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BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

DOCKET NO. 20200139-WS

APPLICATION FOR INCREASE IN
WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES IN
CHARLOTTE, HIGHLANDS, LAKE, LEE,
MARION, ORANGE, PASCO, PINELLAS,
POLK, AND SEMINOLE COUNTIES, BY
UTILITIES, INC. OF FLORIDA.

_____ /

PROCEEDINGS: SERVICE HEARING

COMMISSIONERS
PARTICIPATING: COMMISSIONER ART GRAHAM
COMMISSIONER JULIE I. BROWN
COMMISSIONER ANDREW GILES FAY

DATE: Thursday, December 10, 2020

TIME: Commenced: 2:00 p.m.
Concluded: 3:35 p.m.

PLACE: Betty Easley Conference Center
Room 148
4075 Esplanade Way
Tallahassee, Florida

REPORTED BY: DEBRA R. KRICK
Court Reporter

PREMIER REPORTING
114 W. 5TH AVENUE
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
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5 (UIF).

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7 ANASTACIA PIRRELLO, ESQUIRES, OFFICE OF PUBLIC COUNSEL,
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11 WALT TRIERWEILER, BIANCA LHERISSON, JENNIFER
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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Good afternoon,
3 everybody. My name is Art Graham, and I am a
4 Commissioner on the Florida Public Service
5 Commission, and I will be chairing the meeting
6 today.

7 I would like to take a minute to welcome you
8 all here virtually to the second service hearing
9 for Utilities Inc. of Florida's rate case.

10 In my opinion, this is one of the most
11 important parts of the rate case. This is when we
12 get to hear directly from you, the customer. We
13 want to hear your personal experience. We want to
14 hear what you think the utility is doing right. We
15 also want you to hear what you think the utility is
16 doing wrong. We want to hear your likes, your
17 dislikes. We want to hear about the quality; the
18 quality of the service, the quality of the water,
19 et cetera.

20 Now, I realize this can be an intimidating
21 process for a lot of people. I want you to simply
22 take a deep breath, relax and tell us why you are
23 here today. However, before I get started, I want
24 to introduce my two colleagues that are on the line
25 with me today.

1 The first is Commissioner Brown commissioner
2 Brown, would you say a few words?

3 COMMISSIONER BROWN: Thank you, Chair Graham.

4 And I wanted to also extend my appreciation
5 for these customers calling in. I know doing it
6 virtual is kind of challenging, and we are trying
7 to make the best of it, and we will take all of
8 your comments into great consideration as we go
9 through this process. So thank you for allowing me
10 to introduce myself.

11 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: And my second colleague
12 today is Andrew Fay.

13 Commissioner Fay, can you say a few words?

14 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 I, likewise, feel that these are very
16 important to our process and appreciate the folks
17 who are on here today to provide some input.

18 Mr. Chair, I would just ask you, sometimes my
19 internet was kind of a little -- cutting in and out
20 there a little bit with Michael talking, so if for
21 some reason you lose me or something, I will make
22 sure I dial back in.

23 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Sure. Sounds good.

24 Okay. I would like to officially call this
25 meeting to order.

1 Let the record show it is Thursday, December
2 10th, and this is the Utilities Inc. of Florida's
3 second service hearing, Docket No. 20200139-WS.

4 Staff, if I can get you to read the notice,
5 please.

6 MR. TRIERWEILER: By notice issued November
7 13th, 2020, this time and place has been set for a
8 customer service hearing in Docket No. 20200139-WS.

9 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Let's take
10 appearances of counsel. Let's start with Utilities
11 Inc. of Florida.

12 MR. FRIEDMAN: Yes. Thank you, Commissioner
13 Graham.

14 This is Marty Friedman making an appearance on
15 behalf of Utilities Inc. of Florida.

16 MR. RUDKIN: Good afternoon, Chairman. This
17 is Gary Rudkin, and I am speaking on behalf of
18 Utilities Inc. of Florida.

19 Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: OPC.

21 MS. MORSE: Oh, good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.
22 Thank you.

23 This is Stephanie Morse appearing on behalf of
24 the Office of Public Counsel, and with me is Public
25 Counsel J.R. Kelly, and another attorney from our

1 office Anastacia Pirrello.

