Docket No. TV-200518 - Vol. I

In re Application of: Super Friends Moving L.L.C.

September 1, 2020



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1	BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
2	UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
3	
4	
5	In re Application of:) Docket TV-200518
6	SUPER FRIENDS MOVING, LLC,)
7	For a permit to operate as a)
8	motor carrier of household)
9	goods.)
10	VERBATIM OF ADJUDICATIVE PROCEEDINGS - VOLUME I
11	Pages 1 through 25
12	
13	September 1, 2020
14	(Via Videoconference)
15	
16	APPEARANCES
17	
18	Administrative Law Judge: SAMANTHA DOYLE
19	For the Staff of UTC: JEFF ROBERSON
20	Company Representative: JACOB RAICH
21	Also Appearing: JACQUE HAWKINS-JONES
22	
23	
24	Reported By: JANICE L. TEGARDEN, CCR #2073
25	

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	
3	THE COURT: Good morning. Today is Tuesday,
4	September 1, 2020, and the time is 9:30 a.m.
5	This is Docket TV-200518 which is captioned
6	In the matter of the Application of Super
7	Friends Moving, LLC, doing business as Super
8	Friends Moving, for a permit to operate as a
9	household goods carrier.
10	My name is Samantha Doyle, and I am the
11	Administrative Law Judge presiding over today's
12	brief adjudicative proceedings.
13	Let's take appearance from both parties and
14	then we will talk about how we're going to
15	proceed this morning.
16	Let's start with Commission Staff.
17	MR. ROBERSON: Good morning, Judge Doyle. My
18	name is Jeff Roberson, R-o-b-e-r-s-o-n. I'm an
19	Assistant Attorney General representing Staff.
20	With me at virtual counsel table is staff's
21	witness, Ms. Jacque Hawkins-Jones.
22	THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.
23	And for the Company, if you can state your
24	first and last name, spelling it for the court
25	reporter, and additionally provide your address,

1	telephone number, and e-mail address, please.
2	MR. RAICH: Yes. My name is Jacob Raich,
3	that's J-a-c-o-b, last name is Raich, R-a-i-c-h.
4	I'm with Super Friends Moving.
5	I'm the owner/manager of the Company, and my
6	address at the place of business is 22426 72nd
7	Avenue South, Kent, Washington.
8	THE COURT: And your telephone number and
9	e-mail, please.
LO	MR. RAICH: Telephone number is (206)
L1	302-8833, e-mail address is jake, j-a-k-e, at
L2	super friends moving dot com.
L3	THE COURT: Great. Thank you.
L4	I will just briefly provide a roadmap for
L5	today's hearing. We are here today because the
L6	Commission issued a notice of intent to deny the
L7	Company's application for permanent authority as
L8	a household carrier.
L9	Mr. Raich requested a hearing to have an
20	opportunity to respond to the allegations
21	contained in the notice and explain why the
22	application should be approved.
23	So after Mr. Roberson gives a brief overview
24	of Staff's case, you can present your case,
25	Mr. Raich.

1	MR. RAICH: Thank you.
2	THE COURT: You're welcome. Once all of the
3	witnesses have testified, both parties will have
4	the opportunity to make closing statements.
5	When I call on each party to testify, I will
6	swear you in with the oath of witness so that
7	anything you tell the Court will be under oath
8	and can be sworn testimony.
9	For the court reporter's benefit, please
10	speak slowly and clearly. Once you are sworn
11	in, you can present your testimony.
12	Do you have any questions before we proceed?
13	MR. RAICH: Not here.
14	MR. ROBERSON: I have one small point, Your
15	Honor. Staff has five exhibits.
16	I mailed those to you, Ms. Hawkins-Jones, and
17	Mr. Raich at the start of this hearing. I
18	wasn't sure how else to circulate them.
19	THE COURT: Sure. I received them.
20	Mr. Raich, have you received them as well?
21	MR. RAICH: Yes.
22	THE COURT: Great. Thank you, Mr. Roberson.
23	Mr. Roberson, you may also proceed with your
24	opening statement.
25	MR. ROBERSON: Not that long ago in the

