lives next door to me, my husband
8 and I, he's almost retired; I'm already
9 retired; we kind of settled in; we saved; we
10 did okay. And am I happy with those increased
11 payments, those building cycles and stuff? I
12 am absolutely not, and I also want to point out
13 that I know my MSD bill is going to reflect
14 that increase because what goes in must come
15 out, and those two bills are definitely tied
16 together.

17 So when he made that -- when he made that
18 comment very cavalierly, if I -- if you don't
19 mind me saying. He said, well, it's only going
20 to cost 60 cents a day, 18 dollars a month,
21 times 12 for a year. I took that personally
22 because I felt like that showed a complete
23 lack, a complete disconnect, from what he wants
24 and what the citizens of this state want.
25 Because that 60 cents is going to be duplicated

1 in that sewer bill, and, so, that's a lot more
2 than what most people are thinking about right
3 now.

4 But the story I want to tell you is the
5 girl that lives next door to me. Forget about
6 me and my husband. She is 30-years-old. She
7 has worked for her entire adult life. She is a
8 social worker who is working on her PhD, while
9 single-handily raising a seven-year-old
10 daughter. She lives next door to me. She has
11 Ring cameras on her door, but she can't afford
12 to have the recording part of it.

13 So, when her house was broken into and her
14 car was almost stolen, and he tried to get into
15 the house where the baby was, she was very
16 upset, and I said, well, now, you got the
17 recording, right? She said I can't afford it.
18 My bills are so, so structured right now
19 because I'm trying to be -- that she's buying
20 this house at 30 years old. She says every
21 penny matters, every penny matters, and she
22 said when you go to these meetings, because we
23 have been going to the ones for MSD, we are
24 going to go to the American Water and
25 everything, she said when you go to those

1 meetings, because I can't leave my daughter
2 alone, she said you make sure you tell them
3 that there's a person who lives next door to
4 you that cannot afford all of these tax hikes,
5 these, I've got to fix the aging
6 infrastructure. We are aware of that, but we
7 find it excessive, and I hope that you guys do,
8 too. That's all.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
10 thank you, Ms. Corwin. And I neglected to ask
11 you to spell your name for the record.

12 MS. CORWIN: C-o-r-w-i-n and Mark is my
13 husband. I might have signed him by accident.
14 I'm sorry.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: How do you
16 spell your first name?

17 MS. CORWIN: Martha, M-a-r-t-h-a.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Just wanted
19 to make sure. Yes, Mr. Clizer?

20 MR. CLIZER: I'm sorry. You testified you
21 didn't receive or wasn't aware of this LPH
22 until about 15 minutes before?

23 MS. CORWIN: Yeah, because she came over
24 and said, I need a ride.

25 MR. CLIZER: Did you receive a paper copy

1 of the Local Public Hearing handout?

2 MS. CORWIN: I don't think that I did,
3 and, also, I followed the ICAF, for those who
4 are here from Florissant, that's the I Care
5 About Florissant, and we catch a lot of
6 different notifications that way. I'm also a
7 news junkie. I'm a reader, and so, I'm really
8 surprised I didn't know about it --

9 MR. CLIZER: One last --

10 MS. CORWIN: But, you know, I do now.

11 MR. CLIZER: One last question for you:
12 are you -- do you receive paper bills, or are
13 you a paperless bill customer?

14 MS. CORWIN: Actually, that would be a
15 Mark question. But he's going to get fired if
16 he got that and didn't tell me about it because
17 he knows I'm an activist. But I'm not sure
18 about that, but I would think that it would be
19 in more than just one resource, something this
20 important for that amount of money.

21 MR. CLIZER: Don't worry about it. Thank
22 you very much.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
24 thank you. Next on the list is Sharon
25 Owens-Hare.

1 MS. OWENS-HARE: Good evening. Sharon
2 Owens-Hare. S-h-a-r-o-n, O-w-e-n-s-H-a-r-e.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.

4 (Sharon Owens-Hare sworn.)

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you, go
6 ahead.

7 MS. OWENS-HARE: I actually have about
8 three things. One I'm going to start out with.
9 I live in Wellston. Forgive me, but it's
10 probably one of the worst neighborhoods in
11 North County, but I have a leak that has been
12 there from, I would say, on and off for ten
13 years. And I called the water company and I
14 called the sewer company. They did dig up,
15 earlier this year, the 62 going into the 6300
16 block of Page. The Stephen Jones, right in the
17 intersection. And it's still leaking from
18 under the ground out. It stopped for, I don't
19 know, maybe a month, and then it started all
20 off again. It's back out there now.

21 They've also dug out down the street from
22 my house. I don't exactly know what they're
23 doing down there because we thought they were
24 going to be down there for a week or two, and
25 they've been down there for over a month. So,

1 I would like that the leak taken care of. I
2 have called the City of Wellston and the water
3 company. I just got tired of it.

4 The next thing is that, I would like to
5 find out -- how can I phrase this without
6 sounding rude? The executives and the
7 directors, whoever, why can't you all take a
8 pay cut if we got to take a pay cut? I'm on a
9 fixed income, and I broke my foot for the
10 fourth time, and now my back and my knees are
11 messed up. So, I would love to go get me
12 another job. I'm retired. I'm 68, so I don't
13 understand, and I'm not for this rate increase
14 because I'm not seeing what I should be seeing
15 being done in Wellston.

