

1 STATE OF MISSOURI
2 PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
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4 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
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6 Local Public Hearing
7 December 20, 2016
8 Kansas City, Missouri
9 Gregg/Klice Community Center
10 Volume V
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13 In The Matter Of Kansas City)
Power & Light Company's Request)
14 For Authority To Implement A) File No. ER-2016-0285
General Rate Increase For)
15 Electric Service)
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19 RONALD D. PRIDGIN, Presiding
DEPUTY CHIEF REGULATORY LAW JUDGE
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21 SCOTT T. RUPP,
COMMISSIONER
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25 REPORTED BY: Albert Narvaez

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PROCEEDINGS

(Hearing commenced at 5:55 p.m.)

JUDGE PRIDGIN: On the record, please.

Good evening. We will begin tonight's local public hearing in the Kansas City Power & Light Case ER-2016-0285. This is the evening hearing in Kansas City. I am Ron Pridgin. I am one of the judges that works at the Missouri Public Service Commission and this hearing is being held December 20th, 2016. The time is 5:55 p.m. I wanted to start a little early since it looks like we've got pretty much everybody here who would want to testify. So I want to go ahead and let you testify if you wanted and then get on with your evening. Thank you very much for being here, everyone.

Along with me this evening is Commissioner Rupp. He is one of the five commissioners appointed by the Governor and these Commissioners are also confirmed by the Senate.

The purpose of the hearing tonight is to hear from you. We want to hear from any ratepayers that have any concerns they would like to bring to the Commission concerning Kansas City Power & Light's request for the rate increase. We held another hearing this afternoon in Kansas City. We have also held

1 hearings in Marshall and Gladstone to hear comments
2 from ratepayers. If you wish to ask further
3 questions -- I understand you had a question and answer
4 session with the company. You won't be able to ask
5 questions during this portion of the hearing, but you
6 are free and certainly encouraged to talk to people
7 from the company, people from the staff of the
8 commission, and from the Office of the Public Counsel
9 if you have any questions or concerns you would like to
10 bring to their attention. I have got a few people who
11 have signed up on the sign-up sheet and I will call
12 your names one at a time. If I mispronounce your name,
13 I apologize. Please correct me. What I'll do is, I'll
14 just ask you to come to the podium, raise your right
15 hand to be sworn, and I'll ask you a couple quick
16 questions such as your name. I want to ask you to
17 spell your name so the court reporter can get it into
18 the record correctly. I'll ask you if you are a
19 customer of Kansas City Power & Light and then I'll see
20 if you have a statement for the Commission. Once I get
21 through the sign-up sheet, I'll ask if there's anybody
22 else who wishes to testify before we close.

23 Before we begin with testimony, let me get
24 entries of appearance from counsel beginning with
25 Kansas City Power & Light, please.

1 MR. STEINER: My name is Roger W.
2 Steiner. I am representing Kansas City Power & Light.
3 My contact information has been given to the court
4 reporter.

5 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Mr. Steiner, thank you.
6 On behalf of the staff of the Commission,
7 please.

8 MR. WILLIAMS: Judge, my name is Hampton
9 Williams. I represent the staff of the Public Service
10 Commission, and my contact information has been
11 provided to the court reporter.

12 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Mr. Williams, thank you.
13 On behalf of the Office of Public Counsel,
14 please.

15 MR. OPITZ: Thank you, Judge.
16 My name is Tim Opitz, on behalf of the Office
17 of Public Counsel. My address is PO Box 2230,
18 Jefferson City, Missouri, 65102.

19 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Mr. Opitz, thank you.
20 On behalf of Ameren Missouri?

21 MS. GIBONEY: For Ameren Missouri, I'm
22 Sarah Giboney, and the court reporter has my contact
23 information.

24 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Ms. Giboney, thank you.
25 Have I overlooked any counsel wishing to enter

1 an appearance?