1 spring of 2020, Super Friends' public counsel 2 and Staff resolved the complaint filed against 3 Super Friends by Staff based on the company's 4 operating without a permit. 5 In that settlement Super Friends agreed to 6 cease advertising as a household goods carrier 7 offering to perform moves as a household goods 8 carrier, entering into agreement as a household 9 goods carrier, or performing moves as a 10 household goods carrier. 11 Sometime thereafter Super Friends filed for a 12 permit. After it did so, Staff discovered 13 advertisements from Super Friends and was able 14 to obtain a quote for household goods moves. 15 Staff believes that that evidence shows that 16 the Company is not fit to hold a household goods 17 carrier permit and recommends the Commission 18 deny the permit application. 19 THE COURT: Thank you. 20 Mr. Raich, I will swear you in and we can --21 you can present your testimony. If you could 22 please raise your right hand. 23 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you 24 will give here today will be the whole truth and 25 nothing but the truth?

1	MR. RAICH: Yes.
2	THE COURT: And, Mr. Raich, you may go ahead
3	when you're ready.
4	MR. RAICH: So during the application
5	process, you know, I feel like I completed all
6	the paperwork and had taken down my website as
7	requested by the UTC in order to obtain a permit
8	authority already.
9	So what's I think a couple days before we
10	were to get our permit authority I was notified
11	there was a request to deny the application.
12	I was hoping you what I'm hoping to
13	achieve from today is to figure out what exactly
14	caused the denial of the application.
15	THE COURT: So you're unclear about the
16	assertions in the notice made by Staff?
17	MR. RAICH: Correct.
18	THE COURT: Okay. Well, you'll have an
19	opportunity to ask questions when Staff makes
20	their testimony as well.
21	Was that it for your testimony, Mr. Raich?
22	MR. RAICH: Yes. Yes.
23	THE COURT: Okay. Thank you. I'll go ahead
24	and swear in Ms. Hawkins-Jones and she can
25	proceed with her testimony.

1	Ms. Hawkins-Jones, if would please raise your
2	right hand. Do you swear or affirm the
3	testimony you will give today will be the whole
4	truth and nothing but the truth?
5	MS. HAWKINS-JONES: I do.
6	THE COURT: Thank you.
7	Go ahead, Mr. Roberson.
8	
9	EXAMINATION
10	
11	BY MR. ROBERSON:
12	Q. Good morning. Would you please state your full name
13	and spell your last name for the record.
14	A. Yes. Jackie Hawkins-Jones, last name H-a-w-k-i-n-s,
15	dash, J-o-n-e-s.
16	Q. Who employes you?
17	A. The Washington State Utilities and Transportation
18	Commission.
19	Q. What position do you hold at the Commission?
20	A. I'm a compliance investigator with the Consumer
21	Protection Division.
22	Q. How long have you worked for the Commission as a
23	compliance investigator?
24	A. I have been with the Commission as an investigator for
25	one year.

1	Q. And what are your duties as a compliance investigator?
2	A. I investigate the business practices of Commission-
3	regulated utility and transportation companies,
4	including household goods carriers who may be
5	operating without a Commission-issued permit.
6	Q. Would you please provide a just a brief summary of
7	your educational background.
8	A. Sure. I have an associates degree from Olympic
9	College and have seven years experience as a certified
10	investigator in the state of Washington.
11	I've completed numerous trainings, including
12	advanced courses in fraud.
13	Q. Are you familiar with a company called Super Friends
14	Moving, LLC?
15	A. I am.
16	Q. How are you familiar with Super Friends?
17	A. I was recently asked to conduct a review of the
18	company.
19	Q. Would you please recap Super Friends' recent history
20	at the Commission?
21	A. Sure. Recently Staff completed an investigation into
22	complaints of the Company's not permitted status as a
23	household goods carrier.
24	Q. And that was the investigation in 2019?
25	A Correct