16 And they dug up my alley and took out my
17 drain -- what do you call it, the -- where your
18 water leaks off your roof? Whatever that is,
19 they took it from one side of the house and put
20 it to the other side while they dug up my
21 alley. Didn't nobody ask me nothing. I went
22 ahead and went along with it, and that was a
23 couple years ago. But they said that the
24 rainwater can't go in with the sewer. I'm
25 trying to figure out why did they just start to

1 do that when it's been like that for over two
2 hundred years. My house was built in 1920.

3 And the last thing was, I'm good with the
4 water. It tastes great. It's just that I'm
5 not for this rate increase. When you are on a
6 fixed income, you cannot afford to just keep
7 jumping to everything that you all want to
8 raises the price on.

9 Now, my husband is dead. My mother is
10 dead, and I'm in the house by myself, but it's
11 paid for. But I've got other stuff that I
12 already had to crunch down. I don't have
13 cable; I have a regular TV. I don't have a
14 cell phone -- I don't have a regular phone in
15 my house; I operate off of a cell phone. And I
16 put my son out and am very happy about it. So,
17 I don't have nobody to help me, and there's a
18 lot of people out here that does not have
19 anybody to help them. Women outlive men if you
20 didn't know. So, that's it.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.
22 Thank you for your testimony. Next on the list
23 is Chris Sudlik. Did I pronounce your name
24 correctly?

25 MR. SUDLICK: Yes, you did.

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
2 Mr. Sudlik, would you raise your right hand,
3 please?

4 (Christopher Sudlick sworn.)

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Would you go
6 ahead and state and spell your name?

7 MR. SUDLICK: Sure, Christopher Sudlick,
8 C-h-r-i-s-t-o-p-h-e-r, S-u-d-l-i-k.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

10 MR. SUDLICK: All right. So, first of
11 all, I'd like to say I've also had issues with
12 rates and metering in the past. When we
13 switched to the meters at my previous address,
14 we were facing hundreds of dollars a month,
15 like literally 300 dollar payments for no
16 leaks, no nothing, just ridiculous stuff and it
17 was horrible to work out. But what I really
18 came up to talk about was these three pages
19 that I printed off from the American Water
20 Shareholders Annual Report. And these are
21 2023, 2022 and 2021; they're the third page
22 after the report. And they reference the value
23 that all investors and rich people across this
24 country care about a lot: total shareholder
25 return.

1 Because we all know rich people don't make
2 their money off of incomes. They don't make
3 their money off of pay. They make it off of
4 stocks increasing in value and their net worth
5 increasing in value and making loans off of
6 that to live off of. So, what they really care
7 about is their stock numbers increasing.

8 So, in 2021, I've got this report and it
9 says from 2016 to 2021, their stock price
10 increased from a levelized 100 to \$285. Now,
11 that's just their way of putting it in here to
12 say that the rates have increased by
13 185 percent over the course of five years.
14 Now, that represents probably billions of
15 dollars for a private corporation and for a
16 load of rich people that did zero work to
17 deserve it or to earn; and it represents money
18 out of all these people's pockets, all the
19 people out of the city's pockets; it represents
20 the old people that are in my neighborhood,
21 getting more poor every year and getting more
22 miserable every year.

23 And that's a huge number for an increase,
24 too. But their next two reports are a lot less
25 rosy. In 2022, their five-year total return is

1 down to 82 percent, and, 2023, it's down to
2 58 percent. And, I mean, that's a huge return
3 for rich people in any case, but it's a
4 worrying decrease. And it's a worrying
5 decrease that paints a picture of a trend, and
6 a trend that things are only going to get more
7 expensive. Rates are only going to increase
8 more, and this is going to become a worse and
9 worse problem every year. We had a rate
10 increase in, what, 2020, 2023? Those were both
11 years that they were making huge gains for
12 their rich investors but not for the people.

13 So, I would like to say that, you know, I
14 really hope we find a solution to this that
15 isn't just giving a private corporation more
16 money, that we try to find more collaborative
17 solutions, that we try to figure our
18 infrastructure problems on a city and a
19 statewide basis, that we try to do something
20 about this besides just raising these people's
21 rates forever, because this is not sustainable
22 and it's not going to work. Thank you.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Yes,
24 Mr. Clizer, go ahead.

25 MR. CLIZER: All right, once again, you

1 referenced some documents. Did you want those
2 documents entered into the record?

3 MR. SUDLICK: They're literally just the
4 third page of the shareholder reports, but I'd
5 be happy to pass them over.

6 MR. CLIZER: I'll move to make it an
7 exhibit.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Thank
9 you.

10 MR. CLIZER: No further --

11 MS. JOHNSON: For the record -- for the
12 record no objections from Staff on admitting
13 those.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And Mr. Luft?

15 MR. LUFT: No objection.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: No objection.
17 Okay, all right. The next person on the list
18 is Jeanette Mott-Oxford. Good evening, ma'am.

19 MS. MOTT-OXFORD: Good evening.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Would you
21 raise your right hand, please?

22 (Jeanette Mott-Oxford sworn.)