2 MR. TRIERWEILER: Good afternoon. This is
3 staff counsel Walt Trierweiler. I would like to
4 make appearances on behalf of Bianca Lherisson,
5 Jennifer Crawford, and our General Counsel, Keith
6 Hetrick.

7 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Wow, that's a lot of
8 attorneys on the line. They are making me kind of
9 nervous.

10 Is there any other person that has not -- any
11 attorneys that have not spoken up yet?

12 Okay. As I said earlier, this is a service
13 hearing where we get to hear from you. We will
14 have a technical hearing in a couple of months
15 where we will review all the evidence in the record
16 and also cross-examine the expert witnesses that we
17 have that come before us.

18 If you are on the line and you have a specific
19 billing or service issues during this hearing, UIF
20 has their contact information for the professional
21 staff on the screen. You can see that in the
22 middle. If you have any specific questions of the
23 Public Service Commission, we also have contact
24 name and number for professional, Amber Norris, on
25 the screen. Actually, I think that will be a good

1 time to introduce the rest of the PSC staff.

2 On line with PSC staff is Amber Norris, Dale
3 Buys, Cheryl Banks, Shannon Hudson, Kerri Maloy,
4 Laura King, Kelly Thompson and Cindy Muir.

5 Okay, did I forget anybody with PSC staff?
6 Hopefully not. All right. Enough of the
7 introductions.

8 As you heard Mike say earlier, I will call
9 each one of you one at a time. You will be given
10 about three minutes to speak. So you will unmute
11 your phone, I will swear you in, and then if you
12 would give your name and address, and then three
13 minutes to address the Commissioners and the
14 counsel that's present.

15 If you would, try to get to a place that's
16 quite so we can hear you clearly, i.e., no barking
17 dogs or crying babies. We understand that things
18 are different now and everybody is trying to do
19 this from home, but if you can during those three
20 minutes, if you could just find a place that we can
21 hear you, that will be muchly appreciated.

22 Also don't try to use the speaker function on
23 your phone. If you would just speak directly into
24 a phone, that's a lot clearer for us sometimes.

25 And also, if you are on the phone and watching

1 the video screen, we would ask you turn down the
2 volume on the video screen because sometimes we
3 hear feedback, and also there is a delay between
4 the phone and the video, and sometimes that causes
5 a lot of confusion.

6 And last, if for some reason you get
7 disconnected, please call us back as soon as you
8 can, because we are here to hear you, and trust me,
9 it happens. And this is a virtual reality and
10 technology is not perfect. So if for some reason
11 we did not mean to disconnect you, please call back
12 and we will try to get you routed back so we can
13 hear what it is you need to say.

14 Okay. Now is the time for the attorneys to
15 give a brief opening statements. We will start
16 with the opening statement of Utilities Inc., and
17 followed by the Office of Public Counsel.

18 Mr. Friedman.

19 MR. FRIEDMAN: Yes. Thank you, Commissioner
20 Graham.

21 Customers, I am Marty Friedman, and I am the
22 attorney for Utilities Inc. of Florida in this
23 proceeding. I would just ask, as was mentioned
24 before, that after you speak that you remain on the
25 line in case I have any follow-up questions to make

1 sure that I fully understand better what your
2 comments are.

3 Also, the customer service line -- number and
4 information is -- that's on the website in front of
5 you is only for this -- specifically for this
6 proceeding, and that number will be available
7 during the hearing and for about an hour
8 afterwards. If you have any customer service
9 issues after that, please call the regular customer
10 service number, which is (866)842-8432.

11 Now, Gary Rudkin, who is the President of
12 Utilities Inc. of Florida, would like to speak to
13 you.

14 Gary.

15 MR. RUDKIN: Thank you, Marty.

16 Good afternoon, Chairman, Commissioners and
17 customers. Thank you for this opportunity to speak
18 to the customers today and to get their feedback.
19 We look forward to hearing what they have to say.

20 I am Gary Rudkin, President of Utilities Inc.
21 of Florida. I am not an attorney. And I joined
22 the Florida team in January of this year following
23 retirement of John Hoy, the previous president.

24 I previously managed a multi-utility business
25 unit for Corix with the University of Oklahoma,

1 including water and wastewater, for about
2 six-and-a-half years, been on this team a little
3 over 11 months. I have really enjoyed it so far.

