

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO  
PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE PUCO COMMISSION

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IN RE:

CASE NO. 22-1094-WW-AIR,  
APPLICATION OF AQUA OHIO, INC.  
TO INCREASE ITS RATES & CHARGES  
FOR ITS WATERWORKS SERVICE

IN RE:

CASE NO. 22-1096-ST-AIR  
APPLICATION OF AQUA OHIO, INC.  
TO INCREASE ITS RATES & CHARGES  
FOR ITS WASTEWATER SERVICE

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CD RAY COMMUNITY ROOM, ASHTABULA, OHIO  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 31, 2023

Kurt M. Spencer, Notary Public

1 APPEARANCES:

2  
3 On behalf of the Public Utilities  
4 Commission:

5 LAWRENCE K. FRIEDEMANN, ESQ., CMSR  
6 CLINT WHITE, ESQ.  
7 JILL KOCHER  
8 Ohio Public Utilities Commission  
9 180 East Broad Street  
10 Columbus, Ohio 43215  
11

12 On behalf of the Applicant:

13 Ice Miller, LLP  
14 LAUREN A. STENGER, ESQ.  
15 ROBERT L. DAVIS, AQUA PRESIDENT  
16 250 West Street  
17 Suite 700  
18 Columbus, Ohio 43215  
19

20 ALSO PRESENT:

21 Donald Kral,  
22 Assistant Consumers' Counsel  
23  
24

25 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

1                   MR. WHITE: Good evening, everyone.  
2     The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio  
3     scheduled for public hearing at this time and  
4     place Case No. 22-1094-WW-AIR, which is  
5     captioned In the Matter of the Application of  
6     Aqua Ohio, Inc to increase its rates and  
7     charges for its waterworks service. And, also,  
8     Case No. 22-1096-ST-AIR, which is captioned In  
9     the Matter of the Application of Aqua Ohio, Inc  
10    to increase its rates and charges for its  
11    wastewater service.

12                  My name is Clint White. I'm one of  
13    the two attorney examiners assigned by the  
14    Commission to preside over this local public  
15    hearing. With us this evening, is one of our  
16    Commissioners, Mr. Lawrence Friedeman. I would  
17    like to invite Commissioner Friedeman, at this  
18    time, to make any opening remarks that he would  
19    like to.

20                  MR. FRIEDEMANN: Thank you. Good  
21    evening, everybody. As you will come to  
22    appreciate every case is a pretty complex  
23    proceeding with a whole lot of moving parts.  
24    That being said, your statements will become  
25    part of the record and will represent an

1 integral element of our consideration, as a  
2 Commission, in terms of deciding, ultimately,  
3 what it is we will do with this application.

4 So what you say is important to us,  
5 and I want to thank you so very much for  
6 actually sharing your thoughts with us today.

7 MR. WHITE: Thank you, Commissioner  
8 Friedeman. We also have Jill Kocher with us  
9 from the Commission's Office of Public Affairs.  
10 I would like to note that two parties have  
11 intervened in this case; the Office of the Ohio  
12 Consumers' Counsel has intervened in both  
13 cases, and the City of Marion has intervened in  
14 the water rate case, which is the Case No.  
15 22-1094-WW-AIR.

16 At this time, we'll take  
17 appearances of the parties. On behalf of the  
18 applicants --

19 MS. STENGER: Good evening, your  
20 Honor and Commissioner Friedeman. Lauren  
21 Stenger with the law firm Ice Miller, LLP, at  
22 250 West Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215 on behalf  
23 of the company.

24 MR. WHITE: On behalf of the Ohio  
25 Consumers' Counsel --

1 MR. KRAL: Good evening, your  
2 Honor, Mr. Friedeman. On behalf of Bruce  
3 Westin, Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel,  
4 my name is Don Kral. I'm an assistant  
5 Consumers' Counsel for the Office of the Ohio  
6 Consumers' Counsel. Our address is 65 East  
7 State Street, Suite 700, in Columbus, Ohio  
8 43215.

9 MR. WHITE: I don't believe we have  
10 anyone here today from the City of Marion or  
11 the Attorney General's office on behalf of the  
12 Commission staff. Okay.