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Would you
24 state and spell your name, please.

25 MS. MOTT-OXFORD: It's Jeanette

1 J-e-a-n-e-t-t-e, Mott, M-o-t-t like the apple
2 sauce, Oxford, O-x-f-o-r-d, like the university
3 or the shoe.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

5 MS. MOTT-OXFORD: Okay. I'm here tonight
6 as a lay leader at Epiphany United Church of
7 Christ. We do a lot of work with people in our
8 community that are struggling to make it. For
9 example, last Thursday night, we had a
10 community dinner and welcomed anybody that
11 would come, and then we did a service project
12 for Crisis Nursery that offers respite services
13 for parents and other adult caretakers of kids
14 that just need a break, just want to take care
15 of the kids for a brief amount of a time.

16 So, we're really familiar with a lot of
17 folks who can't afford a 113 percent increase
18 in their fixed monthly customer charge. That's
19 a very steep increase, and customers can't
20 control it by conserving because it's a fixed
21 amount that doesn't have anything to do with
22 the amount of water that they used.

23 I think that a 10.75 percent on equity is
24 a very high corporate profit rate at a time
25 when many households haven't seen their wages

1 or retirement benefits keep up with that. I
2 just retired on October 18th, but last year, I
3 was working at Paraquad, the independent living
4 center for St. Louis City and County, and had a
5 very good, you know, review on the work that I
6 had done. After 40 years of public service or
7 public policy, and I got a two-percent
8 increase, but that was below the rate of
9 inflation. That's the only thing that they
10 could afford to pay given that the state of
11 Missouri gave us some cuts, unfortunately, in
12 the living budget last year; and then I know
13 that a lot of people on Social Security only
14 got only around three percent. So, this 10.751
15 is exorbitant, in my opinion, and having this
16 revenue-stabilization mechanism also harms
17 customers for the sake of guaranteeing that
18 very high ROE.

19 Water is a basic human need, and human
20 beings have to have it to be healthy. I have
21 to have clean water safe for drinking, cooking,
22 baking and cleaning, and any increase in the
23 income for American Water must be accompanied
24 by a robust customer assistance policy to
25 prevent disconnection and secure access to

1 water.

2 We might think this is only a few people
3 that are going to have trouble paying this
4 amount of an increase, but really, there are a
5 whole lot of folks in Missouri that can't
6 afford this. The -- the Who Pays Report from
7 the Institution on Taxation and Economic
8 Policy, that just came out last year, showed
9 that one out of five Missouri non-elderly
10 households have an annual earning of less than
11 20,900 dollars a year, with the average income
12 of that group is just 12,100 a month. You can
13 understand if you're living on about 1,000 a
14 month that you're going to have real trouble
15 paying the kind of increases that are in this.
16 And then the next one, 20 percent, the next
17 quintile, makes less than 43,400 with an annual
18 income of \$31,100. So, there's a whole lot of
19 folks that are going to really struggle with
20 this, and we really think that this is too
21 much.

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.
23 And just to verify for the record, when you
24 first started speaking, you referenced the --
25 what's the Epiphany --

1 MS. MOTT-OXFORD: I attend Epiphany United
2 Church of Christ as a lay leader. I am not a
3 customer of American -- Missouri-American
4 Water, but some of our congregation are
5 members.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay, thank
7 you. And thank you for your testimony this
8 evening.

9 MS. MOTT-OXFORD: And if you would like a
10 copy of this written report, I would be glad to
11 submit it to you for the record.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: It is just --

13 MS. MOTT-OXFORD: It's --

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: -- what
15 you --

16 MS. MOTT-OXFORD: It's just a memo, yeah.

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: That's up to
18 you, really.

19 MR. CLIZER: I'll motion for it to be on
20 the record.

21 MS. MOTT-OXFORD: Okay, thank you. Do I
22 give that --

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: No objection?

24 MS. JOHNSON: No objection from Staff.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

1 Next on the list is Jill Greene.

2 MS. GREENE: Hello, my name is Jill
3 Greene. That's Greene with an E on the end.

4 (Jill Greene sworn.)

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
6 just to verify, it's Jill, J-i-l-l.

7 MS. GREENE: Yes.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Last name is
9 Greene, G-r-e-e-n-e.

10 MS. GREENE: Correct.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.

12 MS. GREENE: I had -- I do appreciate the
13 water service that we do receive, and it is
14 great. However, it just keeps ringing in my
15 head about this -- the writing on the -- we
16 received this in the mail for the announcement
17 of the public hearing, and it's states in here
18 that 250 miles of aging water --

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Excuse me.
20 Ms. Greene, can I have you just take a half
21 step over -- there you go.

22 MS. GREENE: Okay.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Speak a
24 little more into the microphone.

25 MS. GREENE: Is that better?

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: It is better,
2 thank you.

3 MS. GREENE: Okay. It says the
4 installation of approximately 250 miles of
5 aging water and wastewater pipes. I know that
6 the gentlemen over there said, that somehow,
7 someway, the water company handles the
8 wastewater, but, okay, in what way does the
9 water company handle wastewater? The gentleman
10 right here? Can you answer that question? In
11 what way does the water company handle
12 wastewater?