4 Our goal today is -- my goal today is to
5 really provide some background on why we think it's
6 important to invest in the infrastructure, both
7 water and wastewater, and hopefully help you
8 understand why we are doing so and why that leads
9 to a rate increase.

10 Utilities Inc. of Florida is the largest PSC
11 water and wastewater provider. We are about 40
12 years old with 40 systems in 10 counties, and we
13 service about 70,000 -- over 70,000 water and
14 wastewater and reuse customers in Florida. We take
15 our responsibility to maintain and upgrade the
16 infrastructure seriously, and will continue to
17 ensure so in this ever-changing environment,
18 regulatory environment that the state of Florida,
19 particularly the Department of Environmental
20 Protection regulates us by.

21 In the last four years since the last rate
22 case, we have invested over 60 million in capital
23 improvements to improve the infrastructure. Just
24 to put it in perspective, the EPA, the
25 Environmental Protection Agency, estimates that

1 Florida needs to invest 20 billion in water systems
2 alone over the next 20 years. That's quite a bit
3 of investment.

4 We are going to continue to invest in lift
5 stations, main replacements, treatment plant
6 replacements to ensure safe, reliable service to
7 our customers, but also the price of expenses, such
8 as power, chemicals and other -- property taxes and
9 other expenses to run the utility are increasing,
10 so we have the opportunity to recover that in our
11 rates, along with the capital investment and the
12 infrastructure.

13 We provide service to a wide variety of
14 communities, 55 and older mobile home parks,
15 manufactured homes, residential housing and
16 apartment complexes. To address these, we make
17 sure that each system and each provides the right
18 service at the right level and the quality of
19 service.

20 Customer service is our number one priority,
21 and we have invested in some technology tools to
22 help the customer experience. MyUtilityConnect,
23 for example, is a web application and a phone app
24 that the customer can use to pay their bill,
25 stop/start their service, get questions answered

1 and whatnot.

2 We are also looking to possibly to invest in a
3 metering system that allows the customer to see
4 their water usage realtime, and, of course, provide
5 for early leak detection.

6 So again, we are going to continue to invest
7 to make sure we are providing reliable long-term
8 service to our customers. This does require
9 capital investments, and to do so, we have to
10 recover it through the rate process.

11 Again, I look forward to hearing your comments
12 and your feedback. And with that, I will turn it
13 back over to you, Marty.

14 MR. FRIEDMAN: Thank you.

15 Commissioner Graham, that's all we have.

16 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: OPC.

17 MS. MORSE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18 Good afternoon, everyone. My name is
19 Stephanie Morse. I am one of the attorneys in the
20 Office of Public Counsel again.

21 For the customers on the line, our office
22 represents you, the customers as a group in these
23 rate cases. We are working on your behalf to
24 independently analyze the information submitted by
25 the utility and reports generated by the PSC staff

1 as we prepare for the technical hearing scheduled
2 for February.

3 We hired three independent rate consultants to
4 testify on your behalf. We have a utility
5 accounting expert, a utility engineering expert and
6 a utility cost of capital expert. In addition, we
7 have our in-house accounting staff working on the
8 case.

9 Our four witnesses filed testimony on November
10 13th contesting several aspects of UIF's rate case.
11 The major issues involve UIF asking for an 11.75
12 percent return on equity, which we feel is
13 extremely high. It's just too high in light of
14 today's low interest rates and the impacts of the
15 coronavirus.

16 Second, we are challenging several of UIF's
17 requested projects because they either have not
18 begun construction or have not provided the
19 requisite documentation and evidence to support
20 these projects.

21 And the third major issue involves a proposed
22 plan UIF -- (inaudible) -- this case, which we call
23 a sewer and water improvement mechanism, or the
24 acronym SWIM. By that proposal, it would allow UIF
25 to recover the costs of certain capital projects

1 between rate cases without the benefit of a vetting
2 or independent consideration of the company's
3 earnings. They would simply file these costs as
4 pass-throughs right into your rates. We don't
5 believe such a program is necessary under current
6 law, and also that it would be need to be
7 authorized by the Florida Legislature to go into
8 effect.

