

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

In the Matter of The Empire District )  
Electric Company's Request for )  
Authority to File Tariffs Increasing ) **Case No. ER-2019-0374**  
Rates for Electric Service Provided )  
To Customers in its Missouri )  
Service Area )

**STAFF RESPONSE TO THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC COUNSEL'S  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**COMES NOW** the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission, by and through counsel, and for its *Response to The Office of the Public Counsel's Recommendations for Local Public Hearings* in this matter hereby states:

1. The Empire District Electric Company filed tariff sheets and direct testimony proposing a general rate increase for its Missouri service areas on August 14, 2019. The Office of the Public Counsel (OPC) filed a *Local Public Hearings Recommendations* on November 1, 2019, recommending four Local Public Hearings (LPH) be held in Bolivar, Branson, Joplin and Republic over a two-day period. For the Commission's information, Staff now files this *Response* including statistical information historically for those LPHs held in Empire's last general rate case.

a) April 13 and 14, 2016, Joplin in the morning had 4 attend, but no one testify or file a public comment; Joplin in the evening had 2 attend, but no one testify or file a public comment; and Reeds Spring had 10 attend, but no one testify or file a public comment.

2. For the Commission's further information, Staff has compiled information for fiscal year 2019 indicating that average Commission expense and equipment cost per local public hearing was \$573.39, average cost per attendee was \$26.50 and the average cost per witness was \$206.80. These figures do not incorporate personal service expenditures, or costs incurred by the companies or other parties attending LPHs. Staff is not opposed to the locations OPC has recommended as they are new sites which may promote a larger showing than those LPHs held in previous locations.

**WHEREFORE**, Staff, prays that the Commission will accept this *Response*; and grant such other and further relief as the Commission considers just in the circumstances.

**/s/ Whitney Payne**

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served by electronic mail, or First Class United States Postal Mail, postage prepaid, on this 4th day of November, 2019, to all counsel of record.

**/s/ Whitney Payne**