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COPY OF TRANSCRIPT

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH

In the Matter of a Request for Agency Action to Review the Carrying Charges Applied to Various Questar Gas Company Account Balances

Docket No. 14-057-32

HEARING PROCEEDINGS

TAKEN AT:

Public Service Commission

Hearing Room 403 160 East 300 South Salt Lake City, Utah

DATE:

Wednesday, April 8, 2015

TIME:

9:01 a.m.

REPORTER:

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12	INDEX OF EXAMINATION	N	
13	WITNESS	PAGE	
1	CHARLES E. PETERSON		
14	EXAMINATION		
45	BY-MS. SCHMID	4	
15	CAVIN MANCELSON		
16	GAVIN MANGELSON EXAMINATION		
10	BY-MR. OSLEN	10	
17	BI-WIN. OSELIN	10	
	KELLY MENDENHALL		
18	EXAMINATION		
	BY-MS. CLARK	13	
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
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PROCEEDINGS

THE HEARING OFFICER: Good morning. This is the time and place noticed for Commission consideration of the Request for Agency Action to Review Carrying Charges Applied to Various Questar Gas Company Account Balances in Docket No. 14-057-32. My name is Jordan White. I'll be acting as presiding officer for this hearing. With that, why don't we go ahead and start by taking appearances. We'll start here with Ms. Schmid.

MS. SCHMID: Thank you. Patricia E. Schmid with the Attorney General's Office representing the Division of Public Utilities. And with me as the Division's witness is Mr. Charles E. Peterson.

MR. OLSEN: Rex Olsen with the Office of Attorney General representing--or the Attorney General's Office representing the Office of Consumer Services. And with me is the witness for the Office, Gavin Mangelson.

MS. CLARK: Jenniffer Nelson Clark on behalf of the Company and Kelly B. Mendenhall is here as the Company's witness.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thanks. Before we

1	go ahead and proceed, are there any other
2	housekeeping matters before we proceed? I was
3	thinking of with respect to proceeding with the
4	witnesses, since this is the Division's request, I
5	thought it would be appropriate for Division to
6	lead off if that's okay with everyone. Okay.
7	With that, Ms. Schmid.
8	MS. SCHMID: Thank you. Could the
9	Division's witness please be sworn?
10	THE HEARING OFFICER: Do you solemnly
11	swear that the testimony you're about to give is
12	the whole truth and nothing but the truth?
13	MR. PETERSON: Yes.
14	CHARLES E. PETERSON,
15	having been first duly sworn, was
16	examined and testified as follows:
17	EXAMINATION
18	BY-MS.SCHMID:
19	Q. Good morning, Mr. Peterson.
20	A. Hello.
21	Q. Could you please state your employer and
22	work address for the record.
23	A. Okay. My name is Charles E. Peterson.
24	I'm employed by the Division of Public Utilities
25	as a technical consultant. And my address is the



1	Heber Wells Building, Salt Lake City, Utah.
2	Q. Did you participate on behalf of the
3	Division in this docket?
4	A. Yes.
5	Q. Did you prepare or were part of the
6	preparation of the Division's memorandum filed
7	February 24, 2015 entitled Request for Agency
8	Action to Review the Carrying Charges Applied to
9	Various Questar Gas Company Account Balances,
10	Docket No. 14-057-32, and also the Division's
11	memorandum filed March 24, 2015 entitled Request
12	for Agency Action to Review the Carrying Charges
13	Applied to Various Questar Gas Company Account
14	Balances, Docket No. 14-057-32?
15	A. Yes, I did.
16	Q. Do you have any changes or corrections to
17	make to those memorandums?
18	A. No.
19	Q. Do you adopt those memorandums as your
20	testimony here today?
21	A. Yes.
22	Q. Do you have a brief summary you would
23	like to provide?
24	A. Yes.
25	Q. Please proceed.

A. The Division petitioned the Commission to open a docket to investigate the carrying charges on December 31, 2014. The reason the Division wished to open this docket was that it felt that the carrying charges have become dated and needed review in light of current market conditions. The carrying charges tended to be fixed without any procedure in place for regularly reviewing the carrying charges to make sure that they continue to be appropriate. And, consequently, the Division made the request to the Commission to open the docket, which the Commission did.

There was a scheduling conference held on January 13, 2015 and a technical conference on January 26, 2015 in which the Company presented information regarding the carrying charges for the various accounts under consideration and discussed the history of those carrying charges. The carrying charges currently are set at a fixed six percent interest rate. This rate was established at various times for the different carrying charges. And it appears to the Division that the six percent interest rate was established over time in the different accounts merely to be consistent with one another.



The Division is not opposed to having consistent carrying charges, but as discussed in our memoranda, it believes that these carrying charges should be regularly reviewed and adjusted to reflect current market conditions.

The Division made the proposal based upon its analysis described in the memoranda dated--memorandum dated February 24th that the average of the AAA and BAA bond yields as the annual rate as reported by the Federal Reserve Board to be adopted as a regularly adjusting rate that would be adjusted annually for these accounts.

And based upon the average annual rate for these two bond ratings for 2014, the average was 4.51 percent, which the Division proposes be the new carrying charge rate for these accounts to be implemented this year going forward on July 1st. And then in subsequent years the adjustment would be made on March 1st. March 1st date giving time to the Division and parties to review the interest rates from the previous year and compile them and then be able to implement the new rate.

In its response to the Division's

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memorandum, the Company appears to be generally supportive of the Division's proposal. However, it wished to make the carrying charge for extended area charges be assessed on a case by case basis. The Division is not opposed to that suggestion by the Company. So the Division would propose that the other accounts in the Division's memorandum. specifically, Demand Side Management, account 182.3; Pipeline and Distribution Integrity. account 182.4; Passthrough Costs, account 191; Customer Deposits, 235.1; CET, 191; and Energy Assistance Balancing, account 191.8, be subject to this annual adjustment with a beginning rate of 4.51 percent. And if any extension area situation arises in the future, then the Company can bring that forward and then we can establish a specific carrying charge at that time. With that, that completes my initial remarks.