1	Q. And what happened as a result of that investigation?
2	A. The Commission and the Company reached a settlement
3	agreement which required Super Friends to pay a
4	penalty and comply with a cease and desist order until
5	it obtains a permit.
6	MR. ROBERSON: Judge Doyle, at this point I
7	stop and would ask that under WAC 480-07-
8	495(2)(a)(I)(A) that you take official notice of
9	orders (01) and (3) in Docket TV-190835.
10	Order (01) is the Commission's complaint
11	against Super Friends and Order (03) is the
12	order approving that settlement resolving that
13	complaint which incorporates the settlement as
14	Appendix A.
15	THE COURT: Noted. Thank you.
16	Q. (By Mr. Roberson) Did Super Friends subsequently
17	apply for a household goods carrier permit?
18	A. Yes, they did.
19	Q. And did Staff find advertisements for the transport of
20	households goods posted by Super Friends after it
21	applied for a permit?
22	A. Yes, we did.
23	Q. Were you the Staff member that was assigned to that
24	investigation?
25	A. I was not assigned that investigation.

1	Q. But then how do I put this? Did you look for
2	advertisements by the Company after it applied for a
3	permit?
4	A. Yes.
5	Q. And where did you discover those advertisements?
6	A. I discovered the advertisements on Thumbtack and Yelp.
7	Q. Did you also discover evidence that Super Friends was
8	continuing to conduct household goods moves after the
9	entry of the settlement?
10	A. Yes.
11	Q. Where did you discover that evidence?
12	A. Through Thumbtack.
13	Q. Did you discover evidence at any other website?
14	A. Yes, we did discover through customer reviews on Yelp.
15	Q. Would you please turn to Exhibit JHJ-1.
16	A. Okay, I'm there.
17	Q. Can you identify this document.
18	A. Yes, this is a Thumbtack advertisement for Super
19	Friends.
20	Q. Is that a true and accurate copy of the Thumbtack
21	advertisement posted by Super Friends that you found?
22	A. Yes.
23	MR. ROBERSON: At this point Staff would move
24	to admit Exhibit JHJ-1.
25	THE COURT: I will admit JHJ-1 into the

1	record. Thank you.
2	(Staff Exhibit JHJ-1 was admitted.)
3	Q. (By Mr. Roberson) What services does Super Friends
4	advertise on the Thumbtack website or the Thumbtack
5	advertisement?
6	A. They advertise a boutique moving company
7	Q. Would you please turn to Exhibit JHJ-2.
8	A. Okay. I'm there.
9	Q. Will you please identify this document.
10	A. Yes, this is the Super Friends Moving Yelp page.
11	Q. Is this a true and accurate copy of the Yelp
12	advertisement that you found?
13	A. Yes, it is.
14	MR. ROBERSON: The Staff would move to admit
15	Exhibit JHJ-2.
16	THE COURT: JHJ-2 is admitted into the
17	record.
18	(Staff Exhibit JHJ-2 was admitted.)
19	Q. (By Mr. Roberson) Has Super Friends claimed its Yelp
20	page?
21	A. Yes, it has.
22	Q. And what does it mean that Super Friends has claimed
23	the page?
24	A. It means that the owner or a company representative
25	has completed the Yelp's verification process that

1	allows the Company to create a log-in so it can
2	respond to customers, update hours and service areas,
3	or insert photos and links to the company's Yelp page.
4	Q. How does the Yelp page identify Super Friends?
5	A. It identifies Super Friends as a mover, self storage.
6	Q. Does the Yelp page contain a feature allowing
7	potential customers to obtain a quote for services
8	from Super Friends?
9	A. Yes, it does.
10	Q. And does the Yelp page state the number of persons who
11	have recently used that quote feature?
12	A. Yes, it does. It says, "96 locals recently requested
13	a quote."
14	Q. What does the Yelp page state is the average time it
15	takes Super Friends to respond to a request for a
16	quote?
17	A. The average response time is 30 minutes.
18	Q. Does the Yelp page indicate a service territory for
19	Super Friends?
20	A. Yes, it does indicate a service territory.
21	Q. And what is that territory?
22	A. Hello?
23	Q. You're back. I think we lost you. I'll just repeat
24	the question and you can answer it.
25	What is that territory?