9 The bottom line is that UIF has requested an
10 annual increase in water revenues of approximately
11 \$2.8 million, which is a 17 percent increase. And
12 we believe they should receive no more than \$1.1
13 million for -- (inaudible) --

14 Additionally, they asked for an annual
15 increase in wastewater revenues of 26.5 million,
16 which would be a 32.2 percent increase, and the
17 evidence supports no more than roughly 2.5 million,
18 or 12.7 percent increase.

19 So today, this is your meeting. It's vitally
20 important that you speak directly to the
21 Commissioners and -- (inaudible) -- to share your
22 experiences about your water quality, the quality
23 of the customer service, including your interaction
24 with the utility, and your thoughts about the
25 proposed rates.

1 If you want to follow up to talk with Mr.
2 Kelly or with me after this meeting, please call
3 our office at (850)488-9330, or reach out to us on
4 the web at www.FloridaOPC.gov.

5 We thank you for being here and participating
6 in the process.

7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you, Ms. Morse.

9 First question, do we have any elected
10 officials on the line? I would like to recognize
11 any elected officials and let them speak first
12 because they are normally seeking for their
13 constituents. Okay. I am assuming there is no
14 elected officials.

15 For the rest, I am going to call you, as I
16 said, one at a time, as you are registered. I am
17 going to swear you in, get you to raise your right
18 hand. And after I swear you in, I need for you to
19 state your name, your address and specifically if
20 you are a customer -- currently a customer of
21 Utilities Inc. of Florida or not, and then you will
22 be given three minutes to speak.

23 And as Mr. Friedman said earlier, after your
24 three minutes, if you would hold so we can find out
25 if anybody has any questions to ask you before you

1 get off the line, or before you get muted again,
2 because sometimes there needs to be clarifying
3 questions because we do not understand what it is
4 you are trying to say or what the point is you are
5 trying to get across.

6 That all being said, let's start with the
7 first person that I have on my list is Michael
8 Herskovitz. Michael, are you on the line?

9 MR. HERSKOVITZ: Yes, sir.

10 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: If I can get you to
11 raise your right hand?

12 Whereupon,

13 MICHAEL HERSKOVITZ
14 was called as a witness, having been first duly sworn to
15 speak the truth and testified as follows:

16 MR. HERSKOVITZ: I do.

17 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you.

18 Once again, name and address for the record,
19 please.

20 PUBLIC COMMENT

21 MR. HERSKOVITZ: Sure. Yes.

22 Michael Herskovitz, 105 N. Sweetwater
23 Boulevard, Longwood, Florida, 32779.

24 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: And are you a customer
25 of Utilities Inc. of Florida?

1 MR. HERSKOVITZ: Yes, I am.

2 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. You have three
3 minutes, sir. Welcome.

4 MR. HERSKOVITZ: Thank you. I appreciate it.
5 Well, thank you. I would like to thank
6 everyone for having -- taking the time to hear my
7 testimony and for holding these possessions.

8 So essentially the reason I decided to engage
9 and provide my testimony today was I have been
10 living in Seminole County for quite some time where
11 my parents have lived here for several decades. I
12 moved away for a while but then I decided to come
13 back, and I had been living in an apartment for
14 about two years until back in 2017 I was lucky
15 enough to have enough money to purchase a home in
16 this area, to which I did. And upon that -- that
17 was about the time that utilities had basically
18 stated that the area that I lived in, Longwood, was
19 paying the lowest rates out of all of their
20 customers in the region. Essentially, that for
21 some reason, they had not touched our bill and
22 that, you know, that they had to make it right. So
23 essentially what they had said was that they were
24 going to raise our bill about 40 to 50 percent.

25 So what happened at that point was I moved

1 into my new home, and bingo, all of a sudden our
2 bills got high. My father, he also mentioned that,
3 and there were news stories and such.

4 So my thoughts on it was, okay, I mean, if
5 that is true, if we were trying paying low rates
6 for that duration, we were lucky, and, you know, if
7 they have to make it even for everyone else in
8 order for operation costs an everything, then that
9 was just the fact of the matter and I was okay with
10 it.

