Docket Nos. UE-170485 and UG-170486 (Consolidated) - Vol. I

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission v. Avista Corporation

June 30, 2017



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BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION	1 2	APPEARANCES (Cont.)
WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND) TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,) DOCKETS UE-170485 &) UG-170486 Complainant,) (Consolidated) vs.) AVISTA CORPORATION, d/b/a) AVISTA UTILITIES,) Respondent.)	3 4 5 6 7 8 9	FOR INDUSTRIAL CUSTOMERS OF NORTHWEST UTILITIES: JESSE E. COWELL PATRICK OSHIE (via bridge line) Davison Van Cleve, PC 333 SW Taylor, Suite 400 Portland, Oregon 97204 (503) 241-7242 jec@dvclaw.com pjo@dvclaw.com FOR NORTHWEST INDUSTRIAL GAS USERS:
PREHEARING CONFERENCE, VOLUME I Pages 1-23 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE RAYNE PEARSON	11 12 13	TOMMY BROOKS (via bridge line) CHAD STOKES (via bridge line) Cable Huston LLP 1001 SW Fifth Avenue Suite 2000 Portland, Oregon 97204 (503) 224-3092
9:30 A.M.	14	tbrooks@cablehuston.com cstokes@cablehuston.com
June 30, 2017	15 16 17	FOR THE ENERGY PROJECT: SIMON FFITCH (via bridge line)
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission 1300 South Evergreen Park Drive Southwest Olympia, Washington 98504 REPORTED BY: TAYLER RUSSELL, CCR 3358	18 19	Attorney at Law 321 High School Road NE Suite D3, Box 383 Bainbridge Island, WA 98110
Buell Realtime Reporting, LLC 1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 1840 Seattle, Washington 98101 (206) 287-9066 (360) 534-9066 (800) 846-6989 www.buellrealtime.com	20 21 22 23 24 25	(206) 669-8197 simon@ffitchlaw.com
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1 APPEARANCES	1	OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON; JUNE 30, 2017
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: RAYNE PEARSON Washington Utilities and	2 3 4	9:30 A.M. 00o
Transportation Commission 5 1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive SW Olympia, Washington 98504 6 PO Box 47250 (360) 664-1160	5 6	PROCEEDINGS
7 8 FOR PUBLIC COUNSEL: 9 LISA W. GAFKEN ARMIKKA BRYANT 10 Assistant Attorney General Public Counsel Unit 11 Office of the Attorney General 800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000 12 Seattle, Washington 98104 (206) 464-6595 13 Lisaw4@atg.wa.gov armikkab@atg.wa.gov 14 FOR COMMISSION STAFF: CHRISTOPHER CASEY Assistant Attorney General 1400 S. Evergreen Park Drive SW PO Box 40128 Chargin Weshington 98504	7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	JUDGE PEARSON: Let's be on the record. Good morning. My name is Rayne Pearson. I'm an administrative law judge for the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, and I'm sitting in for Judge Marguerite Friedlander while she's on medical leave, and Judge Friedlander will be coming in and taking over the case just prior to the evidentiary hearing, but she will be closely following the case until she returns. We are here today for a prehearing conference in consolidated Dockets UE-170485 and UG-170486, which is Avista's 2017 general rate case
Olympia, Washington 98504 (360) 664-1189 ccasey@utc.wa.gov 20 21 FOR AVISTA CORP.: 22 DAVID MEYER Avista Corp. 23 1411 East Mission Spokane, Washington 99220	19 20 21 22 23	filing. Related to these dockets, it is Avista's request for a power cost adjustment in Docket UE-170484, and ICNU filed a motion to dismiss the filing in that docket or in the alternative to consolidate it with the
Spokane, wasnington 99220 24 PO Box 3727 (509) 495-4316 25 david.meyer@avistacorp.com	24	general rate case proceeding. That docket will be heard by the commissioners at an open meeting most likely on

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August 10th, so ICNU's motion will carry until that time.

So let's get started by taking short appearances beginning with the Company, then we'll jump over here to Staff and go around the room, and then I will ask for appearances on the bridge line.

MR. MEYER: Thank you, Your Honor. David Meyer appearing on behalf of Avista.

MR. CASEY: Christopher Casey appearing on behalf of Commission Staff.

MR. BRYANT: Armikka Bryant appearing on behalf of Public Counsel.

MS. GAFKEN: Lisa Gafken appearing on behalf of Public Counsel.