1 A. The Seattle area. 2 Q. Would you please turn to Exhibit JHJ-3. 3 A. Okay, I'm there. 4 Q. Would you please identify this document. 5 A. This is the customer review section of Super Friends' 6 Yelp page. 7 Q. Is it the Yelp page or is it --8 A. Did you say JHJ-3? 9 Q. I did. I show that as the Thumbtack page. 10 A. I'm sorry, mine indicates the Yelp. 11 Q. Okay. That's fine. Is that a true and accurate copy 12 of the Yelp reviews, the Yelp page that you found? 13 A. Yes, it is. 14 MR. ROBERSON: Staff would move to admit 15 Exhibit JHJ-3. 16 THE COURT: JHJ-3 is admitted. 17 (Staff Exhibit JHJ-3 was admitted.) 18 Q. (By Mr. Roberson) And what services does the review 19 indicate that Super Friends performed? 20 A. It indicates that it performs local moving. 21 Q. Would you please turn to Exhibit JHJ-5. 22 A. Okay, I'm there. 23 Q. Will you please identify this document. 24 A. Sure. This is a customer's review on Super Friends' 25 Yelp page.

1	Q. Is that a true and accurate copy of the Yelp reviews
2	that you found?
3	A. Yes, it is.
4	MR. ROBERSON: Staff would move to admit
5	Exhibit JHJ-5.
6	THE COURT: JHJ-5 is admitted.
7	(Staff Exhibit JHJ-5 was admitted.)
8	Q. (By Mr. Roberson) And what services does the review
9	indicate that Super Friends performed?
10	A. It indicated that the Company performed a move for
11	this customer.
12	Q. Did you attempt to get a quote for a move after
13	discovering Super Friends advertisements?
14	A. Yes, I did.
15	Q. And did you, in fact, obtain a quote from Super
16	Friends?
17	A. Yes, I did.
18	Q. What date did you obtain the quote?
19	A. August 3, 2020.
20	Q. And how did you obtain the quote?
21	A. I submitted a request through Super Friends Thumbtack
22	page.
23	Q. And what service did you ask Super Friends to provide
24	when you requested the quote?
25	A. I asked them to provide a residential move.

1	Q. And where did you want that move performed?
2	A. I'm sorry, can you repeat the question.
3	Q. Sorry. Where did you want that move performed?
4	A. In the Tacoma, Washington, area.
5	Q. And what date did you want this move performed?
б	A. August 31st at 10 a.m.
7	Q. And what service did Super Friends offer to provide
8	when it responded with a quote?
9	A. They offered to provide the move for me on the date
10	and time requested.
11	Q. And did they specify what would be involved in the
12	move?
13	A. They specified a three-person professional crew truck
14	and equipment would be able to provide my service.
15	Q. Would you please turn to the exhibit marked as JHJ-4.
16	A. I'm there.
17	Q. Can you please identify this document.
18	A. Yes, this is the quote that I received from Super
19	Friends.
20	Q. Is that a true and accurate copy of the quote you
21	obtained from Super Friends?
22	A. Yes, it is.
23	MR. ROBERSON: Staff would move to admit
24	Exhibit JHJ-4.
25	THE COURT: JHJ-4 is admitted into the

1	record.
2	(Staff Exhibit No. JHJ-4 was admitted.)
3	MR. ROBERSON: And at this point Staff has no
4	further questions for Ms. Hawkins-Jones.
5	THE COURT: Thank you.
6	Mr. Raich, would you have any questions for
7	Ms. Hawkins-Jones?
8	MR. RAICH: Not at this time.
9	THE COURT: Okay. Mr. Roberson, would you
10	like to give a closing statement?
11	MR. ROBERSON: On your permit an applicant
12	must be fit, that's RCW 81.80.075. Fitness
13	concerns an applicant's willingness and ability
14	to conform its comment to the public service
15	laws and the requirements, rules, and
16	regulations of the Commission.
17	That's the Commission's decision of the
18	application of River (phonetic) Distribution
19	Resources, Incorporated.
20	In terms of an applicant's willingness and
21	ability to conform to the rules, laws, and
22	orders of the Commission, the Commission
23	considers the applicant's compliance history one
24	of the best predictors thereof.
25	That's the Commission's decision and the