11 What proceeded to happen from there is, from
12 2017 to now, is rate increases, which is, you know,
13 every time I got a letter from Utilities, it was
14 essentially to let me know that, hey, we are going
15 to be raising your rates again. And I have
16 received no less than four letters, three of which
17 were all related to rate increases, letting me know
18 my bill was going to be continuing to go up on what
19 they already did with the double -- almost doubling
20 the charges.

21 But I would tell you this, as time has gone
22 on, you know, I questioned myself, well, they are
23 raising our rates, what are they doing for us? And
24 essentially, you know, they are giving us a \$1.99
25 convenience fee to pay our bills with no real easy

1 way, unlike Duke or other utilities, companies that
2 would allow you to attach to their bank accounts
3 and not have to pay that.

4 They are offering, you know, nothing special
5 other than, you know, water coming out of the tap.
6 And what does that mean? That mean that it's
7 water, do I trust it? Do I think it's safe. I
8 fool like it's safe within the minimal guidelines
9 as possible.

10 And what does that mean is, it means that I
11 used to trust drinking water out of the tap, I
12 don't trust drinking water out of the tap here now,
13 and I haven't for a while. The -- you know, I use
14 it to brush my teeth. I try to get to not swallow
15 any of it. I take a shower and I wash because I
16 don't have thousands of dollars to buy a water
17 purification system.

18 But here's the deal, Utilities Inc., to me, is
19 a monopoly. I don't really have a choice.
20 Although, I will tell you, when this rate increase
21 came up, I started thinking to myself, how do I
22 start -- how could I start capturing rainwater?
23 How could I feed that into my hot water system?
24 How could I figure ways around them? Because it
25 feels like the prices are just going to continue to

1 go up until my bill is \$200 instead of the 60 that
2 it is now.

3 So it's like where does it stop? Why are they
4 raising the rates during an outbreak? A pandemic.
5 You know, how are they proving to us that they are
6 increasing the quality or they are operational?
7 How did they not plan for this event, especially
8 after they doubled our rates almost, you know, back
9 in 2017? All of these questions start the
10 swirling, but I'm --

11 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Michael --

12 MR. HERSKOVITZ: Oh, pardon me. Yes.

13 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Michael, you are up to
14 about four minutes.

15 MR. HERSKOVITZ: Oh, sorry. Yeah, then I will
16 be done. Thank you for your time.

17 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Hold on just a second.

18 Mr. Friedman, do you have any questions?

19 MR. FRIEDMAN: Yeah, I just had one question
20 for Mr. Herskovitz.

21 Our reports don't reflect that you have ever
22 complained to the utility about the quality of the
23 water that you have said that now you don't drink
24 it. Do you recall ever complaining about that to
25 the utility beforehand?

1 MR. HERSKOVITZ: No, because I felt like there
2 is nothing you guys would do about it. You own the
3 water and there is nothing we can do.

4 MR. FRIEDMAN: Okay. Thank you.
5 That's all I have.

6 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Ms. Morse?

7 MS. MORSE: No thank you. We don't have any
8 questions. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Commissioners?

10 COMMISSIONER BROWN: Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Commissioner Brown.

12 COMMISSIONER BROWN: Mr. Herskovitz, when
13 did -- was there something that prompted you to not
14 trust the water quality? Your -- I appreciate your
15 story along the way and giving us background, but
16 was there an event that occurred that made you
17 suspect the water was not satisfactory in terms of
18 quality?

19 MR. HERSKOVITZ: Yeah. Sure.

20 So, I mean, I wouldn't say is it was -- you
21 know, essentially, I don't know if it was always
22 this way, but, you know, basically I was drinking
23 the tap water when I first came, you know, to --
24 back from Florida where I used to live. And I
25 don't know if it was the last three or four years

1 or so, but, you know, I am kind of old-fashioned, I
2 didn't drink -- I believed in the tap water. I
3 didn't drink the -- but then it started -- it
4 just -- it started not tasting right, you know. It
5 started like -- you know, it seemed like there was
6 more plumage. But generally, like, it just tasted
7 funky, you know, and it -- I did not -- like, I
8 started to distrust and, you know, like, and didn't
9 want to take any risk from that point on.