- Q. Mr. Peterson, do you believe that these changes are in the public interest?
 - A. Yes, I do.
- Q. And that they will help result in just and reasonable rates?
- A. Yes. It will establish a reasonable market based interest rate or carrying charge for



1	the various accounts that will be adjusted
2	annually. And the Division believes that that
3	process is in the public interest.
4	MS. SCHMID: The Division will request
5	that the Commission take administrative notice of
6	its two memorandums previously described and filed
7	with the Commission.
8	THE HEARING OFFICER: So by
9	administrative notice, you're asking that that be
10	received into evidence?
11	MS. SCHMID: Yes.
12	THE HEARING OFFICER: You are
13	MS. SCHMID: I am.
14	THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.
15	MS. SCHMID: I am asking.
16	THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Any
17	objection to the receivingrather they're
18	received?
19	MS. CLARK: No.
20	THE HEARING OFFICER: With that, they're
21	received.
22	Any questions for Mr. Peterson?
23	MR. OLSEN: We have no questions.
24	MS. CLARK: None. Thank you.
25	THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. With

1	that, I'll turn over to Mr. Olsen.
2	MR. OLSEN: Thank you.
3	EXAMINATION
4	BY-MR.OLSEN:
5	Q. Mr. Mangelson, could you please state
6	your name and employment for the record, please.
7	A. Gavin Mangelson.
8	THE HEARING OFFICER: Do you want to go
9	ahead and swear him in first? Is that okay?
10	MR. OLSEN: Oh, yeah.
11	THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Yeah. Why
12	don't we go ahead and why don't you raise your
13	right hand? Do you solemnly swear that the
14	testimony you're about to give is the whole truth
15	and nothing but the truth?
16	MR. MANGELSON: Yes.
17	GAVIN MANGELSON,
18	having been first duly sworn, was
19	examined and testified as follows:
20	THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you: Sorry.
21	Please proceed.
22	MR. OLSEN: Thank you, Your Honor.
23	EXAMINATION
24	BY-MR.OLSEN:
25	Q. What is yourwhere are you employed?



1	A. Sorry. That was M-A-N-G-E-L-S-O-N. I'm
2	employed by the Office of Consumer Services, 160
3	East 300 south.
4	Q. And did you participate in a preparation
5	of comments for Docket No. 14-057-032 that were
6	submitted on March 5, 2015?
7	A. Yes.
8	Q. Do you have any changes to those
9	comments?
10	A. No changes
11	MR. OLSEN: Your Honor, we ask that they
12	be submitted now as evidence if we could.
13	THE HEARING OFFICER: Any objection
14	they're received?
15	MS. CLARK: No.
16	MS. SCHMID: None.
17	THE HEARING OFFICER: They're received.
18	BY MR. OLSEN:
19	Q. As part of your job, did you prepare a
20	statement for this hearing?
21	A. Yes.
22	Q. And if you would like to give that now,
23	please.
24	A. Thank you. The Office of Consumer
25	Services supports the recommendation submitted by

1	the Division of Public Utilities regarding
2	carrying charges on the various accounts of
3	Questar Gas Company. The Office's view is that
4	carrying charges represent interest rates and
5	should, therefore, be commensurate with rates
6	found in the market or depth of comparable risk
7	and term. The Office, therefore, supports the
8	recommendation to use an average of the AAA and
9	BAA rates and asserts that using this carrying
10	charge will result in just and reasonable rates.
11	The Office further supports the
12	recommendation to review and revise rates
13	annually.
14	MR. OLSEN: We submit that, Your Honor,
15	THE HEARING OFFICER: Are there any
16	questions for Mr. Mangelson?
17	MS. CLARK: No.
18	MS. SCHMID: None.
19	THE HEARING OFFICER: With that, we'll
20	turn over to Ms. Clark.
21	MS. CLARK: Thank you. The Company would
22	call Kelly Mendenhall and ask that he be sworn.
23	THE HEARING OFFICER: Do you solemnly
24	swear that the testimony you're about to give is
25	the whole truth and nothing but the truth?



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MR.	MENDE	NHALL:	Yes.
	KELLY	MENDE	NHALL,

having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

EXAMINATION

BY-MS.CLARK:

- Q. Mr. Mendenhall, would you please state your full name and business address for the record?
- A. Yes. My name is Kelly B. Mendenhall.

 And my business address is 333 South State Street,

 Salt Lake City, Utah.
 - Q. What position do you hold at Questar Gas?
 - A. I'm the Director of Regulatory Affairs.
- Q. And did you participate and oversee in the preparation of Questar Gas Company's comments filed in this docket on March 10th of this year?
 - A. Yes, I did.
- Q. And do you adopt those comments as your testimony today?
 - A. Yes, I do.
- MS. CLARK: The Company would move to have these comments that were referenced into evidence in this matter.
 - THE HEARING OFFICER: Any objection

1	they're received?
2	MR. OLSEN: None.
3	THE HEARING OFFICER: They're received.
4	MS. CLARK: Thank you.
5	BY MS. CLARK:
6	Q. Mr. Mendenhall, can you please summarize
7	the Company's response to the Division's proposal
8	in this matter?
9	A. Certainly. In Docket 14-057-32, In the
10	Matter of a Request for Agency Action to Review
11	the Carrying Charges Applied to Various Questar
12	Gas Company Account Balances, the Division of
13	Public Utilities proposed to change the way that
14	the carrying charge was calculated on six
15	accounts. The six accounts are the Demand Side
16	Management Account 182.3; the Pipeline
17	Distribution and Integrity Account 182.4; the
18	Passthrough Account 191; the Customer Deposit
19	Account 235.1; the Conservation Enabling Tariff,
20	Charge Account 191; the Energy Assistance
21	Balancing, Charge Account 191.8; and the Extension
22	Area Charge.
23	In this docket the Division proposed to
24	change the carrying charge from six percent where



it has been since 1995 to an average of the AAA

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and BAA corporate interest rates updated annually.