13 MR. LUFT: Ma'am --

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Luft, if
15 you could hit the microphone?

16 MR. LUFT: As the president stated
17 earlier, the question and answers, we have some
18 areas of Missouri where we are the wastewater
19 provider. We're not here in St. Louis County,
20 but, for example, in Arnold, Missouri, which is
21 just south of here --

22 MS. GREENE: So Missouri-American Water
23 and Wastewater.

24 MR. LUFT: We handle the wastewater there,
25 but not the water. So, it just depends where

1 you are in the state. But here, in St. Louis
2 County, we're generally just the water, except
3 there are some far areas in the farthest part
4 of West County, in the Wildwood area, where MSD
5 will not go; we happen to be there serving them
6 in wastewater.

7 MS. GREENE: Okay. So, it says the
8 charge -- the change to the bill for wastewater
9 customers will vary depending on the service
10 areas. So, you have outlined some areas and
11 different percentage -- percentages for
12 different areas?

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Greene?

14 MS. GREENE: Yes.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: That may --
16 if there are customer, and I assume there are,
17 Missouri-American Water personel out in the
18 lobby, maybe those are questions that they
19 could answer more efficiency.

20 MS. GREENE: Okay.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: But that --

22 MS. GREENE: Because --

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: They'll have
24 those figures --

25 MS. GREENE: -- it leans toward, you know,

1 certain areas that are already more
2 disenfranchised may be charged a higher
3 increase of percentage than the other more
4 wealthy areas. That has been the case in the
5 past.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Yeah,
7 I would assume they would have that -- if they
8 don't have that information tonight, they can
9 get that information to you.

10 MS. GREENE: And who is that that I should
11 speak with?

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: The gentleman
13 here at the end of the second row is raising
14 his hand.

15 MS. GREENE: Okay, what's his name? Just
16 in case.

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Rich.

18 MS. GREENE: Rich.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.

20 MS. GREENE: Okay. All right then.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Is there
22 anything further that you'd like to testify to?

23 MS. GREENE: I'm opposed to the rate
24 increase.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: I got you.

1 MS. GREENE: I think it's too exorbitant.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

3 MS. GREENE: Especially because it doesn't
4 correlate with the increase of salaries for the
5 upper management people. We can't just have
6 both. Okay, thank you.

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
8 thank you. And next on the list is James
9 Garner.

10 (James Garner sworn.)

11 MR. GARNER: And my name is James,
12 J-a-m-e-s --

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: If you
14 would --

15 MR. GARNER: G-a-r-n-e-r.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.
17 Go ahead.

18 MR. GARNER: And I'm coming -- I'm here to
19 oppose the rate increase, only because we just
20 had -- we've had two rate increases in the
21 last, what, three years? And, also, according
22 to the -- the President of American Water, he
23 said the rate increase would help them
24 acquire -- to acquire more property, more
25 different companies in different areas. So --

1 and, also, the question -- my question is, will
2 all the areas, the 14 states and 18 military
3 bases that Missouri-American services, will
4 they all see rate increases as well to help
5 them increase their profitability, or is it
6 just the state of Missouri?

7 And the last thing is, I don't think it's
8 fair, because you asked them for the customers
9 to give a rate increase but yours stockholders
10 have not had a dividend loss in the last ten
11 years. So, I think American -- American Water
12 stockholders and investors could take a loss if
13 that's what they need to improve the capital --
14 the capital on capital improvement projects.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay, thank
16 you, Mr. Garner. Are there any questions for
17 Mr. Garner? All right, thank you for your
18 testimony. All right, next on the list is
19 Etefia Umana. Good evening, sir.

20 MR. UMANA: Good evening.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: As I said
22 earlier, I'm Judge Seyer, and you're raising
23 your right hand. I appreciate that.

24 (Etefia Umana sworn.)

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And before

1 you testify, could you state and spell your
2 name?

3 MR. UMANA: Etefia Umana, E-t-e-f-i-a,
4 U-m-a-n-a.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: U-m-a --

6 MR. UMANA: -- n-a.

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: -- n-a?

8 MR. UMANA: Yes, excuse me. I'm going to
9 turn this thing off. All right, before I
10 start, I would like to ask because I don't have
11 visual cues, so I don't know if he's sitting
12 here, I think the President was here. Is he
13 still here?

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: I do not
15 believe so.

16 MR. UMANA: Oh, okay. Well, the point I
17 was going to make, was going to ask him, you
18 all approve his salary, correct? The
19 Commission? He said that earlier today,
20 correct? I'm assuming that he's probably
21 making in between 3 and 500,000 dollars, so any
22 increase in his water bill or any of the
23 respective utilities that he pays may be
24 negligible and inconsequential; he's not going
25 to have to make a determination on whether or

1 not to fill up on gas or cut his medication or
2 do any of the things that are -- a lot of the
3 constituents will have to do. One organization
4 I represent is Missouri Council for the Blind,
5 and in the state of Missouri, you have about a
6 90 percent unemployment rate for visually --
7 people who are visually impaired or blind. You
8 have thousands of individuals that are on
9 what's called blind pension, which is affixed
10 at \$782 per month as their major source of
11 income.