13 The subjects of today's public  
14 hearing are two applications; one from Aqua  
15 Ohio, Inc, which I will refer to as Aqua, and  
16 Aqua Ohio wastewater, Inc., which I will refer  
17 to AWI. Aqua seeks to increase its rates for  
18 its waterworks service. AWI seeks to raise its  
19 rates for its wastewater service. I will  
20 briefly discuss each application in turn.

21 On December 30, 2022, Aqua filed an  
22 application for an increase in rates for  
23 waterworks service in Case No. 22-1094-WW-AIR.  
24 Aqua is requesting to increase its annual  
25 revenues by approximately \$9.3 million or

1 12.87%. The average residential customer,  
2 depending on the service territory, will see a  
3 monthly bill increase of between 12 and 18%  
4 under Aqua's proposal.

5 Commission staff reviewed the  
6 application and file a report of investigation  
7 on July 13, 2023, which incorporated  
8 recommendations from an independent audit  
9 performed of the application. In that report,  
10 Commission staff recommended lowering Aqua's  
11 requested increase to a range of between  
12 \$2.4 million and \$4.5 million, which represents  
13 an increase of revenues of between 5.27 and  
14 6.18%. Under this recommendation from the  
15 staff, the average customer would see a monthly  
16 bill increase of between 5 to 6% for waterworks  
17 service.

18 Also, on December 30, 2022, AWI  
19 filed an application for an increase of rates  
20 for its wastewater service in 22-1096-ST-AIR.  
21 AWI is requesting to increase its annual  
22 revenues by approximately \$451,000 or 11.97%;  
23 depending on the service territory, the average  
24 residential customer would see a monthly bill  
25 increase of between 5.1 and 12.1% under AWI's

1 proposal.

2 Commission staff reviewed the  
3 application and filed a report of investigation  
4 on July 13, 2023, incorporating recommendations  
5 from an independent audit performed of the  
6 application. In that report, Commission staff  
7 recommended lowering AWI's requested increase  
8 to a range of between \$219,000 and \$325,000,  
9 which would represent an increase of revenues  
10 between 5.89 and 8.72%. Under commission  
11 staff's recommendation, the average customer  
12 would see a monthly bill increase of 7.4% for  
13 sewer service. In each case, the staff report  
14 is only a recommendation. The final decision  
15 will ultimately be made by the Commission.

16 Tonight's public hearing is the  
17 last of three scheduled local public hearings  
18 in this case; one was held Monday in Columbus;  
19 the other in Marion on Tuesday. These public  
20 hearings are only one aspect of the process.  
21 An evidentiary hearing is scheduled to convene  
22 at the Commission's office in Columbus on  
23 Monday, September 11, 2023 at 10 a.m. However,  
24 I will note that yesterday the parties jointly  
25 requested that the hearing date be moved to a

1 date in October; that motion is currently under  
2 consideration.

3 The purpose of tonight's public  
4 hearing is to receive comments from the public  
5 on these two applications. It is not intended  
6 to be a question-and-answer session.  
7 Representatives from the company and the staff  
8 may be able to speak to any specific concerns  
9 you have after the hearing ends. These  
10 proceedings are being transcribed by a court  
11 reporter and any testimony you give will be  
12 incorporated into the official record of these  
13 cases. The Commission will review and consider  
14 your testimony, before making a final decision  
15 on the applications.

16 If you plan to testify, please  
17 speak clearly. I might also ask you to stand  
18 and speak clearly, if you can, so that the  
19 court reporter can accurately reflect your  
20 testimony on the record. If you signed up to  
21 testify, but changed your mind, you may still  
22 submit written comments on the Commission's  
23 website or via mail. If these comments are  
24 about the water service, make sure to file them  
25 under 22-1094-WW-AIR -- if they are about the



1 sewer service, make sure to file them under  
2 22-1096-ST-AIR.

3 In just a minute, I will begin  
4 calling witnesses from the list of individuals  
5 who signed up to testify; before you give your  
6 testimony, I will swear you in. Ask you to  
7 state and spell your name for the record and  
8 state your address. I will also ask you which  
9 case you're testifying about today; the water  
10 case or the sewer case.