1 application of RedLine Courier (phonetic), 2 Incorporated. 3 When looking whether or not an applicant can 4 overcome a negative compliance history, the 5 Commission considers whether the violations 6 repeated were flagrant, whether the applicant 7 promptly took corrective action, and whether the 8 applicant can now provide credible assurances of 9 future compliance. 10 That's also from the Commission's decision in 11 River Distribution. 12 The Commission has recently made clear that 13 the violation of a cease and desist order is the 14 type of flagrant conduct that justifies a 15 finding of unfitness, that's the Commission's 16 order in regard to the application of Dolly, 17 Inc. 18 Also, the Commission's order with regard to 19 Sea-Tac 24. The facts here show not that long 20 ago Super Friends settled a complaint for 21 operating unlawfully by vowing -- or promising 22 to comply with a previously entered cease and 23 desist order. 24 You just heard from Ms. Hawkins-Jones that 25 the Company is advertising. There's evidence

1 that they're actually performing moves in the 2 form of customer reviews, and Ms. Hawkins-Jones 3 was able to obtain a quote for a household goods 4 move. 5 All of that shows violations of a cease and 6 desist order. It's the type of flagrant conduct 7 that justifies a finding of unfitness. Staff 8 asked the Commission to deny Super Friends' 9 application on fitness grounds. 10 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Roberson. 11 Mr. Raich, would you like to have a final 12 response to those factual allegations? 13 MR. RAICH: Yes, please. 14 In response to the exhibits, what is it we've 15 got, 1 through 5? We -- I guess in regards to 16 Thumbtack and Yelp, we've had -- we've been a 17 company for quite some time, and we -- through 18 those years we've collected a lot of reviews. 19 Reviews don't dictate when the service was 20 provided, orating; there will be some that come 21 in for a move that was conducted three years 22 ago. So I would like to make it clear that it 23 doesn't -- the date of a review does not -- not 24 dictate the date of the actual move taking 25 place.

In regards to the Thumbtack quote, I was under the assumption that -- I think Ms. Hawkins requested a quote on the 3rd of August for a move on August 31st.

Based on my communication with the UTC, we anticipated that we would have received our temporary authority to operate well before then, so mistakenly we did provide a quote for a service that was to take place on August 31st.

What else is there? As far as -- as far as compliance in general, I've gone through the safety compliance training. I've completed several versions of the application, furnished the information requested, and I've studied the safety compliance manual that has been provided to us by the UTC.

I've made plans to incorporate all of the safety compliance forms used by the UTC into our perspective operation so that we can operate as a safe company in the eyes of the UTC and the public.

And I without -- I guess without being given the chance to show that, I was a little surprised that we were denied our application to do so.

1 I think we had discussed with the UTC that we 2 would check in on a monthly basis, and at the 3 time that we did receive authority, making sure 4 that our company was operating as a safe 5 household goods moving provider going into the 6 future. 7 And, so, yeah, I just wanted clarification on 8 mainly why we were denied, which is -- and, of 9 course, the exhibits were sent to me this 10 morning so I did not receive these prior to. 11 So this is good to know at this point what 12 exactly is preventing our application from 13 moving through. 14 THE COURT: So, to be clear, Mr. Raich, when 15 you made that quote, when you responded to 16 Ms. Jones-Hawkins -- Ms. Hawkins-Jones' quote, 17 you admit that you made that response under the 18 assumption that you would have your permit by 19 the time she requested. 20 But you understand how that violated the 21 order or are you saying --22 MR. RAICH: No, I understand in the eyes of 23 having -- in the Commission's eyes I understand 24 the violation would stem from us advertising 25 for -- the advertising or quoting for a move in