The Company commends the Division for their work on this issue. And we think that this proposal will be beneficial to customers and the Company in the future. We believe that this proposal is an improvement on the current policy because the elapsed carrying charge will better match the interest rates in effect at the time.

The Company also believes that continuing to assess the same charge on over collected and under collected balances will result in just and reasonable interest charges for Questar Gas and for the customer.

The Company supports the Division's recommendation to use annually adjusted carrying charge on the Demand Side Management, Pipeline and Distribution Integrity, Passthrough Costs, Customer Deposits, Conservation Enabling Tariff, and Energy Assistance Balancing Account.

With the Extension Area Charge, the Company proposes to take a slightly different approach. And we would note that currently the Company isn't assessing this charge to any of its communities, so this would be--whatever the Commission approve would be really on a going

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forward basis. But the Company is proposing that going forward, the Company--or the Commission would approve this interest rate for the Extension Area Charges on communities on a case by case basis instead of using the annually calculated carrying charge as a de facto interest rate. And this would not preclude the Commission from using the currently effective interest rate, but it would give a little more flexibility to choose an appropriate rate.

The Company feels that case by case analysis would be more appropriate for two reasons. First, the Commission will be approving these charges on a case by case basis anyway and there may be instances where the Commission may want to give a different or more favorable rate to a specific community or extension area. And also because interest rates will be set at the beginning of the year, there may be instances where the Company files an extension area charge at the end of the year and if interest rates change dramatically, the Commission may want to use a more refreshed interest rate in the calculation. So for these two reasons, the Company is making this proposal.



And as Mr. Peterson mentioned, the Division seems to be supportive of this proposal. So I believe the Company and the Division and the Office are in agreement with how these charges should be assessed going forward.

Now, the Company supports the July 1, 2015 effective date. I would point out that we will have to make a handful of tariff changes if this is approved and so we would ask for as much prior notice as possible so that we could get those tariff changes made and approved before the July 1st effective date.

- Q. Does that conclude your summary?
- A. Yes, it does.

MS. CLARK: Mr. Mendenhall is available for further questioning.

MR. OLSEN: We have none, Your Honor,

MS. SCHMID: No questions from the Division.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. A couple questions. I think you started to go on my initial question, which is--and this may be a question for Questar. You kind of already alluded to your plans, but I guess my question is, you know, let's just start out with the basic concept

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that if the Commission were to accept the recommendation, it sounds like there's consensus for both the general timing and the average of the two bond rates and that the case by case analysis from all the parties. I think that's what I heard. Mechanically, you would--upon an order by the Commission, you would file a tariff or what would be the plan?

MR. MENDENHALL: Yeah. So there, I believe, most of the sections that we mentioned those accounts have, you know, specific tariff sections that kind of call out the interest rates. So, basically, we would have to reword the tariff to, you know, to describe kind of what we talked about here, that the interest rate in effect will be the Commission approved interest rate. And that would be using the average of the AAA and BAA interest rates.

And then I guess the mechanics will be as soon as the Commission approves, we would file tariff sheets. We would make tariff filing.

Commission would approve those tariff sheets. And then beginning July 1st, we would begin assessing the new interest rate on all the balances in all these accounts, so--



THE HEARING OFFICER: In terms of timing, is there significance tied to the July 1st date or is that tied to, like, when the average--I mean, help me understand. I mean, if that were the case, we would obviously try to strive to achieve that date, but is there a significance tied to the July 1st date?

MR. PETERSON: There is no particular significance other than the Division felt we would give some what we thought a reasonable time period for this process to conclude itself and assuming the Commission approves the Division's recommendation for the Company to implement the changes as Mr. Mendenhall was just discussing.

So if the--and at the same time, we wanted the new carrying charges to be implemented as quickly as possible so that they weren't unduly delayed. But, on the other hand, if the Company needed another 30 days or something, the Division doesn't consider that necessarily inappropriate if the Company--you know, that would work, too, so--

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. That's a helpful clarification. Getting back on the same--along the same lines of filing tariff sheet corrections--or revisions, I guess--this is just

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something I notice in reviewing the language with regards to the application of the interest--interest--balance. In a lot of these, I notice that there's verbiage that says, you know, for example, in the CET it will say the annual interest rate was applied to the monthly balance as adjusted for the corresponding tax deferral balance in account 283. I notice that the low income account doesn't have--is there a reason for that? Or is it just--I just was curious if there's a reason for that or--

MR. MENDENHALL: Yeah. I think we probably just omitted it when we made these tariff changes.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. There's no--it's probably applied the same way?

MR. MENDENHALL: Yeah. It's applied the exact same way. So, yeah, going forward that's probably a change we need to make in this filing would be to actually get some verbiage in there for that.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. The other question I have--this is for you, Mr. Mendenhall--the Company's comments, I was wondering if you could elaborate on the statement



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you made in the comments about, you know, you say the short-term--the short-term rate could arguably better match interest rates to the true nature of the account. Is there--can you elaborate further on--is there rationale--I mean, obviously, it sounds like there's consensus on this, but does the Company have an opinion as to whether short-term would be better or--

MR. MENDENHALL: I think--we were just basically trying to point out that there's probably a range that is acceptable. And you could make arguments probably for either one.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.