11 After you conclude your testimony,  
12 attorneys for the parties, Commissioner  
13 Friedeman or I may have clarifying questions  
14 for you. So please wait for us to confirm  
15 whether or not we have questions, before  
16 returning to your seat. Once you're done  
17 testifying, you can sit down at your seat. You  
18 can also leave, if you feel like it -- if you  
19 do leave, while the hearing is ongoing, I just  
20 ask that you do so quietly.

21 Finally, if I call your name from  
22 the witness list and you decide you no longer  
23 want to testify, simply pass when I call your  
24 name. Again, the Commission appreciates your  
25 participation in tonight's hearing and looks

1 forward very much to hearing your comments.

2 At this time, we'll begin with our  
3 first witness. Stephen Kellat.

4 MR. KELLAT: Yes.

5 MR. WHITE: Please raise your right  
6 hand. Do you swear or affirm that the  
7 testimony you're about to give is the truth?

8 MR. KELLAT: Yes, sir.

9 MR. WHITE: Okay. Please state and  
10 spell your name for the record.

11 MR. KELLAT: My name is Stephen  
12 Michael Kellat, S-T-E-P-H-E-N M-I-C-H-A-E-L  
13 K-E-L-L-A-T.

14 MR. WHITE: And what is your  
15 address?

16 MR. KELLAT: 1819 East 45th Street,  
17 Ashtabula, Ohio 44004.

18 MR. WHITE: And for which case will  
19 you be providing testimony?

20 MR. KELLAT: Water rates.

21 MR. WHITE: Thank you. You may go  
22 ahead.

23 MR. KELLAT: Good evening, your  
24 Honor and Commissioner Friedeman. Originally,  
25 I hadn't plan to speak all that long, but I

1 will raise a few points. When it comes to  
2 water rates in a communities, such as  
3 Ashtabula, you have to consider an area such as  
4 this, where we are dealing with, first, we have  
5 a ghost newspaper. That's to say we're down to  
6 about 16 pages on average, so according to the  
7 Nieman Lab, it's a ghost newspaper. It's  
8 almost gone. So that any of us are even here  
9 for this hearing is a miracle that we've even  
10 heard about it, because this paper is almost  
11 gone.

12           Beyond that, we have the United Way  
13 Alice Report; ALICE stands for Asset Limited  
14 Income Constrained Employed and within a  
15 community like this, within the service area,  
16 we're talking an area from 50 to 70% of the  
17 population falls within that classification.  
18 That's the polite way to put it. The not so  
19 polite way is, we have a ton of people on the  
20 welfare cliff or just falling off it. So when  
21 it comes to a rate increase, that needs to be  
22 considered.

23           I'm a capitalist. I know  
24 businesses need to make money. But there does  
25 come a point where you can look to make money,

1 but a customer can say, "I can't do that" and  
2 then our neighborhoods start to end up  
3 depleting when residents say, "I can't live  
4 here." and "I can't afford the water bill."  
5 This is not a rich area. And for folks that  
6 are dealing with water rates -- I generally  
7 shutter when I look at my water bill each  
8 month -- and seeing a \$90 increase per year,  
9 that's a lot. I was already looking at  
10 relocating away from Ashtabula County. This is  
11 just another reason to do that. Thank you.

12 MR. WHITE: Thank you, Mr. Kellat.  
13 I hope I pronounced your name correctly.

14 MR. KELLAT: Yes, your Honor.

15 MR. WHITE: Are there any questions  
16 from the company for this witness?

17 MS. STENGER: No questions, your  
18 Honor.

19 MR. WHITE: From the OCC?

20 MR. KRAL: Nothing. I would like  
21 to thank Mr. Kellat for taking the time to  
22 appear today and to testify.

23 MR. KELLAT: Thank you.

24 MR. WHITE: Commissioner Friedeman.

25 MR. FRIEDEMANN: No. Other than,

1     thank you.

2                   MR. WHITE:   Okay.   I have no  
3     questions.   Thank you very much.   Our next  
4     witness is Joseph Pete.

5                   MR. PETE:    Yes.

6                   MR. WHITE:   Do you swear or affirm  
7     that the testimony you're about to give is the  
8     truth?