12 So, this egregious, horrific expansion of
13 price gouging, definitely has a detrimental
14 impact on the life of those individuals that do
15 not have the six figure incomes that most of
16 the attorneys here have and the President of
17 Missouri-American Water. They don't have the
18 kind of resources to turn a blind eye to the
19 increases of these bills.

20 Now, there is an old saying that lack of
21 preparation on your part does not constitute an
22 emergency on my part, and for most of the
23 individuals that are here, that 40 percent
24 increase, that \$11 increase in service, is an
25 emergency that we should have not bear because

1 of the greed of this private company that is
2 manipulating and tweaking gobbledygook on what
3 they would -- their lack of preparation in
4 doing some things, anticipating some things
5 that are needed or what you, because this is
6 not about customer service; this is not about
7 infrastructure.

8 Again, as it has been stated over and over
9 and over again, there has not been a loss for
10 this company at all. The shareholders get what
11 they want all the time. The reality of the
12 situation is this is another gift in the
13 unholy alliance between the company and the
14 Public Service Commission on screwing the
15 customers. That's it, and that's all. There
16 needs to be other more sustainable ways in
17 trying to make sure we can get quality service
18 for this important utility. As well as, again,
19 you know, 40 percent is just -- it's just a
20 little ridiculous, and it's something I
21 vehemently oppose. Thank you.

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you,
23 Mr. Umana. Next on the list is Cindy Meredith.

24 MS. MEREDITH: So, this is my first rodeo
25 with this, and I'm not prepared -- oh.

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Yes, thank
2 you.

3 (Cynthia Meredith sworn)

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And before
5 you -- before you get started, your --

6 MS. MEREDITH: Cynthia. I put Cindy, but
7 it's Cynthia. C-y-n-t-h-i-a, Meredith,
8 M-e-r-e-d-i-t-h.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay, thank
10 you. Go ahead.

11 MS. MEREDITH: I really hate babbling and
12 I hate long stories, so I'm going to try to
13 make this short. I'm not prepared because I
14 was going to blow it off, and I thought I can't
15 do that. I kept my mouth shut for too long
16 with too many things when it comes to our
17 government. I was Googling, because I'm not
18 prepared, after I had a couple questions, I
19 didn't know American -- Missouri-American Water
20 fell under American Waterworks.

21 Well, your CEO makes \$7.72 million a year.
22 She's apparently has a tenure of only 2.92
23 years, and that's ridiculous, okay? That's
24 ridiculous. There's enough to go around, and
25 like I shared -- I'm not going to tell my story

1 about my experience with so-called being told I
2 have water leaks in my house, when, in fact, I
3 did not two times; and I fought; and I was
4 treated like poo poo from the other -- it
5 wasn't the customer service; it was the other
6 people that you have to call to get the
7 schedule to test the water, make the new
8 so-called smart meter; which, you know, I don't
9 really like Googling things because it's not
10 always right.

11 Anyway, I'm just going to cut to the chase
12 here. We're in a recession. We have been for
13 four years. Our interest rates are sky-high.
14 People can't afford homes. People can barely
15 afford groceries. I went to buy butter the
16 other day and almost fell over, because I
17 really don't buy a lot: four sticks of butter
18 was almost five or six dollars.

19 And I find it really interesting that
20 every time that our country is struggling
21 financially with the interest rates and the
22 crazy greed and grifting as the gentlemen just
23 said, all these utility companies that are all
24 monopolies, want price hikes for your
25 investors.

1 I'm sorry to be rude. I don't mean to be
2 disrespectful, but you know what? I don't give
3 a hoot about your investors. I care about
4 being able to put food on my table, gas in my
5 car, buy some clothing and have a decent life
6 since I worked my entire adult life. So, if
7 your CEO is making 7.72 million dollars, I can
8 guarantee that you all are probably 1 to 1.5,
9 if not more, I'm assuming. I don't like to
10 assume, but this stuff has got to stop, okay?
11 It's got to stop.

12 We're tired. We're fed up with it. I
13 don't like to put words in other people's
14 mouths, but I'm sure that's why these people
15 are here, and it seems like every single time
16 I've inquired about these -- oh, I want it on
17 the record too, you know, you all try to go
18 paperless, okay? Well, you're paperless, and
19 you're paying your bill through your bank; you
20 don't really see all the little minutiae-nano
21 letters about these things. I found out from
22 Mike Moon, a senator who is not even in my
23 district, he sets up, I highly recommend
24 everyone get on it, he sends out a weekly
25 e-mail about a lot of important things, and

1 this is how I found about this rate increase.

2 There's no signage out here anywhere,
3 okay? It's like -- it's a scavenger hunt the
4 way you wanted it. But I'm really shocked that
5 not more people are here, but I'm shocked that
6 this many people are here. The greed has got
7 to stop. We can't take it anymore. Hopefully,
8 the next four years are going to be uplifting
9 and a lot better, like they were four years
10 ago, but we need your help to make sure that we
11 can continue to thrive and get out of the hole
12 that we've been under for the last four years.

13 And the fact that your company has never
14 suffered a loss, and I think you've all been
15 around a monopoly for 100-plus years in St.
16 Louis County; it's just too much because you
17 don't think we have a choice, and you have us
18 by the b-a-l-l-s; and I'm tired of it. And it
19 would be nice to have people stand up and fight
20 for us more. That's it.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Miss,
22 Mr. Clizer has a question for you.