2 Commissioner Rupp, any opening remarks before
3 we take testimoney?

4 COMMISSIONER RUPP: Yes. Thank you for
5 coming out tonight. As you come up you may make your
6 comments. We would like to hear your thoughts on the
7 pending rate case plus if you have any commentary on
8 customer service, community partner, and how the
9 company has acted. It's also a great time for us to
10 get feedback from you as well. Thank you.

11 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you.

12 All right. It looks like the first witness is
13 James R. Turner. If you'll come forward and raise your
14 right hand to be sworn. And before I forget, if
15 there's someone who does not wish to take an oath for
16 religious reasons, please let me know and I'll ask your
17 testimony to be affirmed instead of sworn.

18 (Witness sworn.)

19 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you, sir. If you
20 would, please, state and spell your name for the court
21 reporter.

22 MR. TURNER: James R. Turner.

23 "T" as in "tango" - u-r-n-e-r.

24 JUDGE PRIDGIN: And are you a customer
25 of Kansas City Power & Light?

1 MR. TURNER: Yes, I am.

2 JUDGE PRIDGIN: All right. What is your
3 statement for the Commission, sir?

4 MR. TURNER: I oppose increases to
5 Kansas City Power & Light fixed charges. Our need is
6 greater than ever to have efficiency in use of
7 electricity. Sunday's temperatures here were colder
8 than in Fairbanks, Alaska according to the television
9 commentators. So it's obvious that the Arctic Vortex
10 is unstable and that earth's climate is already very
11 destabilized. Many people of Kansas City and some of
12 our businesses already are wisely switching to
13 renewable energy and new efficiencies. We have a
14 populous which can work with a smarter grid. With this
15 spirit, we can be attractive to 21st Century-minded
16 companies, but Kansas City needs all hands on deck for
17 efficiency and that should include a KCP&L rate
18 structure that saves money for consumers who are
19 efficient.

20 Recently I spoke with an area resident who is
21 already off-grid entirely. As battery technology keeps
22 improving, more and more of KCP&L ratepayers will go
23 off-grid if growing fixed KCP&L charges would prevent
24 them from reaping benefits of emerging technologies. I
25 have solar panels and I'm still on the grid and I would

1 prefer that homeowners be motivated to stay on a grid
2 and help to keep it robust.

3 Two years ago I served on the steering
4 committee for Missouri's comprehensive energy plan and
5 I saw information on how distributed power information
6 including rooftop solar panels can help a grid to
7 withstand disruption by worsening climate or by
8 terrorist intrusions in our grid, which is a big
9 concern that we heard about on that committee. More
10 customers will stay on-grid and will install needed
11 efficiencies if KCP&L's fixed charges are not
12 increased. I support KCP&L's electric vehicle charging
13 program, but it needs rates that will encourage
14 off-peak charges. Electric vehicles are efficient and
15 reduce our urban air pollution to the extent that wind
16 and solar energy are sufficiently powering our grid to
17 offset this added electricity that the vehicles will
18 use. I drive a Ford C-MAX Energi and I am using our
19 area's recharging stations when I can. I note that
20 there is such a station just across the street. Time
21 prevented my using it, but anyway, I'm glad to see it's
22 there. But most of my own recharging is in my own
23 garage after midnight. I believe more people like me
24 will be attracted to switch to electric vehicles if the
25 increment to their house electrical bill is tolerable.

1 Time of day charging rates would help to motivate
2 purchasers of electric vehicles. Earlier I referred to
3 Missouri's comprehensive energy plan and committee.
4 One of its meetings in 2014 was held here in Kansas
5 City at our Penn Valley campus and there, Owen Smith of
6 the Rocky Mountain Institute spoke to us about rate
7 saving. So the information is at hand. We just need
8 to challenge KCP&L to devise more policies that meet
9 our society's emerging needs. A nudge from the Public
10 Service Commission could lead to a rate structure that
11 Kansas City can take pride in.

12 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Mr. Turner, thank you.

13 Commissioner Rupp, did you have any questions?

14 COMMISSIONER RUPP: No.

15 JUDGE PRIDGIN: And I may have failed to
16 mention earlier, if you would, please, when you're
17 done, please stay at the podium in case Commissioner
18 Rupp has any questions for you.

