

WUTC v. Washington Water Supply, Inc.

Docket No. UW-240079 - Vol. III (February 18, 2025)



1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 1840 Seattle, Washington 98101
6 South Second Street, Suite 718 Yakima, Washington 98901
Bellingham | Everett | Tacoma | Olympia | Yakima | Spokane
Seattle 206.287.9066 | Tacoma 253.235.0111 | Eastern Washington 509.624.3261

www.buellrealtime.com

email: audio@buellrealtime.com

1 BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
2 UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

3 WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND)
4 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,)
5 Complainant,)
6 vs.)DOCKETS UW-240079
7)and UW-230598
8)(Consolidated)
9)
10 WASHINGTON WATER SUPPLY, INC.,)
11 Respondent.)
12
13 PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING - VOL III
14 PAGES 30 - 44
15 BEFORE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
16 CONNOR THOMPSON

17 Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
18 621 Woodland Square Loop SE
19 Lacey, Washington 98504

20 DATE HELD: February 18, 2025
21 TRANSCRIBED BY: ELIZABETH PATTERSON HARVEY, FAPR, RPR,
22 WA CCR 2731

1 A P P E A R A N C E S :

2

3 FOR PUBLIC COUNSEL:

4 Robert D. Sykes
5 robert.sykes@atg.wa.gov
6 Office of the Attorney General
7 Public Counsel Unit
8 800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
9 Seattle, Washington 98104
10 206.464.7744

11 ALSO PRESENT:

12 Melissa Castaneda-Kerson
13 Morgana Manley
14 Satomi Miyakawa
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1 February 18, 2025 6:00 p.m.
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4 JUDGE THOMPSON: Thanks, Ryan. Currently, I
5 see representatives for staff, public counsel, and the
6 company online, but I do not see any customers at this
7 time. So at this time, why don't we go ahead and wait a
8 few minutes and see if anybody joins us.
9 MELISSA CASTANEDA-KERSON: Sounds good.
10 JUDGE THOMPSON: And hello to the individual
11 who just joined us. It appears your name might be
12 Morgana. Are you here for the public comment hearing?
13 (No audible response)
14 JUDGE THOMPSON: And to the two individuals who
15 just joined us, names Morgana or Morgana and Satomi, are
16 you two here for the public comment hearing for
17 Washington Water Supply?
18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes. I don't know that
19 I really have anything to say. If I hear something that
20 I want to respond to, I'll raise my hand.
21 JUDGE THOMPSON: Okay. Wonderful.
22 MELISSA CASTANEDA-KERSON: Sorry. Hi. My name
23 is Melissa Castaneda-Kerson, and I'm with public
24 involvement.
25 If either of you or anyone on the line would

1 like to speak, please go ahead and put your first and
2 your last name into the chat so we can get you signed in
3 for this meeting.
4 Of course, if you don't want to speak, you're
5 welcome, you know, to say you don't want to. But we
6 definitely would like to get you signed in to the
7 meeting.
8 JUDGE THOMPSON: Okay. And at this time, I'll
9 give it two more minutes, and then I'll go ahead and
10 introduce the case. And we can see if anyone wants to
11 speak at that time, if that's okay with everybody.
12 MELISSA CASTANEDA-KERSON: Sounds good to me.
13 JUDGE THOMPSON: Okay. I don't see anybody
14 else joining us. So let's go ahead and get started.
15 Melissa, did you have anything to add before I
16 get started with the introduction?
17 MELISSA CASTANEDA-KERSON: No. It looks like
18 Morgana went ahead and put her first and last name in the
19 chat.
20 And then Satomi, if you would like to speak, or
21 if you could put your first and last name into the chat
22 as well, that would be great so we can get you signed in.
23 And I will let you go ahead.
24 JUDGE THOMPSON: Okay. Thank you.
25 Good evening, everyone. Today is Tuesday,

