

**STATE OF MISSOURI  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

At a session of the Public Service  
Commission held by telephone/internet  
audio conference on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of  
April, 2020.

In the Matter of The Empire District )  
Electric Company's Request for Authority )  
to File Tariffs Increasing Rates for Electric )  
Service Provided to Customers in its )  
Missouri Service Area )

**File No. ER-2019-0374**

**ORDER SUSPENDING THE EVIDENTIARY HEARING, MODIFYING THE  
PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE, AND DELEGATING AUTHORITY TO THE  
REGULATORY JUDGE**

Issue Date: April 8, 2020

Effective Date: April 8, 2020

On April 3, 2020, at the request of the regulatory judge, the Commission's Staff filed a progress report on behalf of all the parties regarding the upcoming evidentiary hearing in this general rate proceeding, which is scheduled to begin on April 14, 2020. The parties state that while they have diligently discussed settlement options, there are still negotiations that must occur prior to reaching any settlement of this matter. The current Covid-19 pandemic has also hampered settlement negotiations and disrupted the parties' normal work environment.

The parties request that the Commission cancel the evidentiary hearing, allow the parties to offer the pre-filed testimony of witnesses, waive cross-examination of witnesses, and submit the case on the record without an evidentiary hearing. The parties also request alteration of the procedural schedule to accommodate the above request and allow for submission of additional evidence.

The Commission greatly appreciates the parties' efforts to resolve this matter and to alleviate the need for an evidentiary hearing, which would have to be conducted under less than ideal circumstances. The Commission does have concerns that it may be unable to ask questions of the parties or witnesses under the proposed procedural schedule.

The Commission will suspend the evidentiary hearing, and adopt the parties' proposed procedural schedule with some minor alterations. The Commission will delegate its adjudicative authority to the regulatory law judge assigned to this case under Section 386.240 RSMo, to alter the procedural schedule additionally as necessary.

**THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT:**

1. The Commission suspends the evidentiary hearing scheduled for April 14, 2020 through April 22, 2020, to allow the parties to submit their case on the record, as requested by the parties in Staff's Progress Report and Request for Extension of Filing Dates. However, the Commission reserves the right to set evidentiary hearing dates or on the record presentation dates as necessary to accommodate Commission questions or concerns.

2. The Commission shall alter the procedural schedule as follows:

April 8, 2020	List of Issues
April 9, 2020	Final day to issue data requests, request discovery, or conduct depositions
April 10, 2020	Final Reconciliation
April 14, 2020	Position Statements
April 15, 2020	Procedural Conference (Time to be determined)
April 17, 2020	Offers of Evidence
April 27, 2020	Initial Briefs and Objections to Offers
May 4, 2020	Responsive Briefs
May 11, 2020	Reply Briefs and Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law
July 11, 2020	Operation of Law Date

3. The Commission delegates its authority to alter the procedural schedule in this proceeding to the regulatory law judge assigned to this case.

4. This order shall become effective upon issuance.



**BY THE COMMISSION**

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Morris L. Woodruff".

Morris L. Woodruff  
Secretary

Silvey, Chm., Kenney, Rupp, Coleman, and  
Holsman CC., concur.

Clark, Senior Regulatory Law Judge

**STATE OF MISSOURI**

**OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**I have compared the preceding copy with the original on file in this office and I do hereby certify the same to be a true copy therefrom and the whole thereof.**

**WITNESS my hand and seal of the Public Service Commission, at Jefferson City, Missouri, this 8<sup>th</sup> day of April 2020.**



  
**Morris L. Woodruff**  
**Secretary**

# **MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**April 8, 2020**

**File/Case No. ER-2019-0374**

**Missouri Public Service  
Commission**

Staff Counsel Department  
200 Madison Street, Suite 800  
P.O. Box 360  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
staffcounsel@psc.mo.gov

**Office of the Public Counsel**

Marc Poston  
200 Madison Street, Suite 650  
P.O. Box 2230  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
opc@psc.mo.gov

**Empire District Electric Company,  
The**

Diana C Carter  
428 E. Capitol Avenue, Suite 303  
Jefferson City, MO 65101  
Diana.Carter@LibertyUtilities.com

**Empire District Retired Members &  
Spouses Association, LLC**

Douglas Healy  
3010 E. Battlefield, Suite A  
Springfield, MO 65804  
doug@healylawoffices.com

**Empire District Retired Members &  
Spouses Association, LLC**

Terry M Jarrett  
514 E. High Street, Suite 22  
Jefferson City, MO 65101  
terry@healylawoffices.com

**IBEW Local Union 1464**

Michael E Amash  
753 State Ave, Suite 475  
Kansas City, KS 66101  
mea@blake-uhlig.com

**IBEW Local Union 1474**

Michael E Amash  
753 State Ave, Suite 475  
Kansas City, KS 66101  
mea@blake-uhlig.com

**Midwest Energy Consumers Group**

David Woodsmall  
308 E. High Street, Suite 204  
Jefferson City, MO 65101  
david.woodsmall@woodsmallllaw.com

**Missouri Division of Energy**

Jacob Westen  
1101 Riverside Drive  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176  
Jacob.Westen@dnr.mo.gov

**Missouri Public Service  
Commission**

Whitney Payne  
200 Madison Street, Suite 800  
P.O. Box 360  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
whitney.payne@psc.mo.gov

**National Housing Trust**

Andrew J Linhares  
3115 S. Grand Ave  
Suite 600  
St. Louis, MO 63118  
Andrew@renewmo.org

**Natural Resources Defense Council**

Henry B Robertson  
319 N. Fourth St., Suite 800  
St. Louis, MO 63102  
hrobertson@greatriverslaw.org

**Renew Missouri**

Tim Opitz  
409 Vandiver Dr Building 5, Suite 205  
Columbia, MO 65202  
tim@renewmo.org

**Sierra Club**

Henry B Robertson  
319 N. Fourth St., Suite 800  
St. Louis, MO 63102  
hrobertson@greatriverslaw.org

**The Empire District Electric  
Company SERP Retirees, LLC**

David Woodsmall  
308 E. High Street, Suite 204  
Jefferson City, MO 65101  
david.woodsmall@woodsmallllaw.com

***Enclosed find a certified copy of an Order or Notice issued in the above-referenced matter(s).***

***Sincerely,***

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Morris L. Woodruff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

***Morris L. Woodruff***  
***Secretary***

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Recipients listed above with a valid e-mail address will receive electronic service. Recipients without a valid e-mail address will receive paper service.