23 MR. CLIZER: Sorry, ma'am. When you
24 described your getting the information of the
25 LPH for this, the Local Public Hearing, did you

1 receive a physical copy of a local public
2 hearing notice in the mail?

3 MS. MEREDITH: No, not to my knowledge.

4 MR. CLIZER: And are you a wireless -- do
5 you receive paper bill copies or are you an
6 online or paperless bill?

7 MS. MEREDITH: Actually, I still get the
8 paper bills, but as I was sharing earlier,
9 they've become so convoluted and ridiculous
10 that I don't even really read them. I look at
11 my balance, and then I'm, like, there's no way
12 I spent this much money. I don't even have a
13 dishwasher, and I live by myself, like I
14 mentioned earlier in my question. Because I
15 had water spikes at midnight, 1:30 in the
16 morning. And the gentleman outside with your
17 company, he put my address in there to try to
18 find out where it was spiking at those hours;
19 but he couldn't find it. I find that really
20 interesting that maybe it just disappeared.
21 But he was able to see why it was so high; he
22 claims it's from watering my grass. Well, my
23 yard is not that big. Anyway, did I answer
24 your question?

25 MR. CLIZER: You did very much. Thank

1 you, ma'am.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

3 And the next name on the list is Naomi Baye.

4 MS. BAYE: Hi.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Hi. Before
6 you get started, I don't -- do we want to
7 adjust her microphone? Oh, thank you.

8 (Naomi Baye sworn.)

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could you go
10 ahead and spell your name, please?

11 MS. BAYE: Naomi, N-a-o-m-i, Baye,
12 B-a-y-e.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.

14 MS. BAYE: What I want to talk about is, a
15 few months ago, my bills came. It was like
16 1,700, and that was, like, shocking to me
17 because I'm a single mom, and I live with my
18 mom and my grandma. She's in a wheelchair
19 because she got a stroke. And I called them,
20 but the customer service was very rude to me,
21 and I was like, okay, look, I'm a grownup
22 woman, and you're going talk to me like this,
23 I'm going to flip out on you because I don't
24 live with you; can you switch me over to
25 somebody else?

1 Every one of them was just, like, oh,
2 that's your bill; that's your bill. And then I
3 was, like, can I talk to somebody who can
4 really understand what I'm saying right now
5 because 1,700, no. That's a no-no. My car
6 note is 545. And you can't tell me 1,700 for a
7 bill, a one month. No, that's a no-no. And
8 the other lady came, she said, oh, do you have
9 leakage or do you have a pool? Are you
10 hoarding water? Are you building something?
11 I'm, like, no, we're renting. I'm not building
12 a house or a wall or something that I'm going
13 to be using a gallon of water like that.

14 So, my mom called the landlord, and he
15 checked. He's like, no leakage here, but I'm
16 going to still put a new pipe, in case it still
17 says something. So, I called them, and I said
18 the landlord said no leakage, but he's still
19 putting a new pipe. They said, okay, we going
20 to take 700 out, and I'm, like, where am I
21 going to get the money from to pay the other
22 one.

23 Two weeks after, I was at work. My momma
24 called, and she's like, the water gone. I'm
25 like, what do you mean no water? I got my son.

1 He's ten years old. He used to suffer from
2 seizure, but he was on medication, but it took
3 him off, and I'm like, I can't do this with no
4 water in the house with my grandma; she's in a
5 wheelchair, and she's wearing that diaper, that
6 she needs water. Why would they cut my water
7 off? Then when I called: so, you got to pay
8 your bill. I'm like, that's not my bill.
9 That's from somebody else or whatever you all
10 did, because my landlord didn't see no water
11 leakage, nothing.

12 And they turned the water off. We have --
13 I have to go to family members to get water.
14 Me and my momma put water in our car in bucket,
15 in parts, in anything we can, because I need
16 water for my baby, and I need water to take a
17 shower to go to work to make money because I'm
18 a single mom. I don't get no Medicaid. And I
19 don't know how other people get some stuff that
20 other people don't.

21 And I don't get none of the assistance.
22 So, with my car note and everything was up -- I
23 mean, this is the point where sometimes people
24 commit suicide and they wonder why because I
25 was losing my mind, like, if I don't get money

1 to pay this bill, how am I going to live with
2 my grandmother with no water or even me?

3 And I was losing my mind, like, when I go
4 to work, and I keep telling them, I got to go
5 home; I need to go home now; and then I was
6 going home, what's going on? You're not like
7 this, what's going on? It's too much. It's
8 too much. How that bill went up, I don't know.
9 I pay it, but it hurt that I pay something that
10 I didn't use, to pay money for something like
11 that. So, if somebody stealing or whatever it
12 is, it's not right. And your customer service,
13 when people call them -- I'm sorry for my
14 accent, I'm an African. Even though I grew up
15 here but I'm still -- I'm an African. When
16 people called in, they very rude. They don't
17 know how to talk to you. They just said
18 anything they want to say just to get off the
19 phone, and I had something I've been thinking
20 of, and I will call back and say, whom am I
21 speaking, too, because I remember name and then
22 when they come at me, I'm, like, I just talked
23 to you and you hang up.