19 The next witness -- excuse me. Mr. Tuner,
20 thank you for your time and your remarks.

21 The next witness is Charles Carney. If you'll
22 come forward to be sworn, please.

23 (Witness sworn.)

24 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you, sir. If you
25 would, please state and spell your name for the court

1 reporter.

2 MR. CARNEY: My name is Charles Carney,
3 C-a-r-n-e-y.

4 JUDGE PRIDGIN: And are you a KCP&L
5 customer?

6 MR. CARNEY: Yes, I am.

7 JUDGE PRIDGIN: All right. What is your
8 statement, sir?

9 MR. CARNEY: I don't have a pen.
10 Simply, I'm speaking just from the heart. I feel that
11 KCP&L out of seven out of the last 10 years has gotten
12 rate increases and as a result, they have been just
13 without opposition have been upping the electrical bill
14 of the people across the State of Missouri. There are
15 people on fixed incomes that are having a hard time
16 meeting this. And as a result, it hurts them.

17 We had a conversation earlier about variable
18 versus fixed. Well, they're planning on putting a flat
19 increase that is both fixed and variable. They
20 subcontract out, which they just did to smart meters,
21 hundreds of thousands of them, which was expensive,
22 wasn't cheap, and those smart meters, which have been
23 turned down and forbidden in Canada, Oregon, and parts
24 of California, as health hazards as well as being fire
25 hazards and burning of houses have been switched off to

1 the old analog -- back to the analog, which are still
2 available, and as a result I feel that KCP&L really
3 does not have the heart and soul in the patrons that
4 they're serving right now or really care about them
5 because the new smart meter is more expensive. It
6 rolls the thing over to the next highest number, where
7 the analog was a decimal, and as a result, we're paying
8 more money. It's more expensive to have the smart
9 meter than it was the analog. That's more money for
10 them and they know it. At this time I think we should
11 say no to KCP&L and -- stand down and really take a
12 look at what they have.

13 Thank you.

14 Is there anything further from you, sir?

15 COMMISSIONER RUPP: No, sir.

16 JUDGE PRIDGIN: All right. Thank you
17 for your remarks, sir.

18 The next witness is Joseph Jackson. If you'll
19 come forward to be sworn, please.

20 (Witness sworn.)

21 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you, sir. Please
22 state and spell your name for the court reporter.

23 MR. JACKSON: Joseph, J-o-s-e-p-h,
24 Jackson, J-a-c-k-s-o-n, and, yes, I am a KCP&L
25 customer.

1 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Okay. And give your
2 statement when you're ready, sir.

3 MR. JACKSON: Mr. Chairman, members of
4 the Public Service Commission, my name is Joseph
5 Jackson. I am here to testify against the 7.5% rate
6 increase requested by KC Power & Light. Financial
7 information provided in my testimony was attained by
8 Great Plains, the parent company of KCP&L, Form 10-K,
9 dated 31 December 2015. The Form 10-K is a financial
10 document that must be provided to the Security Exchange
11 Commission since KCP&L is a publicly traded
12 corporation. Missouri and Kansas electrical rates do
13 not compete with other utility providers in the
14 electric service area. This allows them to virtually
15 operate as a monopoly. For the year 2015, 82% of the
16 energy produced by KCP&L was by coal. This was the
17 second-most expensive way for the company to produce
18 electricity, behind gas and oil. Production by coal in
19 2015 was higher than it was in 2014 when it was 81%.
20 The highest cost for 2015 energy production for KCP&L
21 was, one, gas and oil at 10.78% per kilowatt hour, 2%
22 of generation. Coal costed 2.06 per kilowatt hour, 80%
23 of electricity generated by coal. Nuclear energy was
24 at 0.67 per kilowatt hour. 17% was generated in this
25 manner. Fourth, wind-renewable, and in their Form 10-K

1 it says 2% at no cost per kilowatt hour.