9                   MR. PETE:    I sure do.   Thank you.

10                  MR. WHITE:   Okay.   Please state  
11     your name and spell it for the record.

12                  MR. PETE:    Joseph J. Pete, 3301  
13     Stevens Road, Ashtabula, Ohio 44004.

14                  MR. FRIEDEMANN:   Excuse me.  
15     Mr. Pete, could you spell your last name,  
16     please.

17                  MR. PETE:    P-E-T-E.

18                  MR. FRIEDEMANN:   Thank you.

19                  MR. WHITE:   And for which case will  
20     you be testifying?

21                  MR. PETE:    Water rates.

22                  MR. WHITE:   Thank you.   Go ahead.

23                  MR. PETE:    I'm a Township trustee  
24     here in Ashtabula Township and I have been for  
25     nearly twenty four years and all of, every time

1     they want to raise, I get phone calls,  
2     especially, from the elderly, who really can't  
3     afford to pay for all these increases,  
4     especially, since they tell me we have Lake  
5     Erie about three miles away; a big source of  
6     water, so, if anything, it should be lowered  
7     here in our community.

8                     So I want to make it short and  
9     sweet. I'm against any increase. I think that  
10    they've become enough. This is nothing  
11    personal against the Aqua workers. They're all  
12    good people here in the area. But people are  
13    hurting now for money, especially, with the  
14    economy the way it is, grocery prices, any kind  
15    of prices you're thinking of have all increased  
16    so much. Inflation has really hurt us.

17                    Any increase in the water rates  
18    will really hurt, especially, the senior  
19    citizens, who are on fixed incomes. So I'm  
20    here to oppose any water rate increase in  
21    Ashtabula Township or in the Ashtabula area,  
22    which some of Ashtabula Township covers. Thank  
23    you very much.

24                    MR. WHITE: Thank you. Are there  
25    any questions for this witness?

1 MS. STENGER: Not from the company,  
2 your Honor.

3 MR. KRAL: Your Honor, I would just  
4 like to thank Mr. Pete for his testimony  
5 tonight. Thank you for coming.

6 MR. PETE: Thank you.

7 MR. WHITE: Commissioner.

8 MR. FRIEDEMANN: Thanks, Mr. Pete.

9 MR. WHITE: Thank you. Our next  
10 witness is John Waid.

11 MR. WAID: Yes.

12 MR. WHITE: Please raise your right  
13 hand. Do you swear or affirm that the  
14 testimony you're about to give is the truth?

15 MR. WAID: To the best of my  
16 knowledge, it is.

17 MR. WHITE: Okay. Please spell and  
18 state your name for the record.

19 MR. WAID: John Waid, W-A-I-D, 3058  
20 Orchard Road, Ashtabula, Ohio, and I, too, am  
21 with the water rates.

22 MR. WHITE: Thank you. Go ahead.

23 MR. WAID: I got some information  
24 here, so I'm going to do the best I can to  
25 share the information I got with what I printed

1 off the internet and there are some viable  
2 sources. So you guys have probably heard of  
3 Seeking Out. It's a business newsletter that  
4 comes out and looks up different stocks and  
5 stuff like that, and I guess Aqua is owned by  
6 Essential; is that correct -- Essential  
7 Utilities; is that --

8 MR. KRAL: Owns it.

9 MR. WAID: -- who owns it -- so  
10 Aqua must be a holding company. I'm just going  
11 to reiterate. This report came out August 7,  
12 2023, shareholder's review, and earnings per  
13 share are 34 cents this quarter. The company  
14 increased its quarterly dividend by 7%. It  
15 acquired seven water and wastewater systems and  
16 reaffirms annual guidance when he says from the  
17 CEO of the company, Christopher Franklin, we  
18 are pleased to report strong results for the  
19 first half of the year. Despite the weather  
20 challenges early in the year, we continue our  
21 track record of delivering strong financial  
22 results through significant and continuous  
23 investment in improvements for our customers,  
24 supplemented by a steady stream acquisition of  
25 water and wastewater utilities. Essential



1 reported record net income of \$93.1 million for  
2 the second quarter of 2023, compared to  
3 \$82.3 million for the same quarter in 2022, and  
4 that's right from the Chairman, CEO.