24 They're very rude. So, please, me paying
25 that money and it took me back. I'm not going

1 to lie right here, it took me back, because I
2 have to put a hold on my car note to pay that
3 money; and you know how it is when you pay your
4 car note; and you don't pay it, they can
5 repossess your car; and I was -- it drive me
6 crazy. And I don't know what to do. I thought
7 I'd done something crazy to myself, like, I
8 can't do this no more. This is not life for
9 me. It wasn't like this before. So, please,
10 whatever it is, it need to stop. And I don't
11 know what they're going to do about that money
12 that I paid for nothing that I didn't use, no
13 water to be 1,700. I was just showing one of
14 the lady right here, my phone, from my phone,
15 the bill, and she's, like, what? And I showed
16 it to her, I'm like, you see? 1,700 is not
17 pocket change. We work. Some of us are
18 getting paid for 16 dollars a hour, sometimes
19 15. And it's not much money for us, because
20 when you go to Walmart, just egg cost six
21 dollars.

22 And it wasn't like that before. You go
23 buy bread, it's almost four dollars, and we got
24 kids. I don't care if it's one or two mom or
25 dad, we go through a whole lot. So, the rich

1 people make more money and they live better
2 lives than us. And it's not fair.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Baye?
4 Ms. Baye?

5 CHAIRPERSON HAHN: Thank you, Ms. Baye,
6 for sharing your story. At ever -- were you
7 aware at any point in time the Commission has a
8 call center that can help with customer
9 complaints relating to bills?

10 MS. BAYE: When I -- when they told me
11 about how my bills were 1,700, a lady told me
12 we can give you somebody's number that can help
13 you pay your bill or whatever it is. When they
14 gave me the number, the lady told me, oh, it
15 going to take a month. My water already off.
16 They said it's going to take a month, 30 days;
17 and she said, I can't give you the guarantee of
18 even 30 days because we got lengths of people
19 in front of you. So, the water is already off.
20 And I have to -- excuse me, hold on. And I
21 have to call my grandma's doctor, that was the
22 crazy one.

23 The lady said, okay, we're going to send
24 this paper to the doctor office. Do you know
25 that it took two days, me and my mama on the

1 phone, and they keep lying, oh, we already sent
2 the paper to the doctor. And my mama have to
3 go to the doctor's office, sitting right there,
4 and the doctor looked and said nothing here.
5 Oh, we already sent it. Doctor said, okay, you
6 know what? You all ain't going to be lying to
7 me. I gave you my fast number, too, and I'm
8 right here in my office with Mary Matati (sic)
9 right here in the wheelchair, and I'm checking.
10 You all didn't send no paper.

11 And that's how the doctor told them that
12 they need to put that water on now, because
13 that's a sick lady who wearing diaper and she
14 need to be cleaner; and that's how after two
15 days, they put that water on. And I still
16 paying that bill, because I can't afford it to
17 see if I'm going to pay 700 or 800 dollars
18 right on this spot. I'm not rich.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: I just -- we
20 have staff here that can help you with
21 resolving, even if the bill is paid already,
22 looking into your issue. So, maybe after this
23 is over, we could connect you with them to help
24 you.

25 MS. BAYE: Okay, that would be great,

1 thanks.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
3 thank you, Ms. Baye. All right, Ms. Baye's
4 name was the last one on the list. So, if you
5 did not testify tonight or if you're watching
6 online and you would like to make comments or
7 if any one who testified here tonight -- I'm
8 sorry, Mr. Clizer? Okay, sure. Is there
9 anyone else who did not sign up tonight who
10 would like to testify tonight? Yes, ma'am.

11 MS. FOGARTY: Hi, my name is Leslie
12 Fogarty.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

14 MS. FOGARTY: L-e-s-l-i-e, F-o-g-a-r-t-y.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could you
16 hold on for a second? Since you were not on
17 the list, let me -- let me get that down. And
18 spell that name again, last name again?

19 MS. FOGARTY: F, as in Frank, o-g-a-r-t-y.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
21 Ms. Fogarty, would you raise your right hand to
22 be sworn in, please?

23 (Leslie Fogarty sworn.)

24 MS. FOGARTY: I would just like to say I
25 do oppose this increase for several reasons.

1 The first, I think it was very deceiving on
2 this notice of the possible increase that was
3 going to be incurred. It says about 1,800 --
4 or \$18 a month, when, in fact, they don't even
5 mention the service charge goes from \$10 to
6 \$21. So, I think that was very deceptive; and
7 the other thing, I know a lot of people have
8 testified about the quality of the drinking
9 water, and I'm going to disagree with that.

10 There is a website called EWG,
11 Environmental Working Group. They do some --
12 you can put in your ZIP code. They give you
13 the quality of the water in your ZIP code. For
14 my ZIP code, it says that the tap -- the tap
15 water has over 16 contaminates that exceed EWG
16 health guidelines, and a total of 39
17 contaminates, many cancer causing. I actually
18 put in a reverse osmosis system or sink thing
19 so that I can drink my water. I will not drink
20 the water here. We were spending a lot of
21 money on bottled water. That got expensive.
22 And the legal limits for contaminants in tap
23 water have not been updated in almost 20 years.