2 Why does KCP&L use the highest means, coal and
3 gas, to produce 83% of their electricity. Nuclear and
4 wind count for only 17%, but these are both less
5 expensive means to produce electrical energy. KCP&L
6 has coal contracts in place for 98% of its 2016
7 requirements, 79% of its 2017 requirements, and 49% of
8 its 2018 requirements. KCP&L owns 47% of Wolf Creek
9 Nuclear Operating Corporation, the operating
10 corporation for KCP&L -- I mean for Wolf Creek.

11 What was more interesting from the information
12 in the Form 10-K was production of electricity by coal
13 went from 2.06 per kilowatt hour to \$1.84 for
14 production and gas went from 10.78 per kilowatt hour to
15 \$5.35 per kilowatt hour. This is a drop of over 50%.
16 For gas and oil the drop was more than it cost last
17 year from 10.78 to the 5.35 the reduction was \$5 -- it
18 was almost more than it was to produce for this year.
19 The reduction in coal from 2.06 in 2015 to \$1.84 in
20 2016 is 22 cents per kilowatt hour reduction for
21 production by coal means if according to the documents
22 costs are decreasing. There's a document of reduction
23 for \$5.43 for gas and oil and electricity production
24 and reduction of 22 cents for coal while electricity
25 costs are consistently increasing every two years. How

1 can a just request of fuel adjustment charge increase
2 if you have your costs for production and costs of fuel
3 went down it is impossible for you to have an increase
4 in fuel cost when your cost to produce each kilowatt
5 hour of electricity goes down. Wanting the 1.5 million
6 combined customers to pay for electricity when KCP&L
7 merges with Weststar and because the largest overall
8 electricity supplier for Missouri and Kansas. We will
9 literally be at their mercy for electricity rates.

10 Total generation costs per kilowatt hour in
11 2016 at this point is down to \$1.70 which is down from
12 \$1.78 in 2015, which is down from 2014 when it was
13 actually \$1.95. This is on page eight of their Form
14 10-K. For 2016 production of electricity by nuclear
15 energy was at 15% versus 17% for 2015. The cost for
16 production was 66 cents per kilowatt hour with nuclear
17 energy which was the second-lowest cost for electricity
18 production for KCP&L. Again, why do we consistently
19 use electrical production rates that are higher than
20 other sources? According to the Form 10-K, the total
21 cost to produce a kilowatt hour of electricity using
22 all sources as I said in 2015 was \$1.78, 2016 is \$1.70,
23 which is then still down from 2014 which was \$1.95.

24 KCP&L truly is a monopoly company with
25 electricity locked in its fist. If you are an

1 individual and the KCP&L service company were to
2 purchase solar panels and produce more electricity each
3 year than your house uses, you would not benefit as
4 KCP&L no longer pays customers for this entry. They
5 started out with a policy where if you get solar
6 panels, it was \$2 per kilowatt hour, then a \$1.50, then
7 \$1, and then it ended last year at 50 cents. Solar
8 panels provide a stable energy cost for the next 20
9 years, but we still have to continue with these
10 fluctuating rate costs every two years when they don't
11 lock in energy at a certain cost, but the Commission
12 consistently gives them energy increases and there's no
13 sign of stopping.

14 on November 4th, 2008, more than 66% of
15 Missourians voted yes on Proposition C Initiative.
16 Proposition C created a renewable energy standard in
17 this state -- utility companies to gradually increase
18 their renewable energy annually to 15% -- energy used
19 in the state is renewable. Further initiative required
20 that the energy rates not increase by more than 1%.
21 This was later challenged by electrical companies and
22 amended by State Legislature. Renewable energy is the
23 cheapest and cleanest source of energy and if we begin
24 to change now, the cost will only be less, but we will
25 also pay less in the future for energy rates and we

1 won't be subject to rates every two years.