MR. MENDENHALL: From a purely theoretical accounting standpoint, you might say, well, the short-term interest rate is a better match because most of these accounts are short-term in nature. But I think the Division did an excellent job in explaining why they proposed the long-term.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.

MR. MENDENHALL: You know, it gives--by--the long-term rates are generally going to be a little bit higher and so that's going to give the Company an incentive to keep those

balances lower. I think then you would have the short-term. So all things considered, you know, it's probably a judgment call. And we're comfortable with the Division's proposal. We think it's fair for both the Company and the customers.

THE HEARING OFFICER: You know, certainly, there's-again, there's consensus on that, the recommendation for the combined bond rate. If the Commission were to consider the short-term for any reason, is there an idea of what that would be based on, what short-term rates, or is it just the concept in general?

MR. MENDENHALL: It would probably be similar to what they proposed. You know, I think they're proposing to use a publicly, you know, published 30-year corporate rate. It would be similar publicly published short-term rate based on some agreed upon index or something.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. And so with the case by case area extension--or Extension Area Charges, the tariff, I guess we'll have to kind of see the language and see how that would mechanically work. In other words, it would say something like upon filing. I mean, is that then



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evaluated when and if such a charge were to come? I know there's not one existing, but is that--you would have some kind of language for that or--

MR. MENDENHALL: Right. Well, we could either be silent on it because, I mean, typically, these extension area charges would be set up in a docket, you know, to go before the Commission and the Commission could actually rule in the docket. Or, I mean, I haven't thought a lot about it, but as I'm sitting here thinking out loud, I think, you know, maybe what we would do is put some language in there that would say the calculation for this EDC would be based on the Commission approved interest rate in the docket.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Did you--I wasn't sure if you had--did you have something you wanted to mention, Mr. Peterson?

MR. PETERSON: My counsel asked me if I wanted to comment on the short-term interest rate issue. And, at this point, I don't think I would have anything beyond what Mr. Mendenhall already said.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. That's great. One final question, just kind of maybe curiosity, but understanding, you know, in a

reading in other dockets, et cetera, it's both the Division and the Office' general position that the goal of these accounts is ultimately to have them around zero percent--or not zero percent--around zero. Just wondering--you know, in looking at the Pipeline Integrity Account, we notice that it's not dropping and it's projected in the last general rate case. Was there any plans to address that from the Company's perspective or--

MR. MENDENHALL: Yeah. It's dropped slightly. The reason why it hasn't dropped as much is probably because we didn't amortize it as quickly as we could. I mean, historically, we've been amortizing it over a five-year period. And, in my mind, it makes more sense if we're coming in for a rate case every three years, which seems to be the trend, I would suspect in an actual rate case, you would probably see us propose a three-year amortization. And, hopefully, over, you know--over a three-year period, that should get us down to that close to zero level where our expenses and our--our actual expenses and our amortization are closely tied.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. That's helpful. So it sounds like you folks are watching



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it and are aware of that issue and will be addressed in the next case. Okay. Is there any other matters that need to be addressed before we adjourn from the parties?

MS. SCHMID: Nothing more from the Division.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Let me just take--can we just take a quick recess? I just want to make sure we're fine. I'll be back in just--let's go off the record. (Recess taken.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: One final, again, mechanics question for Mr. Mendenhall. The Pipeline Integrity is not in the tariff, so would that--is the idea that the Commission would address that just in an order? Would there be a separate filing to address the interest on that account in the tariff?

MR. MENDENHALL: I would prefer the order, but if the Commission wants us to put a section in the tariff, we would be happy to do that.

THE HEARING OFFICER: So do the parties have thoughts on that one way or the other? MR. OLSEN: I don't think it matters to

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the Office, Your Honor.
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            MS. SCHMID: The Division has no comment.
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            THE HEARING OFFICER: That was my final
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      question. Again, if there's no other issues to
 5
      address or any housekeeping matters, we're
 6
      adjourned. Thank you very much.
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      (Hearing concluded at 9:30 a.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the foregoing proceedings were taken before me, NANCY A. FULLMER, a Registered Merit Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Utah;

That the proceeding was reported by me in stenotype and thereafter caused by me to be transcribed into typewriting, and that a full, true, and correct transcription of said testimony so taken and transcribed is set forth in the foregoing pages;

I further certify that I am not of kin or otherwise associated with any of the parties to said cause of action, and that I am not interested in the vent sereof.

Nancy Fullmer, RMR

A
a.m 1:10 26:7
AAA 7:9 12:8 14:25
18:17
able 7:23
accept 18:1
acceptable 21:11
account 1:4 3:6 5:9,13
8:8,10,10,12 14:12,16
14:17,18,19,20,21
15:19 20:8,9 21:4
24:6 25:18
accounting 21:15
accounts 6:17,24 7:13
7:17 8:7 9:1 12:2
14:15,15 18:11,25
21:17 24:3
achieve 19:5
acting 3:8
action 1:2 3:4 5:8,12
14:10 27:14
actual 24:17,22
address 4:22,25 13:8
13:11 24:8 25:16,17
26:5
addressed 25:2,3
adjourn 25:4
adjourned 26:6
adjusted 7:4,12 9:1
15:15 20:7
adjusting 7:11
adjustment 7:20 8:13
administrative 9:5,9
adopt 5:19 13:19
adopted 7:11
Affairs 13:14
Agency 1:2 3:4 5:7,12
14:10
agreed 22:19

agreement 17:4 ahead 3:9 4:1 10:9,12 alluded 17:23 amortization 24:19,23 amortize 24:12 amortizing 24:14 analysis 7:7 16:12 18:4 annual 7:10,14 8:13 20:5 annually 7:12 9:2 12:13 15:1,15 16:5 anyway 16:14 appearances 2:1 3:10 appears 6:22 8:1 application 20:2 applied 1:3 3:5 5:8,13 14:11 20:6,16,17 approach 15:22 appropriate 4:5 6:10 16:10.12 **approve** 15:25 16:3 18:22 approved 17:9,11 18:16 23:14 approves 18:20 19:12 approving 16:13 April 1:9 are-- 9:12 area 8:4,14 14:22 15:20 16:4,17,20 22:21,21 23:6 arguably 21:2 arguments 21:12 arises 8:15 asked 23:18 asking 9:9,15 asserts 12:9 assess 15:10 assessed 8:4 17:5

assessing 15:23 18:23
Assistance 8:12 14:20
15:19
Assistant 2:4,7
associated 27:13
assuming 19:11
Attorney 2:4,7 3:13,18
3:18
available 17:15
average 7:9,14,15 12:8
14:25 18:3,17
average—I 19:3
aware 25:1
B