10 COMMISSIONER BROWN: Thank you.

11 And what neighborhood do you live in, if you
12 don't mind me asking?

13 MR. HERSKOVITZ: Oh, sure, yeah. I live in
14 Sweetwater Oaks.

15 COMMISSIONER BROWN: Okay. Thank you.

16 And again, thank you for participating. And I
17 will tell you, I am going to be looking at that
18 \$1.99 charge that you referenced for convenience,
19 so -- when we get to the rate case.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. HERSKOVITZ: Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Other Commissioners?
23 Commissioner Fay?

24 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 You noticed me on the screen much better than

1 Chairman Clark, so I appreciate that.

2 I actually -- Commissioner Brown touched on my
3 question right at the end there, that \$1.99 fee. I
4 was just going to ask Michael, did you -- I am
5 guessing you inquired with the utility about your
6 options to either sign up for that or not?

7 MR. HERSKOVITZ: I mean, I checked out their
8 FAQ page, and I tried to look as vigorously as I
9 could. And really, the only options that were,
10 like, shown was, you know, was I could bypass that
11 by mailing in a check with, you know, and utilizing
12 a stamp, so -- but I am not going to lie, like, you
13 know, this is an electric world, and the
14 confirmation that that process, you know, goes that
15 my payment was received is, you know, for me,
16 outweighs the 1.99, you know, like knowing,
17 because, like, otherwise I don't want, you know, I
18 am worried my water will get turned off, and I
19 just, you know, I need that assurance that I get
20 from my credit card company, my -- with Duke Energy
21 or any of the other services I use.

22 COMMISSIONER FAY: Okay. Great. Thank you,
23 Michael.

24 That's all I had, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you.

1 Michael, thank you very much for your
2 testimony.

3 MR. HERSKOVITZ: Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: All right. Next speaker
5 will be Mr. Steve Evans. Mr. Evans, are you on the
6 line?

7 MR. EVANS: Yes, sir. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: If I can get you to
9 raise your right hand.

10 Whereupon,

11 STEVE EVANS

12 was called as a witness, having been first duly sworn to
13 speak the truth and testified as follows:

14 MR. EVANS: Yes. It is true.

15 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Mr. Evans if I
16 can get you to state your name and address and if
17 you are a customer, and then we will give you three
18 minutes to address the Commission.

19 PUBLIC COMMENT

20 MR. EVANS: Thank you.

21 My name is Steve Evans. My address is 312
22 Blyth Court, Longwood, Florida, in the Wekiva
23 subdivision.

24 Is that all you need?

25 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Are you a customer of

1 Utilities Inc. of Florida?

2 MR. EVANS: Oh, yes, sir. I am a customer.

3 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. What can we do
4 for you, sir?

5 MR. EVANS: Well, happy holidays to everyone.
6 I appreciate the opportunity to address the
7 committee and everyone that's involved. And first
8 of all, I would like to thank Utilities Inc.
9 simply because they do provide water to us, so
10 that's a good thing. And I appreciate the upgrades
11 and improvements that they have declared in their
12 statements to our homeowners for, you know, safe,
13 cleaning drinking water.

14 And our community consists of 4,000 homeowners
15 that take pride in their homes and in their
16 landscape. And many of our residents are retirees
17 on a fixed income and are impacted by their
18 expenses, and when it comes to utilities, they
19 have, unfortunately, no options since there is no
20 competition to keep the costs in line. And the
21 cost of the water has forced some homeowners to
22 stop irrigating their lawns and gardens, and this
23 is creating a hardship for the owners, eventually
24 receiving letters from the HOA that they are not in
25 compliance with the covenants regarding the

1 landscape rules. And also this affects everyone
2 with possible diminished home values caused by
3 simply lack of water on the lawns. And so that's a
4 concern to us in Wekiva.

5 And I am a long-term Wekiva resident. We have
6 experienced a dramatic increase in the cost of
7 water and sewage since Sanlando Utilities was
8 purchased by Utilities Inc., and I would like to
9 ask the Florida Public Service Commission to review
10 this rate increase with our residents in mind, and
11 keep in mind how it impacts each and every person
12 in our community.

13 And thanks for allowing me to express my
14 views, and that's the end of my comments.

15 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Evans.
16 Hold on just a second, let me see if there is any
17 questions for you.