5 I've got some other information and  
6 I'm going to give it to you when I'm done. But  
7 Essential that owns Aqua, as I read here,  
8 Essential Utilities through its subsidiaries,  
9 operates regulated utilities that provide  
10 water, wastewater or natural gas services in  
11 the United states. The company operates  
12 thorough regulated water and regulated natural  
13 gas segments. It offers water services through  
14 operating and maintenance contracts with  
15 municipalities authorities and other parties.  
16 The company also provides non-utility raw water  
17 supply services for firms in the natural gas  
18 drilling industry; and water and sewer line  
19 protection solutions and repair services to  
20 households.

21 It serves approximately 8.8 million  
22 residential water, commercial water, fire  
23 protection, industrial water, wastewater and  
24 other water and utility customers in  
25 Pennsylvania, Ohio, Texas, Illinois, North

1 Carolina, New Jersey, Indiana, Virginia, West  
2 Virginia and Kentucky under Aqua and Peoples  
3 brands.

4 Essential Utilities was started in  
5 February of 2020. You probably wonder why I'm  
6 going over all this information, because we're  
7 here for Aqua tonight and Aqua is our provider,  
8 but they're owned by Essential.

9 So after I did some looking up of  
10 information about Essential, their market cap  
11 is roughly about \$10 billion a year. Their  
12 total debt is \$6.93 billion and their cash in  
13 the bank \$11.64 million.

14 It says gross profit margin for  
15 Essential Utilities is 47.68. That's a pretty  
16 good profit margin, I'd say. Dividend yield,  
17 3.32. Annual pay out \$1.23. Years of growth,  
18 31 years, they raised the dividend. And every  
19 quarter out of the four quarters in an annual  
20 year, they raise it up two cents. So two out  
21 of the four quarters every year, if you look  
22 back and check your stock out, they raised that  
23 dividend up 2 cents every time. That's a  
24 pretty good profit margin there. Their stocks,  
25 \$36.90 today at closing. The ten year return

1 on your investment would be 51.23%.

2 Like Mr. Pete said back there, this  
3 little town, the lake is just right down the  
4 road here. We don't have -- we have a sewer,  
5 but it's run by our city and our county. You  
6 know, I just got my bill today for my sewer,  
7 because our sewer is based on our water usage;  
8 the County doubled the charge that they charge  
9 us. I have a house with my wife and I, a  
10 little ranch home. I am retired. She's not.  
11 My sewer bill was \$157 for two months -- it  
12 used to be \$80. That's quite substantial. And  
13 Essential is going to -- Aqua is going to raise  
14 their rates again, you know, they just raised  
15 them a year ago.

16 And I do -- the Aqua fellas do a  
17 good job in this town, you know, they respond  
18 quickly. They repair things, you know, we  
19 don't have any questions about what they do.

20 But I do have a question, if  
21 someone is paying a dividend for 31 years and  
22 I'm helping pay it, it don't seem like they're  
23 hurting that much that they have to come for  
24 more money from the average customer, you know,  
25 when the CEO makes between 6 to \$8 million a

1 year and there are seven or eight VPs that are  
2 under him that are anywhere from \$800,000 to  
3 \$1.5 million in salaries and stock options, I  
4 mean, I'd like to see them take a real, real  
5 close look at this. I know we're talking about  
6 Aqua, and there are so many subsidiaries of  
7 Aqua, but I would really love to see the  
8 accounting for either PUCO -- if you guys go  
9 over how many shovels they buy, how many tires,  
10 how much gas, you know, is it all just Aqua?  
11 Do they make out a list and go to you guys, and  
12 say, "This is what we've done," compared to  
13 their shareholders report, that it's all one  
14 big company? I mean, years ago, I think it was  
15 Ronald Reagan that deregulated the utility  
16 industry, and they said, "Oh, it's going to  
17 make competition," and all it did was allow  
18 people to merge and get bigger and bigger. And  
19 I just wonder if the whole piece of the pie  
20 here is being figured correctly. And the  
21 reason I'm here is because, no disrespect to  
22 you guys at the PUCO, but, you know, last year,  
23 I heard nothing too good with what happened  
24 with the electric company here in our town with  
25 some of the people that run the PUCO -- am I

1 correct or not correct with that statement?