2 If this body was to grant KCP&L an increase, it
3 would be their seventh since 2007. We looked at 11.7%
4 in 2015, 2013, 4.9% excludes fuel rebates, 2011 7.1%
5 excludes fuel rebates, 2010 no change, 2009, 10.5%
6 excludes fuel rebates, 2007, 11.6% excludes fuel
7 rebates, 2006, 11.2% excludes the fuel rebates.
8 Increases in a total of over 57%. This does not
9 include, as I said, the fuel adjustment charge. Last
10 year Missouri Gas Energy received an increase and this
11 year they're asking for additional increases in
12 infrastructure replacement costs.

13 Kansas City is also under an environmental
14 protection agency mandate that we must replace all
15 water and sewer lines. Water rates in this city have
16 doubled since 2010 with no signs of slowing down. In
17 July of 2010 Kansas City water department went from
18 bi-monthly billing to monthly billing and it's
19 increased the water for each household by 100%. In
20 2010, we had a \$10.85 surcharge. Sewer was 9.90. 2011
21 was 10.85. Sewer was 10.85. 2012 it stayed the same,
22 but sewer went up to 11.55. 2013, all water rates went
23 to 11.90 on the surcharge, then the sewer went to 12.20.
24 The surcharge in 2014 went to 13.09, sewer to 15.10.
25 This doesn't include the water rate, which in 2010 was

1 \$2.84 per 100 cubic feet, and this year it's \$4.60 per
2 ccf. Gas increases, light increases, healthcare
3 increases, water increases, each time utility bills are
4 up, prices go up, but we don't have an increase in
5 wages. Every organization passes their costs onto the
6 next user, but who is the customer at the bottom to
7 pass their cost onto? What is a senior citizen, an
8 individual with disabilities, or a single mother to do
9 when they have to choose between utilities and food?

10 In my community the average for an African
11 American household is \$28,000 a year. If you're a
12 Latino in Kansas City, it's \$32,000 a year. If you are
13 Caucasian, it's a little bit over \$50,000 a year and
14 this was from the mayor's city address last year. With
15 the increase in 2015 the utility will be allowed a 9.5%
16 rate of return, down from its current rate of return of
17 9.7% and substantially less than the 10.3% rate they're
18 requesting. Chuck Caisley, KCP&L's Vice President of
19 Marketing and Public Affairs said that the rate of
20 return you see is at the low end of the cost
21 nationally. We would like to have those who invest
22 with us in Missouri to give more of a return. How
23 about investing in the community more to reduce energy
24 costs across the entire spectrum, not just in one area
25 or another area when the program's not available. The

1 dividend to shareholders has increased, but KCP&L is
2 still asking for an increase. KCP&L wants their
3 increase to take effect in May right before residents
4 get the highest bills of the year to try to stay cool
5 in the summer months, and we have many deaths because
6 our senior citizens and other people cannot afford to
7 pay those large bills. If they were truly worried
8 about the customers and consumers, they wouldn't have
9 asked for an accelerated schedule and they would have
10 done this in September to allow people to turn around
11 and get ready for those bills the upcoming year, but
12 they wanted to make -- it was profits first. They're
13 wanting to make their money right when the summer
14 energy bills come in. I'll ask you to think about this
15 as you decide on giving them a rate increase.

16 Any questions?

17 JUDGE PRIDGIN: No questions, sir.

18 Thank you for your time and your testimony.

19 The next witness is Robert Moonie, I believe it
20 is.

21 MR. MOORE: It's probably Robert Moore.

22 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Robert Moore? I'm
23 sorry. Robert Moore.

24 MR. MOORE: That's fine.

25 JUDGE PRIDGIN: I apologize for missing

1 the name.

2 MR. MOORE: That's okay.

3 JUDGE PRIDGIN: If you'll come forward
4 to be sworn, please.

5 (Witness sworn.)

6 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you, sir. Please
7 state and spell your name for the court reporter.

8 MR. MOORE: My name is Robert Moore,
9 M-o-o-r-e.

10 JUDGE PRIDGIN: And are you a KCP&L
11 customer?

12 MR. MOORE: Yes, I am.

13 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Okay. What is your
14 statement for the Commission, sir?