18 Mr. Friedman?

19 MR. FRIEDMAN: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Evans.

20 Commissioner Graham, we don't have any of
21 questions for Mr. Evans.

22 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Ms. Morse?

23 MS. MORSE: OPC doesn't have any questions,
24 Mr. Chair. Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Commissioners?

1 Okay. Mr. Evans, thank you very much for your
2 testimony. Enjoy your holiday.

3 MR. EVANS: Okay. Thank you so much. I
4 appreciate the opportunity.

5 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Next speaker is
6 Gabrielle, looks like Milch. I am sorry, ma'am, I
7 apologize if I butchered your last name.

8 MS. MILCH: You said it fine. Thank you, sir.

9 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Ma'am, if I can get you
10 to raise your right hand.

11 Whereupon,

12 GABRIELLE MILCH

13 was called as a witness, having been first duly sworn to
14 speak the truth and testified as follows:

15 MS. MILCH: Yes.

16 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you very much.

17 If you would give your name and address and if
18 you are a customer, I would appreciate it.

19 PUBLIC COMMENT

20 MS. MILCH: My name is Gabrielle Milch, and I
21 live at 252 Coble Drive, Longwood, Florida, in the
22 Wekiva Hunt subdivision. I am a -- I am a customer
23 of Utilities Inc., and I own a rental home at 107
24 E. Wyndham in the Wekiva subdivision as well, and
25 thank you.

1 Do I start now?

2 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: You can start now,
3 ma'am. Thank you.

4 MS. MILCH: Okay. Well, greetings, Chairman
5 Clark, Commissioners. I appreciate your time and
6 effort, and thank you, Mr. Rudkin and the Utilities
7 Inc. staff, for providing mostly good water
8 quality, or good water to my neighborhood and
9 treating the wastewater.

10 Why am I here today to speak to you? I am
11 talking about Utilities Inc. and its new affiliate
12 companies and the proposed rate increase and
13 comments about my quality of service.

14 I am a long-time resident, 31 years in the
15 Wekiva Hunt Club community and to speak to -- and
16 also to speak for others in Utilities Inc.'s
17 service area.

18 I have reviewed the consumptive use permit and
19 believe there are 4,500 other folks -- 45,000 other
20 folks that are getting service in this area. I
21 have experience with Utilities Inc. prior to it
22 being owned by Utilities Inc. back when it was
23 Sanlando Utilities. I was on the HOA board, and
24 there was -- tried to have a sale for it. I can
25 speak to my personal experience about the service

1 provided by Utilities Inc. and several other
2 concerns.

3 There were new meters put in a while back, and
4 there was some issues with meter reading and
5 aspects of that. I have concerns about you, the
6 Commissioners, granting this rate increase from my
7 base wastewater treatment costs and supplying me
8 with water to drink without more protections for me
9 and the environment in which I live.

10 I am also here today to talk about the history
11 of service which was been difficult for us, the
12 residents, and the environment, specifically the
13 Wekiva Springs and the river system. Pollution and
14 human safety is a huge concern to me. I have been
15 following the -- (speaker lost connection) --
16 Sweetwater Creek and the Wekiva River, the springs
17 and ultimately potentially the St. Johns River.
18 The springs were closed for several days as well.

19 I have been told that our system is old and
20 piecemealed together. I have several press
21 releases from Utilities Inc. about the repairs and
22 such. I can send a copy of those -- a copy of the
23 latest consent order, which I do not know if it was
24 executed by Utilities Inc. or not through the
25 Department of Environmental Protection.

1 I do not know if proper and timely inspections
2 have been done. The maintenance and repair of the
3 systems, our quality monitoring, I did receive a
4 notice I have that said there was fecal coliform
5 unacceptable levels in our water, and I am aware of
6 some upgrades to our treatment system because I
7 have seen folks out working on the system in my 31
8 years here.

9 I am aware of many infractions. I have an
10 Excel spreadsheet with 10 years of data showing 74
11 files of compliance issues and consent orders for
12 sanitary sewer overflows, water supply line breaks
13 and areas of low pressure in peak times when people
14 are using water over the last 10 years. It's not a
15 great history, but I appreciate having water and
16 sewer in my neighborhood, and I am concerned about
17 the future.