MR. COWELL: Jesse Cowell on behalf of the Industrial Customers of Northwest Utilities.

JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. And on the bridge

line?

MR. OSHIE: Patrick Oshie with Davison Van Cleve representing ICNU.

MR. BROOKS: This is Tommy Brooks and Chad Stokes from Cable Huston for the Northwest Industrial Gas Users.

MR. FFITCH: This is Simon ffitch appearing on behalf of the Energy Project.

about that?

MR. MEYER: Not from Avista's standpoint. I know there are a few things that I think we can just fire off quickly. There may be a date for discovery cutoffs that is still to be discussed, but I don't think that will take long.

MR. CASEY: Same. Two of the parties had talked about potentially slipping the discovery date a little bit later. The discovery deadline from December 12th to the 28th, Staff has no objection to that, but believes that if we do that, everybody should be aware that in that week kind of between Christmas and New Year's, I think the parties should just be flexible and understand that, you know, parties might need a couple extra days to fulfill a discovery request if Staff is out for the holidays or something to that effect. But we are fine with slipping the discovery date.

MR. MEYER: You know, with the good faith of the parties, we're fine with that. I think that is a truncated five-day turnaround, five business-day turnaround, that on top of the holidays I could see quite possibly we'll be asking for additional time, and I would encourage the -- well, we'll do it on a case-by-case basis and just work with the parties.

MS. GAFKEN: So Public Counsel was the one

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JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. Is there anyone else on the bridge line?

Okay. Hearing nothing, we will first address the petitions for intervention. Are there any objections to the petitions for intervention filed by the Energy Project, the Industrial Customers of Northwest Utilities, or the Northwest Industrial Gas Users?

MR. MEYER: No objection.

JUDGE PEARSON: Okay.

MR. CASEY: No objection from Staff.

JUDGE PEARSON: All right. Then those petitions for intervention are granted.

For the record, we've already entered a standard protective order and have made discovery rules available to the parties. And as a reminder, the Commission has adopted new procedural rules that provide for electronic service of all documents. So absent a request for a paper service, the Commission will only serve documents electronically in this case. So make sure and let me know now if you require paper service, which I assume no one does.

Okay. So that brings us to the schedule. I know the parties have been conferring about a schedule. Do we need to take a break for some more discussion

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who suggested that we slip the proposed cutoff from December 12th to December 28th and to put it more in line with procedural schedules that we typically see that result in this final discovery response as being due shortly before cross-exhibits come in. And there certainly are holidays in that timeframe, there's also holidays around the December 12th date as well, there's Hanukkah right there. So I think we have holidays all around during that timeframe anyway.

One thing to note is a truncated five-day turnaround period, but with a request coming in, let's say on December 28th, there's holidays that bump that out, and so those responses wouldn't be due -- I thought I wrote it down. I think -- oh, January 5th is when they would be due. And so quite frankly, I think a lot of the work on any requests that would come in during that timeframe would happen after the holidays. I think, in my experience, parties have been very accommodating when additional time is needed and if somebody just isn't available and they need an extra day.

The way the procedural schedule is set or proposed, cross-exhibits aren't due until January 9th, and so there's some padding built in. But, you know, I guess from our perspective, we would assume the parties