24 So, another thing that I disagree with is
25 the fluoride. You know, how much money are

1 they are -- are they spending on putting
2 fluoride in the water? There are lots of
3 studies that say fluoride is very detrimental
4 to your health. I do have some stuff printed
5 out. I got rid of fluoride in my toothpaste
6 and had the best dental appointments I've ever
7 had. So, that could be cost savings of getting
8 rid of that, so. So, that's all I have.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
10 thank you for your testimony. Yes, sir? Sir,
11 what's your name by the way?

12 MR. SHANNON: Lamont Shannon.
13 L-a-m-o-n-t, S-h-a-n-n-o-n.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
15 Mr. Shannon, would you raise your right hand,
16 please?

17 (Lamont Shannon sworn.)

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead,
19 Mr. Shannon.

20 MR. SHANNON: I just want to point out an
21 observation. I'm not sure that this is
22 something that's prolific throughout your
23 community of work, but in the 241 area, which
24 is where I live, I noticed something about your
25 operation. That I've seen your workers come

1 out to service an area where they may have four
2 or five trucks with people in it and only two
3 people working. And I was wondering is that
4 normal procedure, and, if so, isn't that, I
5 mean, not cost efficient? And, so, I just
6 wanted to point that out, that I have observed
7 that on more than one occasion.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And you said
9 that was in what area?

10 MR. SHANNON: The 241, that's this area
11 here, the Normandy, Jennings, Wellston, all
12 these little areas around here. And, so, I
13 just thought was, like, you know, not an
14 efficient way to run an operation.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.
16 Mr. Clizer has a question for you.

17 MR. CLIZER: Very briefly. When you say
18 "you" for the sake of the record, you are
19 referring to Missouri-American Water Company?

20 MR. SHANNON: Yes.

21 MR. CLIZER: Thank you. That was my only
22 question.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,
24 thank you, Mr. Shannon. Anyone else? Yes,
25 ma'am.

1 MS. DOLSON: My name is Kathy Dolson,
2 K-a-t-h-y, D-o-l-s-o-n.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Ms.
4 Dolson, would you raise your right hand,
5 please.

6 (Kathy Dolson sworn.)

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

8 MS. DOLSON: I just want to go on the
9 record to say I'm strongly opposed to this rate
10 increase. While I'm not in dire straits like
11 many of the people that came up and spoke, it's
12 just a ridiculous increase when they have CEOs
13 that make the money they do, and the investors
14 make bookoo bucks on their investments. It's
15 just not right that it's a monopoly, and we
16 have no choice in our water service. Thank
17 you.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.
19 Anyone else like to testify who is not on the
20 list? All right. As I started to say earlier,
21 if you do have comments that you would like to
22 add, if something comes to your mind later on,
23 if you go to the Commission's website, that is
24 psc.mo.gov. On that home page, there is a link
25 on the right side of the page that says Submit

1 Comments. If you click on that link, you can
2 add your comments there, and I would just ask
3 that you reference this case number, which is
4 WR-2024 -- WR-2024-0320. And Chair Hahn, would
5 you like to make closing remarks?

6 CHAIRPERSON HAHN: Thank you, Judge. I
7 just want to take a second to tell you all how
8 appreciative I am that you came out tonight on
9 this rather getting late evening. I feel like
10 I've learned a lot. I know the commissioners
11 listening here and on online have learned a
12 lot. I've even been tickled at times by
13 husbands getting fired. I'm not going to go
14 tell Mark.

15 I just -- I know you could choose to do
16 other things with your time, and I know your
17 comments tonight will help us make a better
18 decision, and I appreciate that so much. And
19 for many of you, you may have offered comments
20 about issues that you've experienced. I would
21 encourage you to reach out to our staff that
22 are here tonight. They work with customers and
23 citizens all the time, Mike in the back, just
24 raised his hand, help you work through those
25 issues if you hadn't -- if your resolution

1 hasn't met your satisfaction yet. So, please
2 do that. Again, thank you for coming, and look
3 forward to seeing you again in the future.
4 Thank you.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you,
6 Chair Hahn. And if there's nothing further,
7 we -- the hearing is now adjourned, and we're
8 off the record.

9 (Ending time of the hearing: 08:43 p.m.)

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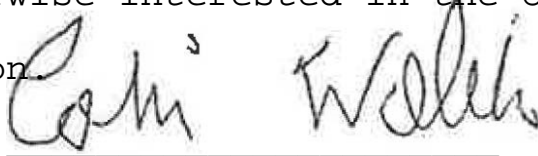
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1 I, Colin Wallis, in and for the State of
2 Missouri do hereby certify that the witness
3 whose testimony appears in the foregoing
4 Examination Under Oath was duly sworn by me;
5 that the testimony of the said witness was
6 taken by me to the best of my ability and
7 thereafter reduced to typewriting under my
8 direction; that I am neither counsel for,
9 related to, nor employed by any of the parties
10 to the action in which this examination was
11 taken, and further that I am not relative or
12 employee of any attorney or counsel employed by
13 the parties thereto, nor financially or
14 otherwise interested in the outcome of the
15 action.


Colin Wallis

17 within and for the State of Missouri
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