15 MR. MOORE: My statement was kind of a
16 variation on what I said during the Q and A before. My
17 concern is that the fixed rate charge is basically a
18 Trojan horse to be sure that a certain return on
19 investment is made by the company and I believe that a
20 fair way would be to increase the cost per wattage, so
21 that the higher users would pay more and people like
22 myself who are lower income wouldn't pay as much
23 because when you're poor you're not going too use as
24 much electricity.

25 I also would ask that the Commission look at

1 the range of fixed charges across this area and to see
2 as how KCP&L compares in terms of that. I believe in
3 terms of fixed charges, it would probably be among the
4 highest across this area and I don't think that's a
5 good idea. So that is basically all I have to say. I
6 wish I had something written down, but I don't.

7 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you, sir.

8 MR. MOORE: Uh-huh.

9 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you very much.

10 Jim Fitzpatrick -- I'm going to do it off the
11 microphone. It's cutting in and out. I'm just going
12 to shout. I apologize. Mr. Fitzpatrick, if you'll
13 come forward to be sworn, sir.

14 (Witness sworn.)

15 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you, sir.

16 Please state and spell your name for the court
17 reporter.

18 MR. FITZPATRICK: It's Jim Fitzpatrick.
19 That's F-i-t-z-p-a-t-r-i-c-k.

20 JUDGE PRIDGIN: And are you a KCP&L
21 customer?

22 MR. FITZPATRICK: I am.

23 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Okay. What is your
24 statement, sir?

25 MR. FITZPATRICK: Well, Judge and

1 Commissioner, thank you very much for giving me the
2 opportunity to speak. I am a retired reporter and
3 editor for the Kansas City Star. I've been retired for
4 10 years and I just wanted to say a couple -- make a
5 couple of points concisely. I believe I can do this.

6 Just as a starting point, I'm on Social
7 Security and a pension from McClatchy Company, which is
8 the owner of the Kansas City Star. My Social Security
9 benefits do not go up nearly as frequently as KCP&L
10 rates go up and my pension never goes up. Now, I don't
11 say that in a "woe is me" way because my -- even though
12 I'm on a fixed income, I do pretty well. I do better
13 than a lot of people on my fixed income, but I'm
14 thinking more about the tens of thousands of customers
15 who are on fixed incomes at a much lower rate than I am
16 and I think that this rate proposal at 7.5%, if that is
17 indeed correct -- and raising the fixed charge from
18 \$11.88 to \$13.18, I think that would work a terrific
19 hardship on thousands and thousands of lower income
20 people on fixed incomes and I'm very concerned about
21 that. In the Q and A session I took a look at my check
22 register to see what I was paying to KCP&L because,
23 frankly, I didn't -- I hadn't paid that much attention
24 to it, but I was able to look at my last five months
25 and it averages about \$200 a month. That's a lot of

1 money. That's a significant amount of money. Now,
2 it's a big service and we need it. I understand that
3 the company needs money to go on and to return to their
4 investors. Mine would go up from \$200 a month to about
5 \$215 a month. Now, again, I'm thinking of the people
6 who are on lower incomes and I think that would be a
7 relatively steep hike, to go 7.5%.

8 On the fixed charge, I agree exactly with what
9 Mr. Moore just said, that taking it from \$11.88 to
10 \$13.18. I would encourage the Commission to really
11 think hard before raising that fixed rate because it's
12 out of the consumer's control once that fixed rate goes
13 up.

14 Finally, on the electric vehicle charging
15 stations, I really applaud Power & Light for pushing
16 this, for advocating for electric vehicles. I drive a
17 hybrid, so I'm halfway there. I would urge -- as I
18 understand it, the rate for the charging stations is
19 now a flat rate and I would encourage -- I think it
20 would be good for the company to institute variable
21 rates to encourage off-peak charging. In other words,
22 lower the rates for off-peak and give people -- so that
23 it would even it out more and not -- I think if you
24 just followed some of these points, we could all get
25 along.

1 Thank you very much.

2 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you, sir.

