

**NEWMAN, COMLEY & RUTH**

PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION  
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW  
MONROE BLUFF EXECUTIVE CENTER  
601 MONROE STREET, SUITE 301  
P.O. BOX 537  
JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI 65102-0537

TELEPHONE: (573) 634-2266  
FACSIMILE: (573) 636-3306

ROBERT K. ANGSTEAD  
MARK W. COMLEY  
CATHLEEN A. MARTIN  
STEPHEN G. NEWMAN  
JOHN A. RUTH  
D. GREGORY STONEBARGER  
ALICIA EMBLEY TURNER

July 2, 2001

The Honorable Dale Hardy Roberts  
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge  
Missouri Public Service Commission  
P.O. Box 360  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0360

Re: Case No. GR-2001-629

**FILED<sup>2</sup>**  
JUL 2 2001  
Missouri Public  
Service Commission

Dear Judge Roberts:

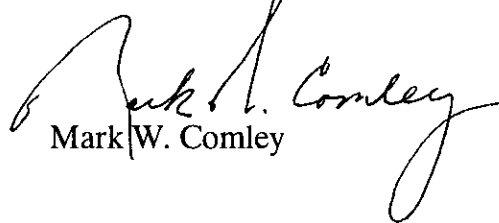
Enclosed for filing in the above referenced matter, please find the original and eight copies of a Laclede Gas Company's Response to Staff's Suggestions to the Commission Regarding Scheduling.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this filing. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

NEWMAN, COMLEY & RUTH P.C.

By:

  
Mark W. Comley

MWC/kjh  
Enclosures

cc: General Counsel  
Office of Public Counsel  
Parties of Record

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

FILED<sup>2</sup>

JUL 2 2001

Missouri Public  
Service Commission

In the Matter of Laclede Gas Company's )  
Tariff to Revise Natural Gas Rate )  
Schedules. )

Case No. GR-2001-629

**RESPONSE TO STAFF'S SUGGESTIONS TO THE COMMISSION**  
**REGARDING SCHEDULING**

COMES NOW Laclede Gas Company ("Laclede" or "Company") and pursuant to 4 CSR 240-2.080(16) files this Response to Staff Suggestions to the Commission Regarding Scheduling ("Motion"). In support thereof, Laclede states as follows:

1. On June 20, 2001 the Missouri Public Service Commission's ("Commission") Staff ("Staff") filed the aforementioned Motion requesting the Commission to reconsider the hearing dates set for the above captioned case ("Rate Case"). In its Motion, the Staff proposed two alternatives to the Commission for its consideration in this proceeding.
2. Since Staff filed its Suggestions, the Company has held discussions with both the Staff and the Office of the Public Counsel ("Public Counsel") relating to the scheduling matters addressed in Staff's Suggestions. Based on those discussions, the Company has indicated that it has no objection to Staff's second proposal contained in Attachment A of its Suggestions to the extent it recommends that evidentiary hearings be scheduled for January 7, 2002, to January 21, 2002 and true-up hearing be scheduled for February 11, 2002.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Laclede assumes that the remaining procedural dates for the filing of testimony, etc., would be discussed by the parties at the July 16, 2001, prehearing conference that has previously been scheduled in this proceeding and addressed in the proposed procedural schedule which is due to be filed on July 26, 2001.

3. In an effort to resolve other outstanding scheduling matters, however, the Company also discussed with Staff and Public Counsel its recommendations, as set forth in Laclede's June 21, 2001 *Recommendation Concerning Test Year* and June 21, 2001 *Motion for True-Up Audit and Hearing*, that:

(a) a test year ending February 28, 2001, be used in this proceeding, and that such test year be updated through July 31, 2001;

(b) a true up audit be conducted in this proceeding period in order to permit certain items that will be known and measurable through December 31, 2001, to be recognized in rates;<sup>2</sup> and

(c) that the items to be considered for true-up as a result of such audit include, but not be limited to:

- (i) revenues associated with customer additions;
- (ii) rate base components and associated depreciation;
- (iii) property taxes;
- (iv) changes in wages, salaries and benefits, including employee levels;
- (v) rate case expense;
- (vi) changes in the gas safety deferrals associated with the accounting authorization granted to Laclede in Case No. GR-99-315;
- (vii) insurance expenses; and
- (viii) changes in capital structure.

---

<sup>2</sup> In its Motion for True-Up Audit and Hearing, the Company proposed that the items set forth in its Motion be true-up through November 30, 2001, or such later date as could be accommodated by the schedule established in this proceeding. Based on the second alternative schedule proposed by Staff and the timely

4. Both Staff and Public Counsel have authorized Laclede to represent that they concur in Laclede's test year and true-up recommendations as set forth in its previous motions and outlined above, provided that the necessary information is made available in a timely manner to accommodate a true-up through December 31, 2001. Laclede accordingly requests that the Commission adopt such recommendations in addition to the second alternative schedule proposed by Staff in its Suggestions.

WHEREFORE, for the foregoing reasons, Laclede Gas Company respectfully request the Commission issue its order:

(a) granting Staff's second schedule proposal contained in Attachment A of its Suggestions to the extent that it recommends that evidentiary hearings be scheduled for January 7, 2002, to January 21, 2002, and that a true-up hearing be scheduled for February 11, 2002;

(b) granting the Company's recommendation that a test year ending February 28, 2001, be used in this proceeding, and that such test year be updated through July 31, 2001;

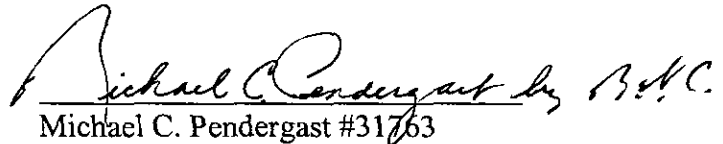
(c) granting the Company's recommendation that a true up audit be conducted in this proceeding period in order to permit certain items that will be known and measurable through December 31, 2001, to be considered for recognition in rates, subject to the timely availability of the necessary information ; and

(d) granting the Company's recommendation that the items set forth in Laclede's June 21, 2001 Motion for True-Up Audit and Hearing be considered for true-up as a part of such true-up audit and hearing.

---

provision of true-up information by the Company, the parties have agreed that a true-up ending date of December 31, 2001, could be accommodated.

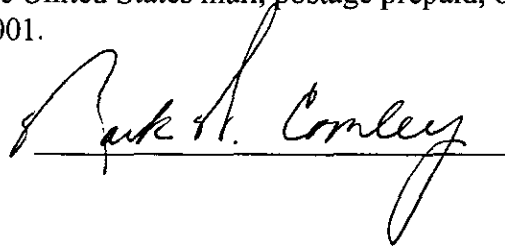
Respectfully Submitted,

  
Michael C. Pendergast #31763

Assistant Vice President  
Associate General Counsel  
Laclede Gas Company  
720 Olive Street, Room 1520  
St. Louis, MO 63101  
(314) 342-0532 Phone  
(314) 421-1979 Fax

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

Michael C. Pendergast, Assistant Vice President and Associate General Counsel for Laclede Gas Company, hereby certifies that the foregoing Motion for True-Up Audit and Hearing has been duly served upon the General Counsel of the Staff of the Public Service Commission, Office of the Public Counsel and all parties of record to this proceeding by placing a copy thereof in the United States mail, postage prepaid, or by hand delivery, on this 2nd day of July, 2001.

  
Mark H. Comley