2 One guy is in prison -- did a shotty little  
3 thing there.

4           So I've got some time on my hands.  
5 I retired in November and I -- this kind of  
6 makes me wonder what's going on in the world  
7 here today. I used to work at the FirstEnergy  
8 company back when it was CEI. I can remember  
9 when they built the Perry Plant and they said,  
10 "The electric is going to be so cheap, your  
11 meter is going to hardly spin" -- that was  
12 actually a commercial on TV back then -- and  
13 the rates never went down. They merge and  
14 merge just like Essential has merged with Aqua  
15 and all the rest. I just hope the PUCO takes  
16 our little town, you know, we used to be a big  
17 industrial site years ago, when I was a young  
18 man growing up; it's not that any more. We're  
19 pretty depressed here. You can check the  
20 numbers through the state. Welfare is big in  
21 this town, you know, it's -- we don't need our  
22 rates to go up here. You know, if I see the  
23 stock report go down a little bit and  
24 shareholders pay some expense there -- I'm not  
25 saying deplete it -- but somebody might sharpen

1     their pencil and look at this a little closer  
2     than what they have in the past.

3                     So that's all I have to say.

4     Mr. Recorder, if you want this information,  
5     I'll be happy to give it to you. There you go.  
6     That's all I have. Do you guys have any  
7     questions for me?

8                     MR. WHITE: Thank you, Mr. Waid.  
9     Any questions?

10                    MS. STENGER: No questions from the  
11     company. Thank you.

12                    MR. KRAL: I just have one  
13     question, Mr. Waid.

14                    MR. WAID: Yes.

15                    MR. KRAL: I appreciate all the  
16     research you've done. Do you think that, given  
17     what you read about; their net profits, their  
18     growth and their dividends and all that, did  
19     you come across anything that indicated they  
20     would have a problem raising money for  
21     investment purposes, if they needed to raise  
22     money?

23                    MR. WAID: Well, by the sound of  
24     those numbers, I don't think they have a money  
25     problem -- they're well taken care of with

1 salaries. They're -- I think I read they  
2 contributed to the communities \$4 million last  
3 year in contributions, you know, from the  
4 company. It seems like they got some money; 31  
5 years paying stockholders almost 3.5% -- that's  
6 not too shabby.

7 MR. KRAL: Thank you.

8 MR. WAID: You're welcome.

9 MR. WHITE: Commissioner, any  
10 questions?

11 MR. FRIEDEMANN: No.

12 MR. WHITE: Thank you, Mr. Waid. I  
13 appreciate it.

14 MR. WAID: Yes. Thank you.

15 MR. WHITE: The next witness is  
16 Steve McClure.

17 MR. MCCLURE: Yes.

18 MR. WHITE: Do you swear or affirm  
19 that the testimony you're about to give is the  
20 truth?

21 MR. MCCLURE: Yes.

22 MR. WHITE: Please state and spell  
23 your name for the record.

24 MR. MCCLURE: Stephen,  
25 S-T-E-P-H-E-N, McClure, M-C-C-L-U-R-E, 2900

1 Avon Boulevard, A-V-O-N, and that's in  
2 Ashtabula, Ohio. I'm also a Township trustee  
3 like Mr. Pete and a long time Aqua customer.  
4 I'm here to testify on the water rates --

5 MR. WHITE: Thank you.

6 MR. MCCLURE: The water rate  
7 increase, which I don't agree with. Like some  
8 other people said, we have a growing elderly  
9 population, and with the cost of groceries and  
10 other things, to me, it just doesn't make  
11 sense. And going along with what Mr. Waid said  
12 about -- I haven't researched it, and I don't  
13 have the facts with me -- but the salaries, not  
14 just the water company, Aqua, but the  
15 Illuminating Company, everybody, right -- the  
16 utilities and right down the line. And then  
17 they get these big balloon payments, when the  
18 CEO retires, and I just can't grasp, put my  
19 head around that, why there's all these  
20 salaries and they keep coming back for rate  
21 increases.

22 And my hat's off to Aqua, because  
23 I'm the first guy that loves turning my spigot  
24 on and have water come out, or flip my light  
25 switch and have the lights come on. I do have



1 a generator when the power goes out, but I  
2 don't have the same luxury as Aqua, I mean, you  
3 stick a pole in the ground and water comes  
4 out -- I don't have that luxury. But I'm also  
5 opposed to a water rate increase.