3 MR. FITZPATRICK: Any questions?

4 COMMISSIONER RUPP: No, sir.

5 MR. FITZPATRICK: All right.

6 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you, sir.

7 Next witness is Zay Thompson. If you'll raise
8 your right hand to be sworn, please.

9 (Witness sworn.)

10 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you, sir. Please
11 state and spell your name for the court reporter.

12 MR. THOMPSON: My first name is
13 Franklin, but I go by Zay, my middle name, Z-a-y. My
14 last name is Thompson, T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n. I am a
15 ratepayer for KCP&L.

16 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Okay. What is your
17 statement, sir?

18 MR. THOMPSON: I'm basically going to
19 echo what Mr. Fitzpatrick said. I am opposed to fixed
20 rates, increases. I think it's ridiculous. They just
21 got an increase last year. It doesn't do anything to
22 encourage energy conservation, which we need to be
23 doing. You know, people who use more energy need to be
24 paying more. It also hurts poor and people on fixed
25 income and that's something you guys should take very

1 seriously, especially with the history of increased
2 rates that KCP&L has been requesting over the last
3 several years. You know, they admit that part of the
4 reason they want this is so they can earn higher
5 profit. So, you know, you -- I think that with the
6 history of wanting increased rates and the poverty that
7 a lot of people are in, that that should just be
8 denied.

9 I do appreciate the electrical vehicle charging
10 stations that have been put in. I think that's
11 something that we should be moving to. It's going to
12 improve our air quality and I think that that's
13 starting to catch on. That's a good thing and I
14 appreciate that. I think it can be done in a smarter
15 way, where variable rates can be put in so that it
16 encourages off-peak charging and that's better for our
17 grid and it's also smarter energy conservation.

18 That's my statement. Any questions?

19 COMMISSIONER RUPP: I don't have any.

20 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you, sir.

21 The next witness is Cheryl Barnes.

22 MS. BARNES: Hi.

23 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Good evening.

24 (Witness sworn.)

25 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you. If you

1 would, please state and spell your name for the court
2 reporter.

3 MS. BARNES: Cheryl Barnes, C-h-e-r-y-l,
4 Barnes, B-a-r-n-e-s.

5 JUDGE PRIDGIN: And are you a KCP&L
6 customer?

7 MS. BARNES: I am.

8 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Okay. What is your
9 statement, ma'am?

10 MS. BARNES: My statement is that I
11 think that 7.9 to 8.75% is a really high rate of
12 return. I think that any business is going to need to
13 consider improvements in its infrastructure, and they
14 haven't been doing that. That's an example of poor
15 planning and/or greed. Utilities must plan years ahead
16 and decades out and, apparently, either they have not
17 done that or they're doing it very poorly because they
18 keep coming back to you asking for increases. It shows
19 more concern for their shareholders than it does their
20 customers, especially when you take a look at their
21 customer base, take a look at their demographics,
22 particularly where you've held these meetings -- which
23 I appreciate since I live in this area too. I think
24 that many -- because so many of the customers are lower
25 income, that it really reflects badly to keep raising

1 the prices the way that they do. I would suggest that
2 they take a look at their executive salaries and what
3 the company is doing to reduce cost and to hold their
4 line on costs.

5 That's it.

6 COMMISSIONER RUPP: No questions.

7 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Ms. Barnes, thank you.

8 MS. BARNES: You're welcome.

9 JUDGE PRIDGIN: That is the last witness
10 I have on the sign-up sheet. Is there anyone else who
11 wishes to testify?

12 Yes, ma'am. If you'll come forward.

13 (Witness sworn.)

14 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you so much.
15 Please state and spell your name for the court
16 reporter.

17 MS. WIESE: Rita Wiese. Rita, R-i-t-a,
18 Wiese, W-i-e-s-e.

19 JUDGE PRIDGIN: And are you a KCP&L
20 customer?

21 MS. WIESE: I am.

22 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Okay. What is your
23 statement -- can you move the microphone down so people
24 in the back can hear? There you go. Thank you.