B 3:23 13:10 **BAA** 7:9 12:9 15:1 18:17 back 19:23 25:9 **balance** 20:6,8 balances 1:4 3:6 5:9,14 14:12 15:11 18:24 22:1 **Balancing** 8:12 14:21 based 7:6,14 8:25 22:12,18 23:13 basic 17:25 basically 18:13 21:10 basis 8:4 16:1,5,14 be--whatever 15:24 beginning 8:13 16:19 18:23 behalf 3:23 5:2 believe 8:19 15:5 17:3 18:10 believes 7:3 9:2 15:9 beneficial 15:4 better 15:7 21:3,8,16 **beyond** 23:21

bit 21:24
Board 7:11
bond 7:9,15 18:4 22:9
brief 5:22
bring 8:15
Building 5:1
business 13:8,11
BY-MR 2:16
BY-MR.OLSEN 10:4
10:24
BY-MS 2:14,18
BY-MS.CLARK 13:6
BY-MS.SCHMID 4:18

 \mathbf{C} **calculated** 14:14 16:5 calculation 16:24 23:12 call 12:22 18:12 22:3 carrying 1:3 3:5 5:8,12 6:2,5,7,9,16,18,19,21 7:2,3,17 8:3,17,25 12:2,4,9 14:11,14,24 15:7,15 16:6 19:16 case 8:4,4 16:4,4,11,11 16:14,14 18:4,4 19:5 22:21,21 24:8,16,18 25:2 cause 27:14 caused 27:7 certainly 14:9 22:8 **CERTIFICATE 27:1** certify 27:2,12 **CET 8:11 20:5** cetera 24:1 **change** 14:13,24 16:22 20:19 **changes** 5:16 8:20 11:8 11:10 17:8,11 19:14 20:14



charge 7:17 8:3,17,25
12:10 14:14,20,21,22
14:24 15:7,10,16,20
15:23 16:6,20 23:1
charges 1:3 3:5 5:8,12
6:2,5,7,9,16,18,19,22
7:2,4 8:4 12:2,4
14:11 15:12 16:4,14
17:4 19:16 22:22
23:6
Charles 2:13 3:16 4:14
4:23
choose 16:9
City 1:8 2:5,8,11 5:1
13:12
clarification 19:23
Clark 2:9,18 3:22,22
9:19,24 11:15 12:17
12:20,21 13:22 14:4,5
17:15
close 24:21
closely 24:23
collected 15:10,11
combined 22:9
come 23:1
comfortable 22:4
coming 24:15
commends 15:2
commensurate 12:5
comment 23:19 26:2
comments 11:5,9 13:16
13:19,23 20:24 21:1
Commission 1:1,7 3:3
6:1,11,12 9:5,7 15:25
16:2,7,13,15,22 18:1
18:7,16,20,22 19:12
22:10 23:7,8,13 25:15
25:20
communities 15:24

```
16:4
community 16:17
Company 1:3 2:9,10
 3:6,23 5:9,13 6:15
 8:1.6.15 12:3.21
 13:22 14:12 15:2,5,9
 15:14,21,23 16:1,11
 16:20,25 17:3,6 19:13
 19:18 21:7,25 22:5
Company's 3:24 13:16
 14:7 20:24 24:9
Company--or 16:2
Company--you 19:21
comparable 12:6
compile 7:23
completes 8:18
concept 17:25 22:13
conclude 17:13 19:11
concluded 26:7
conditions 6:6 7:5
conference 6:13,14
consensus 18:2 21:6
 22:8
consequently 6:10
Conservation 14:19
 15:18
consider 19:20 22:10
consideration 3:4 6:17
considered 22:2
consistent 6:25 7:2
consultant 4:25
Consumer 2:6 3:20
 11:2,24
continue 6:9
continuing 15:9
corporate 15:1 22:17
correct 27:9
corrections 5:16
corrections--or 19:25
```

corresponding 20:7 Costs 8:10 15:17 counsel 23:18 couple 17:21 curiosity 23:25 curious 20:10 current 6:6 7:5 15:6 currently 6:19 15:22 16:8 **customer** 8:11 14:18 15:13,18 **customers** 15:4 22:6 D date 1:9 7:21 17:7,12 19:2.6.7 dated 6:5 7:8 dated--memorandum 7:8 days 19:19 de 16:6 December 6:3 deferral 20:7 delayed 19:18 **Demand** 8:8 14:15 15:16 Deposit 14:18 **Deposits** 8:11 15:18 **depth** 12:6 describe 18:14 described 7:7 9:6 different 6:21,24 15:21 16:16 Director 13:14 **discussed** 6:17 7:2 discussing 19:14 Distribution 8:9 14:17 15:17 **Division** 2:3 3:14 4:5