1	a period of time where we're not supposed to be
2	advertising or quoting for a move. So I do
3	understand the violation there.
4	But, yeah, I just wanted to make it known
5	that we were under the assumption that by the
6	end of August, yes, we would be it was
7	assumed that we would have our authority to
8	operate as a household goods carrier.
9	THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.
10	Staff, would you like a short ten-minute
11	recess in light of his testimony and potentially
12	give a recommendation, if you can take that
13	opportunity?
14	MR. ROBERSON: I think that would be
15	fruitful, Your Honor.
16	THE COURT: Great. We will take a short
17	ten-minute recess and be back on the record at
18	10:10.
19	(A ten-minute recess was taken at 10:00 a.m.)
20	THE COURT: Has Staff come up with a
21	recommendation at this time?
22	MR. ROBERSON: Yes, I believe Staff would
23	change its recommendation at this time.
24	Staff believes it's probably in the public
25	interest to have Mr. Raich and his company

1 permitted so that the Commission can monitor its 2 operations, and; therefore, Staff would 3 recommend granting the Company a provisional 4 permit. 5 However, Staff would like the Commission to 6 make clear that it will deny the Company 7 permanent authority until it pays the fines that 8 it agreed to, the penalties agreed to, and the 9 settlement agreement. 10 They will pay as well whatever penalties the 11 Commission imposes as a result of the Complaint 12 the Staff will soon file based on the 13 allegations that Mr. Raich effectively just 14 admitted to, the violations at issue in this 15 hearing. 16 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Roberson. 17 Before we adjourn I'd like to request that 18 the parties waive the requirement to issue an 19 order in ten days. 20 I'd like to have the transcript available to 21 me when I'm writing my decision and we usually 22 receive the transcript within seven to ten days. 23 I anticipate that I would issue an order 24 within five business days from the date the 25 transcript is received at the latest.

1	Does either party have an objection to
2	waiving the requirement?
3	MR. ROBERSON: Staff has no objection.
4	THE COURT: Mr. Raich, do you have any
5	objection to that? Mr. Raich, are you still on
6	the line?
7	MR. ROBERSON: Judge Doyle, I think he might
8	be having technical difficulties, his mic was
9	muted. It unmuted when you asked him that
10	question.
11	He appears to be on the line, I think he's
12	just having trouble talking.
13	THE COURT: I see. Thank you.
14	MR. RAICH: My apologies. I was muted. I
15	have no objection to the Staff's recommendation.
16	THE COURT: Great. Thank you. And does any
17	party either party have anything further
18	before we go off the record?
19	MR. ROBERSON: Nothing from Staff.
20	MR. RAICH: Nothing from Super Friends
21	Moving.
22	THE COURT: Okay. Thank you all for
23	participating here today. We are off the
24	record.
25	(The Hearing concluded at 10:15 a.m.)

1	CERTIFICATE
2	
3	I, Janice L. Tegarden, a Certified Court Reporter in and for the State of Washington, residing at Centralia, do hereby certify;
4	do hereby dertify,
5	That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me
6	and thereafter reduced to a typed format under my direction; that the transcript is a full, true, and
7	complete transcript of said proceedings consisting of Pages 1 through 25.
9	That as a CCR in this state, I am bound by the
10	Rules of Conduct as Codified in WAC 308-14-130; that court reporting arrangements and fees in this case are offered
11	to all parties on equal terms.
12	That I am not a relative, employee, attorney or
13	counsel of any party to this action, or relative or employee of any such attorney or counsel, and I am not
14 15	financially interested in the said action or the outcome thereof;
16	
17	That upon completion of signature, if required, the original transcript will be securely sealed and the same
18	served upon the appropriate party.
19	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 15th day of September, 2020.
20	and rour day or depterment, 2020.
21	
22	
23	JANICE L. TEGARDEN
24	Certified Court Reporter License No. 2073
25	