Page 9 Page 11 1 1 will approach discovery in a reasonable manner and work settlement conference, the one that would be scheduled 2 together. 2 for November 3rd, should be the official, the one that's 3 JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. So do we have an 3 in the official schedule, but I think Staff does think agreement on the schedule, then, that can be read into 4 it is very important to get together before any 4 5 5 the record at this point or do the parties want a couple testimony is filed to see if there are certain issues 6 of minutes to iron things out? 6 that we can settle without litigation. 7 7 MR. MEYER: No, I just have one question. And so, you know, I would make -- I would 8 So which -- I appreciate your feedback yesterday on the 8 agree with Public Counsel to make the second one the one 9 scheduling, as part of the scheduled settlement 9 that is officially noticed, but, you know, I think all 10 conferences and the one you would schedule. So have you 10 the parties are in agreement that we're going to have 11 decided which one you would prefer to be scheduled or is 11 both of them. So that's Staff's position. 12 that up to parties to decide? 12 MS. GAFKEN: And I think that if we're in JUDGE PEARSON: The first one would be 13 13 agreement that we're going to have both of them, I would 14 scheduled. 14 prefer they both be on the schedule particularly in 15 15 light of kind of the sordid history of settlement MR. MEYER: Okay. Very well. 16 JUDGE PEARSON: And then what I would 16 conferences and making sure that everybody is at the 17 recommend doing is putting another one in the schedule 17 table the first round. 18 with a TBD instead of a date. 18 JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. 19 MR. MEYER: Okay. All right. And could 19 MR. MEYER: Thank you. We would agree that 20 that, then, be the second one that appears on this 20 both should be on the schedule. 21 sequence of process? 21 JUDGE PEARSON: So, Mr. Casey, are you 22 JUDGE PEARSON: That would be the TBD? 22 amendable to that? 23 MR. MEYER: Yeah. 23 MR. CASEY: Yes, if the parties agree that 24 JUDGE PEARSON: I mean, that's what I think. 24 they want both to be scheduled, then Staff is fine with 25 Is everyone in agreement on all the other dates? I 2.5 that. Page 10 Page 12 1 guess I'm not really getting an answer to that question, 1 JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. 2 if we're ready to go forward with reading a schedule 2 MR. COWELL: ICNU is fine with that, too, 3 3 into the record or if you need a couple of minutes. Your Honor. 4 MS. GAFKEN: I think we're probably very 4 JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. Anyone on the bridge 5 5 close. And as far as having both of the settlement line? 6 conference dates, we have these marked in, and the 6 (Multiple speakers talking.) 7 parties have agreed that those dates work for us, 7 JUDGE PEARSON: I'm sorry, what? 8 8 MR. FFITCH: Energy Project is fine with October 6th and November 3rd. I will raise a concern 9 more just because I want to air it than anything else. 9 that, Your Honor. 10 I certainly don't have a strong objection to having that 10 JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. Anyone else? 11 October date, but -- October date set, but one thing 11 Okay. So are we, then, adopting the version 12 that I just wanted to bring up was the -- in two recent 12 that was sent to me by Avista yesterday with a couple 13 cases where we've had the early settlement conferences, 13 modifications or... 14 MR. CASEY: Yes, the schedule that was sent they've been very unproductive, either they've been 14 15 15 by Avista with the one modification of moving the cancelled or completely unfruitful. 16 discovery deadline from December 12th to December 28th. 16 And so I raise it just because I want 17 17 JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. So I will read that parties to start thinking about maybe moving that first 18 into the record now, and please correct me at any point conference past the time that we're filing our cases in 18 19 chief. That may help for more productive sessions, but 19 if there's disagreement. 20 I also understand there's another perspective where 20 So we have the public notice report on 21 parties want to try to reduce the amount of testimony 21 August 7th, 2017; Avista circulates joint issues list on 22 that's filed. So I see both sides of the coin, so I 22 September 15th, 2017; the first settlement conference on 23 just want to raise it since we're on the record. 23 October 6th, 2017; Staff, Public Counsel, and intervenor 24 24 response testimony and exhibits due on JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. 25 25 MR. CASEY: Staff agrees that the second October 27th, 2017; the second settlement conference on

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- November 3rd, 2017; the joint issues list due on
- November 13th, 2017; Company rebuttal testimony and
- 3 exhibits and Staff, Public Counsel, and intervenor
- 4 cross-answering testimony and exhibits due on
- 5 December 1st, 2017; the public comment hearing to be
 - determined by a later notice; the discovery deadline
- 7 last day to issue data requests on December 28th, 2017;
 - and it looks like -- well, backing up, that after
- December 1st, 2017, the response time to data requests
 will be seven business days, and then after December

28th it will be reduced to five business days.

The deadline for filing cross-examination exhibits and time estimates and witness list will be January 9th, 2018; the evidentiary hearing will be held January 16th, 17th and 18th, 2018; post-hearing briefs

and updated issues list will be due on

February 22nd, 2018; the suspension date is
April 26th, 2018, but from my reading, Avista is seeking
to have rates go into effect on May 1st, 2018; is that

20 correct?

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MR. MEYER: Well, I think more precisely on or before May 1st.

JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. So coincide it with

the suspension date.MR MEYER:

MR. MEYER: Yes, please.

1 MR. MEYER: Correct. Yeah.

JUDGE PEARSON: How do the other parties

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feel about that?

MS. GAFKEN: Well, under our standard -- the way we usually see it is that after each round of testimony it ratchets down, and I don't really see any reason to do it differently in this case. To have just that last set of discovery be shortened to five doesn't seem to provide any benefit.

MR. CASEY: I would agree. Staff would agree, I think, it's important to have after that -- after the rebuttal testimony and cross-answering testimony for the discovery time to be reduced to make sure there can be a proper exchange.