4:24 5:3 6:1,3,11,22

7:1,6,16,21 8:5,6 9:2 9:4 12:1 14:12,23 15:2 17:2,3,19 19:9 19:19 21:18 24:2 25:6 26:2 **Division's** 3:15 4:4,9 5:6,10 7:25 8:2,7 14:7 15:14 19:12 22:4 docket 1:2 3:6 5:3,10 5:14 6:2,4,12 11:5 13:17 14:9,23 23:7,8 23:14 dockets 24:1 dramatically 16:22 dropped 24:10,11 dropping 24:7 duly 4:15 10:18 13:3 \mathbf{E} E 2:3,13 3:12,16 4:14 4:23 East 1:8 2:4,7 11:3 **EDC** 23:13 effect 15:8 18:15 effective 16:8 17:7.12 either 21:12 23:5 **elaborate** 20:25 21:4 elapsed 15:7 **employed** 4:24 10:25 11:2 employer 4:21 employment 10:6 **Enabling** 14:19 15:18 Energy 8:11 14:20 15:19 entitled 5:7,11 establish 8:16,24 established 6:20,23 et 24:1



evaluated 23:1 event 27:15 evidence 9:10 11:12 13:24 exact 20:18 **EXAMINATION 2:12** 2:14,16,18 4:17 10:3 10:23 13:5 examined 4:16 10:19 13:4 example 20:5 excellent 21:19 existing 23:2 expenses 24:22,22 explaining 21:19 extended 8:3 **extension** 8:14 14:21 15:20 16:3,17,20 22:21 23:6 extension--or 22:21

F facto 16:6 fair 22:5 favorable 16:16 **February** 5:7 7:8 Federal 7:10 feels 16:11 **felt** 6:4 19:9 **file** 18:7,20 **filed** 5:6,11 9:6 13:17 **files** 16:20 filing 18:21 19:24 20:19 22:25 25:17 **final** 23:24 25:12 26:3 fine 25:9 first 4:15 10:9,18 13:3 16:13 five-year 24:14 **fixed** 6:7,19

flexibility 16:9 Floor 2:7 folks 24:25 follows 4:16 10:19 13:4 **foregoing** 27:2,11 forth 27:10 forward 7:18 8:16 16:1 16:2 17:5 20:18 **found** 12:6 full 13:8 27:8 Fullmer 1:11 27:4,16 further 12:11 17:16 21:4 27:12 **future** 8:15 15:5 \mathbf{G} Gas 1:3 2:9,10 3:6 5:9 5:13 12:3 13:13,16

14:12 15:12 Gavin 2:15 3:21 10:7 10:17 general 2:4,7 3:18 18:3 22:13 24:2,8 General's 3:13,19 generally 8:1 21:23 Getting 19:23 give 4:11 10:14 11:22 12:24 16:9,16 19:10 21:25 gives--by--the 21:23 giving 7:21

go 3:9 4:1 10:8,12 17:21 23:7 25:10 goal 24:3 going 7:18 15:25 16:2 17:5 20:18 21:23,24

great 23:24 guess 17:24 18:19

22:22

Good 3:2 4:19

guess--this 19:25

H

had--did 23:16 hand 10:13 19:18 handful 17:8 happy 25:21 have--is 20:9 have--this 20:23 heard 18:6 hearing 1:5,7 2:2 3:2,8 3:25 4:10 9:8,12,14

11:13,17,20 12:15,19 12:23 13:25 14:3 17:20 19:1,22 20:15 20:22 21:13,21 22:7 22:20 23:15,23 24:24 25:7,12,23 26:3,7

9:16,20,25 10:8,11,20

Heber 5:1 held 6:13 Hello 4:20 help 8:22 19:4 helpful 19:23 24:25 higher 21:24 historically 24:13 history 6:18

hold 13:13 Honor 10:22 11:11 12:14 17:17 26:1 hopefully 24:19

housekeeping 4:2 26:5

idea 22:11 25:15 **implement** 7:23 19:13 implemented 7:18 19:16 improvement 15:6 inappropriate 19:20

incentive 21:25 income 20:9

index 2:12 22:19 information 6:16 initial 8:18 17:22

instances 16:15.19

Integrity 8:9 14:17 15:17 24:6 25:14

interest 6:20,23 7:22 8:20,25 9:3 12:4 15:1 15:8.12 16:3.6.8.18

16:21,23 18:12,15,16 18:18.24 20:6 21:3.16 23:14.19 25:17

interest--interest--ba... 20:3

interested 27:14 investigate 6:2

is--and 17:22 issue 15:3 23:20 25:1

issues 26:4

J

January 6:14,15 **Jenniffer** 2:9 3:22 job 11:19 21:19 Jordan 2:2 3:7 judgment 22:3 **July** 7:19 17:6,12 18:23 19:2,7 just--I 20:10