<p>1 February 18, 2025. And this is a public comment hearing 2 of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission 3 in Dockets UW-240079 and UW-230598, which involve 4 Washington Water Supply's general rate case and request 5 for a surcharge which is related to the well 6 rehabilitation on the Echo Glen well.</p> <p>7 I am Connor Thompson, an administrative law 8 judge here at the commission. I am the presiding officer 9 assigned to this matter.</p> <p>10 As in a court of law, I am not able to answer 11 questions or engage in a dialogue tonight, but I am here 12 to listen to your comments, which will become part of the 13 record in this case.</p> <p>14 I appreciate you joining us for this public 15 comment hearing tonight. I will provide a brief overview 16 of the case and the process for this hearing, and then 17 turn it over to Melissa Castaneda-Kerson, public 18 involvement specialist for the commission, to provide 19 some logistics about the hearing and further instructions 20 for those who wish to speak.</p> <p>21 We have a scheduled public comment hearing for 22 this proceeding. Anyone who wishes to speak will have an 23 opportunity to do so, but you're certainly not obligated 24 to do so.</p> <p>25 A brief overview of the case: Washington Water</p>	<p>1 the proceeding;</p> <p>2 And the Public Counsel Unit of the Attorney 3 General's Office, representing residential and small 4 commercial customers.</p> <p>5 Following the hearing in this matter, the 6 Commission will enter an order based on the record, 7 including all public comments and testimony from this 8 public hearing.</p> <p>9 In addition to the testimony, evidence, and 10 comments made tonight, we invite customers and members of 11 the public to share their views in this matter pending 12 before the Commission.</p> <p>13 The comments we receive from you this evening 14 will be made part of the formal record in this case. For 15 that reason, we are recording tonight's hearing, and I am 16 here tonight to listen to your comments.</p> <p>17 By statute, the Office of Public Counsel 18 represents the interests of Washington Water Supply's 19 residential and small commercial customers.</p> <p>20 And I see that Robert Sykes, representing 21 public counsel, is attending the meeting this evening.</p> <p>22 If you have questions about this case, you can 23 contact the commission's public involvement staff, 24 Melissa Castaneda-Kerson, who is assigned to this case. 25 Melissa can be reached by emailing comments@utc.wa.gov,</p>
<p>1 Supply filed with the commission a proposed surcharge on 2 January 22, 2024. The commission suspended that request 3 and ordered the company to file a general rate case while 4 consolidating the request with Docket UW-230598.</p> <p>5 Subsequently, the commission filed a complaint 6 on May 30, 2024, against the company, alleging five 7 counts.</p> <p>8 And on June 28, 2024, Washington Water Supply 9 filed documents seeking to amend rates in the form of a 10 surcharge or general rate request, and the commission set 11 this matter for adjudication on March 18, 2025.</p> <p>12 Washington Water Supply's June 28, 2024, filing 13 requests a surcharge of \$3.18 over 15 years or until 14 costs related to rehabilitation are recovered, or 15 customers may opt into a one-time payment of \$571.43.</p> <p>16 Washington Water Supply requests these 17 increases due to increased expenses incurred from 18 rehabilitating the Echo Glen well.</p> <p>19 Washington Water Supply's last general rate 20 increase became effective on January 1, 2001.</p> <p>21 The following parties are participating in this 22 proceeding: Washington Water Supply, Incorporated; 23 Commission staff: The commission staff looks 24 to ensure rates are fair, just, and reasonable and in the 25 public interest, and participate like any other party to</p>	<p>1 or calling (888) 333-9882.</p> <p>2 You can also reach out, if you have questions, 3 to the Office of Public Counsel by emailing them at 4 utility@atg.wa.gov, or writing to them at the Attorney 5 General's Office, Public Counsel Unit, 800 Fifth Avenue, 6 Suite 2000, Seattle, Washington, 98104.</p> <p>7 When Melissa provides logistics for the hearing 8 tonight, she will repeat this information and it will be 9 included on a slide for you to see.</p> <p>10 For those who do not wish to speak tonight, you 11 may submit written comments in this case. You may submit 12 those via the form on the commission's website at 13 UTC.WA.gov/consumers/, and you will see a link you can 14 click that says "Submit a comment."</p> <p>15 Or you can submit comments to the public 16 counsel's office.</p> <p>17 At the conclusion of tonight's proceeding, 18 we'll determine a final date for submitting comments.</p> <p>19 And at this time, I'll now turn to Melissa 20 Castaneda-Kerson, from our public counsel -- our public 21 information staff, to go over the logistics for this 22 meeting. Melissa?</p> <p>23 MELISSA CASTANEDA-KERSON: Thank you. 24 Good evening. My name is Melissa 25 Castaneda-Kerson, and I'm a public involvement</p>