MS. GAFKEN: Another reason in support of reducing it or the main reason why we see reducing at that time period, at that point nobody's preparing testimony. And so -- and before that, we have longer response times as people are doing two different things; responding to discovery and doing testimony. But after that last round of testimony, we don't have that added burden of preparing testimony.

MR. CASEY: I would add that we've also often seen change of position on -- in the rebuttal round and sometimes you need a couple rounds of

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JUDGE PEARSON: All right. So if everyone agreement --

is in agreement --MR. COW

MR. COWELL: Your Honor?
JUDGE PEARSON: Yes?

MR. COWELL: I might have heard incorrectly, but I did want to maybe just clarify or go over again the dates for the response times changing.

JUDGE PEARSON: Oh, sure. So according to this schedule, following Staff, Public Counsel, and intervenor response testimony exhibits on October 27th, response time to data requests would be reduced to seven business days. And then -- there's actually two footnotes noting reducing the time to five business days, and then the first is after December 1st and the second is after December 28th. So which date did the parties want that to go down to five days, December 1st or December 28th?

18 MS. GAFKEN: December 1st.
19 MR. CASEY: December 1st.
20 JUDGE PEARSON: December

JUDGE PEARSON: December 1st? Okay.

MR. MEYER: Avista, given that we're kind of
stretching things out a bit in that back part of the
schedule, we prefer that to be seven days, and then the

shorter five-day turnaround would be for the last --JUDGE PEARSON: December 28th?

discovery to flesh out that change of position because you don't have more testimony to respond to.

JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. That sounds reasonable to me.

Mr. Cowell, did you --

MR. COWELL: We'd also prefer the December 1st to start the five-day.

JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. All right. Then we will adopt that date.

Any other questions?

MR. MEYER: I do just have a request that as discovery is put to the Company, that not be batched up in big bundles so we don't get 40, 50, 80 or a hundred with multiple subparts all at once, no matter whether it's the first round, second, or third round. It's -- sometimes in prior cases, especially with some outside experts, it seems like they get them batched up, they get forwarded to us, and it's -- it's just not reasonable. So we've managed to work our way through it, the parties have cooperated, but just anticipate that from the outset, I encourage all parties to begin their discovery, but please make it in manageable tranches, if you will, okay?

JUDGE PEARSON: That sounds reasonable. MR. CASEY: One thing to add with discovery

Docket Nos. UE-170485 and UG-170486 (Consolidated) - Vol. I - 6/30/2017 Page 17 Page 19 1 1 too. I know a couple of the cases we've had before the of what you were just speaking about? 2 2 JUDGE PEARSON: Yes. If you've already Commission recently we've stipulated to the first 3 customary DR where we all agree to send each other all 3 included everyone you want to receive service, that's 4 the discovery requests and responses, and I'd like to do 4 fine. But if there's anyone that you haven't indicated 5 5 that today so that the parties don't have to send that at this point in time, just please send me an email and 6 DR out. 6 let me know. 7 7 JUDGE PEARSON: I was wondering if you were MR. MEYER: Just so I -- excuse me. Just so 8 going to bring that up. 8 I -- appreciate the size and scope of this master 9 Can we have stipulations from the parties on 9 service list as we respond to testimony sometimes with 10 10 that? voluminous responses. Is it the intent of the Bench 11 MR. COWELL: Yes, Your Honor. 11 that all of those responses be provided to all of the 12 MS. GAFKEN: Yes. 12 multiple representatives that each party may designate MR. BROOKS: Yes, Your Honor. 13 at some point, it could become pretty unwieldy. 13 JUDGE PEARSON: Well, if you create just an 14 JUDGE PEARSON: All right. Thank you. 14 So the Commission encourages stipulations, 15 electronic master service list and just paste it into 15 16 both as to facts and to issues that can be resolved via 16 the email line. That's usually what I do. 17 the settlement process or other means of alternative 17 MR. MEYER: Some of the stuff is provided 18 dispute resolution, and so the Commission should be 18 not just in emails but hard copy. 19 advised of any progress you make in those processes. 19 JUDGE PEARSON: Oh, I see. 20 For filing, we will need the original plus 20 MR. MEYER: And then some members ship out 21 21 ten copies for internal distribution. If filings FedExes to ten representatives --22 include information designated as confidential or highly 22 JUDGE PEARSON: These are just for 23 23 electronic courtesy copies. This does not apply for confidential, file the original and ten copies of the 24 fully unredacted version, the original and one copy of 24 hard copies. 25 any partly redacted version, and the original and one 25 MR. MEYER: Thank you very much. Page 18 Page 20 1 copy of the fully redacted version. 1 JUDGE PEARSON: For paper copies, you just 2 2 need to provide those to the designated lead We will require you to submit a witness list 3 showing an order of presentation and time estimates for 3 representative for service. 4 cross-examination of each witness. And 4 MR. MEYER: That is helpful. Thank you. 5 5 JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. All right. Is there cross-examination exhibit lists by January 9th, and we 6 will exchange cross-examination exhibits prior to the 6 anything else that we need to address while we're here? MS. GAFKEN: There is just one more item, 7 hearing and take up any other business that will 7 8 maximize efficiency at the hearing such as stipulating 8 and I didn't want to interrupt this process when we left 9 to the admission of testimony and exhibits. 9 the calendar on the schedule. With respect to the 10 If any party has not yet designated a lead 10 public comment hearing, we would request the two that 11 11 representative for service, please do so via email to we've usually done with Avista cases and historically, 12 myself as soon as possible. Right now, I just have the 12 we've done them in Spokane and Spokane Valley. I know 13 same individuals that were in the previous rate case, 13 there's been some discussion about maybe moving the 14 and I imagine that is the same. And once again, if Spokane Valley to a different location. I don't know if 14 15 anyone would like to add names and email addresses of 15 that's still a live issue or not, but I was going to

