

1 BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

2 STATE OF MISSOURI

3 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

4 PREHEARING CONFERENCE

5 Eddie and Carlene Johnson )

6 Complainant, ) Case No.: EC-2026-0048

7 v. )

8 The Empire District )

9 Electric Company d/b/a )

10 Liberty, )

11 Respondent. )

14 TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026  
9:00 a.m.

15 Jefferson City, MO  
16 via WebEx

17 VOLUME 1

19 RON PRIDGIN, Presiding  
20 DEPUTY CHIEF REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

21 KAYLA HAHN, Chair,  
22 MAIDA J. COLEMAN,  
GLEN KOLKMEYER,  
JOHN MITCHELL,  
23 COMMISSIONERS

24 Transcribed by:

25 Sam Tinega

1 THE COURT: Good morning. I'm showing  
2 that it's 9 o'clock. Do we need to wait on anyone  
3 before we begin?

4 MR. COOPER: I'm not aware of anybody,  
5 Judge.

6 THE COURT: Mr. Cooper, thank you. If  
7 everyone's ready -- and Mr. and Ms. Johnson, I'll do  
8 this kind of more for your benefit than anyone else's.  
9 Obviously everybody else is, is familiar with this. I'm  
10 just going to ask in a moment for people to enter an  
11 appearance. And all that means is I'm just asking for  
12 you to kind of introduce yourselves. The other -- the  
13 lawyers will kind of give their name and business  
14 address and, and that's all I'm looking for. And then  
15 I'm going to jump off the call fairly quickly and let  
16 you talk with the other parties about perhaps how to  
17 resolve the complaint or if you need to go to hearing.  
18 And that's really all this is today. So are, are there  
19 any questions before we get started?

20 MR. JOHNSON: No, sir.

21 MS. JOHNSON: No, sir.

22 THE COURT: All right. Very good. Thank  
23 you. Well, we'll get started. Good morning. We are on  
24 the record. This is the prehearing conference for Eddie  
25 and Carlene Johnson v. The Empire District Electric

1 Company, doing business as Liberty. It's case number  
2 EC-2026-0048. I am Ron Pridgen. I'm the regulatory law  
3 judge presiding over this prehearing conference. It's  
4 being held via WebEx on January 20th, 2026. The time is  
5 9:00 a.m. I would like to get entries of appearance  
6 from counsel, beginning with staff, please.

7 MS. ANDREA: Good morning, Judge Pridgen.  
8 Andrea for staff counsel entering her appearance. Tracy  
9 Johnson is staff counsel. She is also appearing this  
10 morning. And we also have two staff members who are  
11 sitting in.

12 THE COURT: Ms. Hansen, thank you. Any  
13 entry of appearance on behalf of Liberty, please?

14 MR. COOPER: Yes, Judge. Dean Cooper  
15 from the law firm of Brydon, Swearengen & England P.C.,  
16 appearing on behalf of the Empire District Electric  
17 Company, doing business as Liberty.

18 THE COURT: Mr. Cooper, thank you. Any  
19 entry on behalf of the office of the public counsel?  
20 Hearing none and -- this is completely optional, Mr. or  
21 Ms. Johnson, you're free to introduce yourselves. You  
22 don't have to give your address or you don't have to  
23 enter an appearance at all. This is more for counsels.  
24 So you can introduce yourself if you like. If not,  
25 we'll just keep going.

1 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah. I'm Eddie Johnson  
2 and my wife Carlene Johnson.

3 THE COURT: All right. Mr. and Ms.  
4 Johnson, thank you and good morning.

5 MR. JOHNSON: Good morning.

6 MS. JOHNSON: Good morning.

7 THE COURT: Have I overlooked anyone?

8 Anyone else needing to enter an appearance. Okay. I'm  
9 not hearing anyone else. Again --

10 MS. VANGER PEN: Judge Pridgen?

11 THE COURT: Yes.

12 MS. VANGERPEN: I apologize for my delay.  
13 This is Lindsay VanGerpen, on behalf of the OPC. I  
14 apologize for our delay in getting on this morning.

15 THE COURT: No problem, Ms. VanGerpen.  
16 Thank you. And, and will show your -- that you entered  
17 your appearance on behalf of the office of public  
18 counsel. Thank you very much. Have I overlooked any  
19 other entries of appearance? Okay. Not hearing  
20 anything, and as I said a moment ago, Mr. and Ms.  
21 Johnson, I'm going to get off the call here in just a  
22 moment and let you discuss with the other parties if you  
23 can resolve the complaint or if not, if and when you'd  
24 like to go to hearing. And I believe that's all that I  
25 have for the parties. Before I get off the call, does

1 anyone have anything else to bring to my attention? All  
2 right. I'm not hearing anything. Counsel, would a --  
3 some sort of either -- you know, some sort of pleading,  
4 a procedural schedule or a status report or something.  
5 Do you think you'd be able to file something sometime  
6 next week just to keep me posted on, on where this is  
7 going?

8 MS. ANDREA: Absolutely. We can do that.

9 THE COURT: Very good. All right. Thank  
10 you. Anything else for me before I jump off the call?  
11 Okay. Hearing nothing, I wish you all a good morning  
12 and I'll look forward to hearing from the parties next  
13 week. Thank you very much.

14 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you, sir.

15 MS. VANGERPEN: Thank you, Judge.

16 (End of audio recording.)

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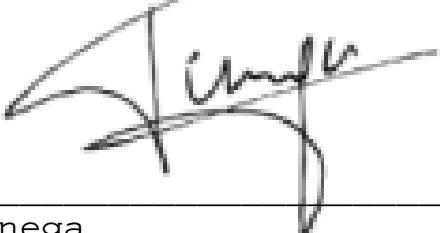
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8 I further certify that I am not  
9 interested in the outcome of said action, nor connected  
10 with, nor related to any of the parties in said action,  
11 nor to their respective counsel.

12  
13 IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set  
14 my hand this 22nd day of January, 2026.

15   
16  
17 Sam Tinega

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