just--let's 25:10 K

keep 21:25 Kelly 2:17 3:23 12:22 13:2,10

kin 27:12

kind 17:23 18:12,14 22:22 23:3,24



know 17:25 18:11,14	26:5	note 15:22	OSLEN 2:16
19:21 20:4 21:1,22	mean 19:3,4 21:5 22:25	notice 9:5,9 17:10 20:1	ourour 24:22
22:2,7,15,16 23:2,7	23:5,9 24:13	20:4,8 24:6	oversee 13:15
23:11,25 24:5	mechanically 18:6	noticed 3:3	
knowover 24:20	22:24		P
	mechanics 18:19 25:13	O	PAGE 2:13
L	memoranda 7:3,7	objection 9:17 11:13	pages 27:11
Lake 1:8 2:5,8,11 5:1	memorandum 5:6,11	13:25	part 5:5 11:19
13:12	8:1,7	obviously 19:5 21:5	participate 5:2 11:4
language 20:1 22:23	memorandums 5:17	Office 2:6 3:13,17,19	13:15
23:3,12	5:19 9:6	3:19,21 11:2,24 12:7	particular 19:8
lead 4:6	Mendenhall 2:17 3:23	12:11 17:4 26:1	parties 7:21 18:5 25:4
let's 17:25	12:22 13:1,2,7,10	Office' 24:2	25:23 27:13
level 24:21	14:6 17:15 18:9	Office's 12:3	Passthrough 8:10
light 6:6	19:14 20:12,17 21:9	officer 2:2 3:2,8,25	14:18 15:17
lines 19:24	21:14,22 22:14 23:4	4:10 9:8,12,14,16,20	Patricia 2:3 3:12
little 16:9 21:24	23:21 24:10 25:13,19	9:25 10:8,11,20 11:13	percent 6:20,23 7:16
long-term 21:20,23	Mendenhallthe 20:24	11:17 12:15,19,23	8:14 14:24
looking 24:5	mention 23:17	13:25 14:3 17:20	percentaround 24:4
lot 20:3 23:9	mentioned 17:1 18:10	19:1,22 20:15,22	percentor 24:4
loud 23:10	merely 6:24	21:13,21 22:7,20	period 19:10 24:14,20
low 20:8	Merit 27:4	23:15,23 24:24 25:7	perspective 24:9
lower 22:1	mind 24:15	25:12,23 26:3	Peterson 2:13 3:16
	monthly 20:6	Oh 10:10	4:13,14,19,23 8:19
M	morning 3:2 4:19	okay 4:6,6,23 9:14,16	9:22 17:1 19:8 23:17
M-A-N-G-E-L-S-O-N	move 13:22	10:9,11 19:22 20:15	23:18
11:1		20:22 21:13,21 22:20	petitioned 6:1
making 16:25	N	23:15,23 24:24 25:2	Pipeline 8:9 14:16
Management 8:8 14:16	name 3:7 4:23 10:6	Olsen 2:6 3:17,17 9:23	15:16 24:6 25:14
15:16	13:8,10	10:1,2,10,22 11:11,18	place 3:3 6:8
Mangelson 2:15 3:21	Nancy 1:11 27:3,16	12:14 14:2 17:17	plan 18:8
10:5,7,16,17 12:16	nature 21:3,18	25:25	plans 17:24 24:8
March 5:11 7:20,20	necessarily 19:20	omitted 20:13	please 4:9,21 5:25 10:5
11:6 13:17	need 20:19 25:3	onis 21:5	10:6,21 11:23 13:7
market 6:6 7:5 8:25	needed 6:5 19:19	open 6:2,4,12	14:6
12:6	Nelson 2:9 3:22	opinion 21:7	point 17:7 21:10 23:20
match 15:8 21:3,17	new 7:17,24 18:24	opposed 7:1 8:5	policy 15:6
matter 1:2 13:24 14:8	19:16	or 20:11 21:8 23:3	position 13:13 24:2
14:10	noit's 20:16	24:9	possible 17:10 19:17
matters 4:2 25:3,25	Notary 27:4	order 18:6 25:16,20	preclude 16:7



prefer 25:19 preparation 5:6 11:4 13:16 **prepare** 5:5 11:19 presented 6:15 presiding 3:8 previous 7:22 previously 9:6 **prior** 17:10 probably 20:13,16,19 21:11,12 22:3,14 24:12,18 procedure 6:8 proceed 4:1,2 5:25 10:21 **proceeding** 4:3 27:6 proceedings 1:5 3:1 27:3 process 9:3 19:11 projected 24:7 proposal 7:6 8:2 14:7 15:4,6 16:25 17:2 22:4 propose 8:6 24:18 **proposed** 14:13,23 21:20 22:15 proposes 7:16 15:21 **proposing 16:1** 22:16 provide 5:23 public 1:1,7 2:3 3:14 4:24 8:20 9:3 12:1 14:13 27:5 **publicly** 22:16,18 published 22:17,18 **purely 21:14** put 23:11 25:20

0

Questar 1:3 2:9,10 3:5

5:9,13 12:3 13:13,16

recess 25:8.11

14:11 15:12 17:23 question 17:22,23,24 20:23 23:24 25:13 26:4 questioning 17:16 questions 9:22,23 12:16 17:18,21 quick 25:8 quickly 19:17 24:13

R raise 10:12 range 21:11 rate 6:20,20,23 7:10,11 7:14,17,24 8:13,25 16:3,6,8,10,16,23 18:15,16,24 20:6 21:2 21:16 22:10,17.18 23:14,19 24:8,16,17 rates 7:22 8:23 12:4,5 12:9,10,12 15:1,8 16:18,21 18:4,12,18 21:3,23 22:13 ratings 7:15 rationale--I 21:5 reading 24:1 really 15:25 reason 6:3 20:9,11 22:11 24:11 reasonable 8:23,24 12:10 15:12 19:10 reasons 16:13,24 received 9:10,18,21 11:14,17 14:1,3 receiving--rather 9:17

recommendation

18:2 19:13 22:9

record 4:22 10:6 13:9

11:25 12:8,12 15:15

25:10 referenced 13:23 reflect 7:5 refreshed 16:23 **regarding** 6:16 12:1 regards 20:2 Registered 27:4 regularly 6:8 7:4,11 Regulatory 13:14 remarks 8:18 reported 7:10 27:6 Reporter 1:11 27:4 represent 12:4 representing 3:14,19 representing--or 3:18 request 1:2 3:4 4:4 5:7 5:11 6:11 9:4 14:10 Reserve 7:10 respect 4:3 response 7:25 14:7 result 8:22 12:10 15:11 review 1:2 3:5 5:8,12 6:6 7:22 12:12 14:10 reviewed 7:4 **reviewing** 6:8 20:1 revise 12:12 revisions 19:25 reword 18:13 Rex 2:6 3:17 right 10:13 23:4 risk 12:6 RMR 1:11 27:16 **Room** 1:7 rule 23:8