<p>1 representative with the Utilities and Transportation 2 Commission. I will be the moderator for the comment 3 hearing this evening.</p> <p>4 If you did not sign up in advance to provide a 5 comment at this evening's hearing and you wish to do so, 6 please go ahead and put your first and last name into the 7 chat.</p> <p>8 If you're calling in, please press Star 9 to 9 raise your hand, and we will call on you for your name in 10 a few minutes.</p> <p>11 If you have already provided your name to us, 12 there is no need to provide it again.</p> <p>13 Now for some meeting logistics: Please mute 14 your connection unless you're called on to speak.</p> <p>15 If you're participating via the Zoom 16 application, you can mute by clicking the microphone 17 icon. A slash will appear across the microphone, 18 indicating you have successfully muted your connection.</p> <p>19 To unmute, click the microphone again. The 20 slash will disappear. Please remember to mute your 21 connection again after you are done speaking.</p> <p>22 If you called in with your phone, press Star 6 23 on your phone to mute yourself.</p> <p>24 When you are called on to speak, press Star 6 25 to unmute yourself.</p>	<p>1 You can also contact public counsel by emailing 2 utility@ATG.wa.gov or calling (206) 464-7744.</p> <p>3 Before I turn the time over to Judge Thompson, 4 if you wish to speak tonight and haven't provided your 5 name yet, please put your first and your last name into 6 the chat if you're using the Zoom application.</p> <p>7 If you're calling in, please press Star 9 to 8 raise your hand, and we will call on you to provide your 9 name. When we call your phone number, please provide 10 your first and your last name with spelling. After you 11 provide your name, press Star 9 again to lower your hand.</p> <p>12 I will now turn the time over to Judge 13 Thompson. Thank you.</p> <p>14 JUDGE THOMPSON: Thank you very much, Melissa. 15 Okay. We will go ahead and take comments, if 16 anybody is wanting to speak tonight, in the order that 17 you've provided your name.</p> <p>18 So, here in just a moment, I'll turn to you, 19 Morgana, and then you tell me -- to ask if you would like 20 to provide any comments this evening.</p> <p>21 But before I do, I'm just going to proactively 22 swear you in so that your comments can become part of the 23 official record.</p> <p>24 So at this time, I can't see you, but if you 25 would please raise your right hand and respond to the</p>
<p>1 And after you're done speaking, please press 2 Star 6 to mute yourself.</p> <p>3 Please wait to be called on for comment, and do 4 not interrupt other speakers.</p> <p>5 There are two options to report technical 6 difficulties. You can use the chat feature in Zoom, or 7 you can call Ryan Smith at (360) 915-3646.</p> <p>8 The chat feature should be used to report 9 technical difficulties and to ask to be added to the 10 sign-in sheet.</p> <p>11 We will not be -- we will not be accepting 12 comments via the Zoom chat feature, so please do not use 13 the chat to provide your comments.</p> <p>14 Closed captioning is available via the toolbar 15 at the bottom of the Zoom application.</p> <p>16 If you do not wish to speak tonight and you 17 want to provide your comments in writing, you can submit 18 written comments through the following ways: You can 19 email comments@utc.wa.gov; call toll free, 20 1-888-333-9882; or you can write the UTC at P.O. Box 21 47250, Olympia, Washington, 98504-7250.</p> <p>22 Judges in formal filings like this cannot 23 answer questions. However, if you do have questions, you 24 can email comments@UTC.wa.gov, or call (888) 333-9882 and 25 ask to speak with Melissa Castaneda-Kerson.</p>	<p>1 following oath: Do you swear or affirm that the 2 statement you provide tonight is the truth and nothing 3 but the truth?</p> <p>4 And I hope that you answered in the 5 affirmative.</p> <p>6 And at this time, I would just turn to Morgana 7 Manley to ask if you would like to provide any comments 8 tonight. And if not, that is certainly okay.</p> <p>9 And you can respond "no" in the chat if you 10 don't feel like coming off of mute.</p> <p>11 MORGANA MANLEY: No, I don't have any comments 12 at this time.</p> <p>13 JUDGE THOMPSON: Okay. Thank you. 14 And Satomi Miyakawa?</p> <p>15 SATOMI MIYAKAWA: I don't have comments at this 16 time.</p> <p>17 JUDGE THOMPSON: Okay. Thank you very much. 18 Is there anybody else who wishes to comment on 19 Washington Water Supply's rate case and surcharge at this 20 time?</p> <p>21 Okay. Hearing nothing, let's please determine 22 the final date for comments and for submitting those 23 comments into evidence.</p> <p>24 Mr. Sykes, would March 18, the date of the 25 hearing, be the date for submitting comments, the</p>

<p>1 deadline for submitting comments? 2 ATTORNEY SYKES: Uh, yes. That is what we 3 would request. 4 JUDGE THOMPSON: Okay. I believe that should 5 work for everybody. 6 ATTORNEY SYKES: Your Honor, as far as the 7 public comment exhibit, can we have an extra week after 8 the deadline to put that together? 9 JUDGE THOMPSON: March 25, 2025? 10 ATTORNEY SYKES: Yep. 11 JUDGE THOMPSON: Okay. That works as well. 12 And we will go ahead and probably reiterate that at the 13 hearing as we typically do. 14 But let's go ahead and plan on March 18 being 15 the deadline for submitting comments and March 25 for 16 submission of the exhibit. 17 Okay. At this time, I will make one last call. 18 Is there anyone else interested in making comments 19 tonight? 20 Okay. Hearing nothing, and unless anybody 21 disagrees, I'm prepared to adjourn the meeting. 22 And hearing nothing, I want to thank everyone 23 for appearing tonight. And thank you for your time. I 24 hope you all have a good rest of your evening and a good 25 rest of your week.</p>	<p>1 2 3 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER) STATE OF WASHINGTON) 4) ss COUNTY OF KING) 5 6 I, Elizabeth Patterson Harvey, a Certified 7 Court Reporter and Registered Professional Reporter 8 within and for the State of Washington, do hereby 9 certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing legal 10 recordings were transcribed under my direction; that I 11 received the electronic recording in the proprietary 12 format; that I am not a relative or employee of any 13 attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor 14 financially interested in its outcome. 15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my 16 hand this 4th day of March, 2025. 17 <i>Elizabeth Patterson Harvey</i> 18 Elizabeth Patterson Harvey CCR 2731 19 Certified Court Reporter in The State of Washington 20 21 22 My license expires December 21, 2025 23 24 25</p>
<p>1 This concludes the public comment hearing in 2 this case, and we are adjourned. 3 (Proceedings concluded at 6:18 p.m.) 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p>	

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