25 MS. WIESE: As the gentleman said in a

1 previous hearing, KCP&L has raised rates -- or has
2 proposed seven rate hikes in the last 10 years. I went
3 to a previous rate hike meeting and then to one last
4 week, just to find out what it was they were asking for
5 and what it was going for. I think that since KCP&L
6 has a monopoly and therefore can force customers or
7 withhold energy, I ask that there be no increase.

8 My pension has decreased. KCP&L wants more of
9 my income, coming to me after they have already
10 upgraded systems and built plants and put in plants,
11 cut trees. I think their lack of good budgeting
12 pinches my pocket. If there were competition we could
13 go to another provider, but with KCP&L having a
14 monopoly and controlling both the power and the cost, I
15 feel like we're being bullied by another rate hike and
16 they're holding us hostage.

17 One of KCP&L's upgrades was to a digital meter,
18 also called a smart meter. An analog meter lasts about
19 50 years. A digital meter has about a 20-year
20 lifespan, so we face another rate hike when KCP&L
21 decides to replace the smart meters, twice as soon as
22 we would if we kept our analogs. That cost will be
23 built into my future too.

24 I wrote a letter to KCP&L a couple of years ago
25 asking to keep my analog meter and refusing a digital

1 meter. I spoke with Catherine Winter to verify my
2 refusal. Their subcontractor came twice. The first
3 time, he left after voicing what he wanted to do and
4 getting my refusal. The second time, the meter was put
5 in when I was not home. If we want the analog meter
6 back, we would probably pay a hefty price. I would
7 consider that extortion rather than something that
8 benefits the customer.

9 My objection to the digital meter is
10 cybersecurity, surveillance, and lack of privacy. An
11 analog meter was one-way, my usage to KCPL. Smart
12 meters are two-way. It both sends our usage to KCPL,
13 plus they know what is being used by appliances and
14 they have the ability in the future to set our
15 thermostats. They also sold our data to Opower, a data
16 analytics firm, without asking for clients' permission.
17 Also, a hacker can easily find out when people are home
18 by the power usage. Would you take off the curtains
19 and the blinds of your homes so anyone could look in
20 and see what you were doing, when you were doing it,
21 and how many people were there? The 1845 Constitution
22 of the State of Missouri, revised August 28th, 2014, in
23 Article 1 Section 15 of the Bill of Rights states,
24 "Unreasonable search and seizure prohibited, that the
25 people shall be secure in their persons, papers, homes,

1 effects, and electronic communications and data."
2 This is in our Missouri Constitution. Innovation
3 should make life better, not more insecure. The smart
4 meter, though, through which we receive the KCPL
5 product, puts our privacy, our property, our security,
6 and our health at risk. It was considered an upgrade
7 by KCPL, but it impacts my pocket. Analog does not.
8 We have been forced to accept a surveillance device
9 which can be controlled by the utility company, which
10 compromises our safety.

11 A good friend of mine, shortly after the analog
12 meter was put on her house in Parkville, it caused a
13 fire to their home. Now, two provinces in Canada,
14 Saskatchewan and Ontario, have taken out all the
15 digital meters and replaced them with analog meters
16 because of fires.

17 I think the satisfaction of energy attendees at
18 one of the meetings I was to -- says to me, the client,
19 that they have the power, therefore they can get a rate
20 hike if they want. I think that this is really
21 difficult for people who live on a fixed income or
22 lower incomes to manage.

23 Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER RUPP: Thank you.

25 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you very much for

1 your time and your remarks.

2 All right. Anyone else wishing to testify?

3 Okay. I see no volunteers.

4 Anything from counsel before we close?

5 Commissioner Rupp, closing comments?

6 COMMISSIONER RUPP: I would just thank
7 everyone again for coming out this evening, for your
8 testimony, and for coming out for the question and
9 answer session.

10 JUDGE PRIDGIN: Thank you very much.
11 That concludes this evening's local public hearing in
12 ER-2016-0285. We are off the record.

13 (Hearing adjourned at 6:33 p.m.)

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