S Salt 1:8 2:5,8,11 5:1 13:12 same--along 19:24 says 20:4

scheduling 6:13 **Schmid** 2:3,14 3:11,12 3:13 4:7,8 9:4,11,13 9:15 11:16 12:18 17:18 25:5 26:2 section 25:21 sections 18:10,12 see 22:23,23 24:18 sense 24:15 separate 25:17 **Service** 1:1,7 Services 2:6 3:20 11:2 11:25 set 6:19 16:18 23:6 27:10 sheet 19:24 sheets 18:21,22 short-term 21:2,8,16 21:18 22:2,11,12,18 23:19 short-term--the 21:2 Side 8:8 14:15 15:16 significance 19:2,6,9 silent 23:5 similar 22:15,18 sitting 23:10 situation 8:14 six 6:19,23 14:14,15,24 slightly 15:21 24:11 so-- 18:25 19:21 solemnly 4:10 10:13 12:23 soon 18:20 Sorry 10:20 11:1 sounds 18:2 21:6 24:25 south 1:8 2:4,7,10 11:3 13:11 **specific** 8:16 16:17 18:11



		ı	
specifically 8:8	term 12:7	truth 4:12,12 10:14,15	we'll 3:10 12:19 22:22
standpoint 21:15	terms 19:1	12:25,25	we're 22:3 24:15 25:9
start 3:9,10 17:25	testified 4:16 10:19	try 19:5	26:5
started 17:21	13:4	trying 21:10	we've 24:13
state 2:10 4:21 10:5	testimony 4:11 5:20	turn 10:1 12:20	Wednesday 1:9
13:7,11 27:5	10:14 12:24 13:20	two 7:15 9:6 16:12,24	Wells 5:1
statement 11:20 20:25	27:9	18:4	weren't 19:17
stenotype 27:7	Thank 3:12 4:8 9:24	typewriting 27:8	White 2:2 3:7
Street 2:10 13:11	9:25 10:2,20,22 11:24	typically 23:5	wished 6:4 8:3
strive 19:5	12:21 14:4 17:20		witness 2:13 3:15,20
subject 8:12	26:6	U	3:24 4:9
submit 12:14	Thanks 3:25	ultimately 24:3	witnesses 4:4
submitted 11:6,12,25	thatis 25:15	understand 19:4	wondering 20:25
subsequent 7:19	thatyou 23:2	understanding 23:25	wonderingyou 24:5
suggestion 8:5	theand 19:15	unduly 19:17	words 22:24
summarize 14:6	theoretical 21:15	updated 15:1	work 4:22 15:3 19:21
summary 5:22 17:13	there'sagain 22:8	use 12:8 15:15 16:23	22:24
supportive 8:2 17:2	therecan 21:4	22:16	wouldupon 18:6
supports 11:25 12:7,11	thereof 27:15	Utah 1:1,8 2:5,8,11 5:1	
15:14 17:6	things 22:2	13:12 27:5	X
sure 6:9 23:16 25:9	think 15:3 17:21 18:5	Utilities 2:3 3:14 4:24	Y
suspect 24:17	20:12 21:18 22:1,5,15	12:1 14:13	-
swear 4:11 10:9,13	23:10,20 25:25	V	yeah 10:10,11 18:9
12:24	thinkwe 21:9		20:12,17,18 24:10
sworn 4:9,15 10:18	thinking 4:3 23:10	various 1:3 3:5 5:9,13	year 7:18,22 13:17
12:22 13:3	thought 4:5 19:10 23:9	6:17,21 9:1 12:2	16:19,21
	thoughts 25:24	14:11	years 7:19 24:16
T	three 24:16	verbiage 20:4,20	yields 7:9
take 9:5 15:21 25:8	three-year 24:19,20	view 12:3	youI 23:15
takecan 25:8	tied 19:2,3,6 24:23	W	yourwhere 10:25
taken 1:7 25:11 27:3	time 1:10 3:3 6:24 7:21	W 2:6	Z
27:10	8:17 15:8 19:10,15	want 10:8 16:16,22	zero 24:4,4,5,21
talked 18:14	times 6:21	25:9	
tariff 14:19 15:18 17:8	timing 18:3 19:1	wanted 19:16 23:17,19	0
17:11 18:7,11,13,21	today 5:20 13:20	wants 25:20	
18:21,22 19:24 20:13	transcribed 27:8,10	wasn't 23:16	1
22:22 25:14,18,21	transcription 27:9	watching 24:25	1 17:6
tax 20:7	trend 24:17	way 14:13 20:16,18	10 2:16
technical 4:25 6:14	true 21:3 27:9	25:24	10th 13:17
tended 6:7			



Hearing Proceedings

=======	V	290	IK .
13 2:18 6:14	7		
14-057-032 11:5			
14-057-32 1:2 3:7 5:10	8		
5:14 14:9	81:9		
160 1:8 2:4,7 11:2	84114 2:5,8		
182.3 8:9 14:16	84145-0433 2:11	II.	
182.4 8:10 14:17			
191 8:10,11 14:18,20	9		
191.8 8:12 14:21	9:01 1:10	1	
1995 14:25	9:30 26:7	1	
1st 7:19,20,20 17:12		1	
18:23 19:2,7			
2			
2014 6:3 7:15			
2015 1:9 5:7,11 6:14,15			
11:6 17:7			
235.1 8:11 14:19	l'	I.	
24 5:7,11			
24th 7:8	0		
26 6:15			
283 20:8		1	
3			
30 19:19			
30-year 22:17		l.	
300 1:8 2:4,7 11:3			
31 6:3		l'	
333 2:10 13:11			
4			
42:14			
4.51 7:16 8:14			
403 1:7			1
5			
5 11:6			
5th 2:7		1	
6			
-			1



			, 5
			()