5 (Pages 17 to 20)

suggest that we would work with Andrew Roberts to

procedural schedule, that seems to fit in well despite

the first half of December, because looking at our

JUDGE PEARSON: Okay.

discuss locations and potential dates. We would suggest

MS. GAFKEN: -- in terms of where things

JUDGE PEARSON: And they will be back to

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the holiday issue --

back, correct?

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other representatives or support staff who should

receive service of all documents, please email that to

now working under the new procedural rules. Trying the

MR. COWELL: Question on that because we're

me as well, preferably by the end of the day today.

MR. COWELL: Your Honor?

expanded rules out, ICNU put in our petition to

intervene experts and support staff that we'd like to

have on the emails, and is that sufficient for purposes

JUDGE PEARSON: Yes?

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1	MS. GAFKEN: Correct.	1	CERTIFICATE
2		2	CERTIFICATE
3	JUDGE PEARSON: So we only need one space	3	STATE OF WASHINGTON
	in the schedule to hold those two dates?	4	COUNTY OF THURSTON
4	MS. GAFKEN: I believe so, and I suppose	5	COUNTY OF THURCHON
5	that would be determined a little bit in part in where	6	I, Tayler Russell, a Certified Shorthand Reporter
6	locations are. I mean, if we stick with the Spokane and	7	in and for the State of Washington, do hereby certify
7	Spokane Valley, that works really well because there's	8	that the foregoing transcript is true and accurate to
8	usually one in the evening in Spokane and one during the	9	the best of my knowledge, skill and ability
9	lunch hour in Spokane Valley.	10	and seek or my tane medge, et and desired
10	JUDGE PEARSON: Okay.	11	Jan Prancis
11	MS. GAFKEN: And just one overnight trip,		Sayler Rusself
12	two days together. So I think that would most likely be	12	Tayler Russell, CCR 3358
13	sufficient, but I would like to talk with Andrew	13	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
14	Mr. Roberts, a little bit more about the locations.	14	
15	JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. He's right here so	15	
16	now he knows.	16	
17	Okay. Is there anything else?	17	
18	MR. BROOKS: Your Honor, this is Tommy	18	
19	Brooks for the Gas Users, I do have one follow-up	19	
20	question about service, and your question earlier to the	20	
21	parties was whether anyone was requesting a paper copy	21	
22	from the Commission for service. Does that also apply	22	
23	for service by other parties? Has anyone requested	23	
24	paper copies for other parties?	24	
25	JUDGE PEARSON: No, the parties are still	25	
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1	required to use paper services. This is just the way		
2	that the Commission serves documents at this time.		
3	We've only addressed that chunk of the procedural rule		
4	so far. So in the general rate case rules, it still		
5	requires paper copies from the parties.		
6	MR. BROOKS: Thank you.		
7	JUDGE PEARSON: Okay. Anything else?		
8	Okay. Well, I will issue an order		
9	reflecting the schedule and everything that we discussed		
10	here today, and we are adjourned. Thank you.		
11	(Hearing adjourned at 9:54 a.m.)		
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