6 And I do appreciate all the  
7 infrastructure you guys are repairing, you  
8 know, within the city, the Township, that is  
9 good, but I still don't believe that a water  
10 rate increase is necessary.

11 And another thing that Aqua did is,  
12 I still get my sewer bill every two months,  
13 which Aqua's water bill used to be every two  
14 months, and they would charge a bi-monthly fee,  
15 well, now, they do billing monthly and I'm  
16 getting a monthly service fee, or whatever it  
17 is on that bill, instead of a bi-monthly fee,  
18 so, really, they've doubled the cost of their  
19 service fee by having it twelve times a year,  
20 instead of six times a year.

21 So, again, I just state my  
22 opposition to the water rate increase; nothing  
23 personal against these guys, but I have to be  
24 opposed to it just because I'm, you know, it's  
25 my wife and I; like Mr. Waid said, it's just

1 him and his wife. And I also got my sewer bill  
2 today, and since I've lived in the Township --  
3 I did live in the city and my sewer bill was  
4 half the cost of my water bill, and, now, my  
5 sewer bill is right in line with my water bill.  
6 So if my water bill is high, I know my sewer  
7 bill is going to be high. We all water the  
8 flowers and garden, you know, all that stuff is  
9 going through the sewer, so that adds to my  
10 sewer rate, but I know that Aqua doesn't have  
11 anything to do with our sewers. I know they  
12 have sewer plants at other places, but ours is  
13 going through the city.

14 So I just wanted to state my  
15 opposition to the increase. Thank you --

16 MR. WHITE: Thank you, Mr. McClure.

17 MR. MCCLURE: And I have known  
18 Mr. Pete since he was a little -- I mean,  
19 Mr. Perry since he was a little boy, so nothing  
20 worse than coming here and --

21 MR. WHITE: Any questions for this  
22 witness?

23 MS. STENGER: No questions from the  
24 company, your Honor.

25 MR. KRAL: No questions, your

1 Honor. Thank you for testifying.

2 MR. MCCLURE: Thanks.

3 MR. FRIEDEMANN: Thank you,  
4 Mr. McClure.

5 MR. WHITE: Thank you very much.  
6 There is no one else on our sign-in sheet who  
7 intended to testify. Is there anyone who did  
8 not sign up that would like to testify today?

9 MR. MCCLURE: We do appreciate you  
10 having the hearing here at our humble Township  
11 this evening. So thank you. I hope I'm not  
12 out of turn saying that.

13 MR. WHITE: Thank you. Yes, sir --  
14 did you have a question or --

15 MR. WAID: I just wanted to also  
16 thank you guys for coming. I don't ever  
17 recall -- I'm not saying the PUCO hasn't been  
18 here before in our little town here. But I do  
19 appreciate you guys running all the way up  
20 here, and I would like to see you more often.  
21 Any time any utility company, you know, has a  
22 rate increase, it's nice to see you guys. And,  
23 I think, like the one gentleman over here  
24 mentioned, our paper is getting thinner and  
25 thinner here, which is sad, but, you know, the

1 world we're living in, it is what it is.

2 I'm glad I came tonight. I'm glad  
3 you guys came, and I hope to see more of you in  
4 the future. It's a -- I just think it's a good  
5 thing.

6 MR. FRIEDEMANN: Thank you. It's  
7 our pleasure.

8 MR. WHITE: Thank you. If there  
9 are no other comments that are going to be  
10 shared tonight, I will just say thank you,  
11 everyone, for showing up and for sharing your  
12 comments.

13 This will conclude tonight's public  
14 hearing. The transcript from this meeting will  
15 be submitted on the record and the Commission  
16 will consider it as part of the process of this  
17 case in making their decision. Thank you. And  
18 we are adjourned.

19 (Hearing concluded at 6:32 p.m.)  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Kurt M. Spencer, do hereby  
certify that as such Reporter I took down in  
Stenotypy all of the proceedings had in the  
foregoing transcript; that I have transcribed  
my said Stenotype notes into typewritten form  
as appears in the foregoing transcript; that  
said transcript is the complete form of the  
proceedings had in said cause and constitutes a  
true and correct transcript therein.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kurt Spencer". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Kurt M. Spencer, Notary Public  
within and for the State of Ohio

My commission expires December 2, 2025.

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