18 I am not an expert at wastewater treatment or
19 water supply. I teach about water quality,
20 quantity protections and have concerns. As of
21 today, I am not in favor of the increase without
22 more detailed plans presented to me and my other
23 ratepayers. I hope by the end of this process
24 today that experts analyze -- (speaker lost
25 connection) --

1 COMMISSIONER FAY: Chairman, I am losing her,
2 if it's just me.

3 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Ms. Milch -- Ms. Milch,
4 are you still there?

5 MS. MILCH: Yes, I am. Hello.

6 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Yes. All right.
7 Any questions of Ms. Milch? Mr. Friedman?

8 MS. MILCH: I didn't -- I didn't complete my
9 talk. Sorry.

10 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Ma'am, you are over five
11 minutes.

12 MS. MILCH: Okay.

13 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Mr. Friedman?

14 MR. FRIEDMAN: Commissioner Graham, I don't
15 have any questions for Ms. Milch.

16 Thank you for participating, Ms. Milch.

17 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Ms. Morse?

18 MS. MORSE: Commissioner, OPC doesn't have any
19 questions for this witness. Thank you very much.

20 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Commissioners?

21 All right. Ms. Milch, the spreadsheet that
22 you said that you have, do we have that at the
23 Public Service Commission?

24 MS. MILCH: I am not aware. It's the Excel
25 spreadsheet emailed to me from the Oculus that FDEP

1 has.

2 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Can you send that to Ms.
3 Morris -- I am sorry, to Ms. Norris? Do you see
4 her contact information on the screen?

5 MS. MILCH: I am not on the screen. I am just
6 on the phone, but I can look up her e-mail.

7 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Well, if you can just --
8 if you can get on the Public Service website, which
9 is FloridaPSC.com and email that information to us
10 for this docket and we will make sure it goes into
11 the docket file.

12 MS. MORSE: Commissioner Graham?

13 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Yes.

14 MS. MORSE: Hi, this is OPC. We are wondering
15 whether we can have an exhibit number assigned to
16 that document so that it can later be admitted into
17 the record?

18 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: I see no harm in giving
19 it an exhibit number. Walt, do we have an exhibit
20 number for this document once we receive it?

21 MR. TRIERWEILER: What we typically do, and
22 have done in the past, is when we receive the
23 document, I share it with the parties and they
24 discuss whether or not they can -- they agree to
25 attach it as an exhibit to the testimony. If it

1 was a separate exhibit, we would give it Exhibit
2 No. 2 to this service hearing. However, we believe
3 that it's a better practice to attach the document
4 to the testimony itself so that it has more
5 meaning. And this is also an opportunity if the
6 document has been described in enough detail, for
7 there to be some cross-examination about the
8 document.

9 We could give it a number, but I think that a
10 preferred practice would be to see the document,
11 let the parties look at it, and then raise whatever
12 objections they may have at that time, and then
13 contact, if they agree, the court reporter -- which
14 is what we did for the last service hearing -- and
15 have that exhibit actually attached to the
16 testimony of the person that provided it. That
17 would be our recommendation.

18 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Well, Walt, there is
19 no -- Walt, there is no opportunity for either
20 party to cross-examine Ms. Milch from this document
21 that's in there. I guess we can make the
22 determination -- or Chairman Clark can make the
23 determination later on if we are going to add this
24 to the record, but we can always just put it in the
25 docket file, correct?

1 MR. TRIERWEILER: That is correct.

2 MR. KELLY: Mr. Chair --

3 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: I think that's probably
4 a better way of handling that.

5 Ms. Morse.

6 MR. KELLY: Mr. Chair, this is J.R. Kelly with
7 Office of Public Counsel.

8 I respectfully disagree with handling it as
9 the PSC Staff counsel had suggested. I mean,
10 what -- it's been my experience over the years is
11 that when one of the customers has something that
12 they would like to submit, they -- as you
13 suggested, they describe it in detail -- these are,
14 you know, normally we are appearing in person and
15 they hand it to you and we can look at it in
16 person, and so forth. Of course, we can't do that
17 today.

18 To be fair to the utility, you know, if they
19 have concerns about what this documentation is,
20 then I would respectfully ask that they ask
21 questions today, because, as you said, if they --
22 if we wait until we get to the technical hearing
23 and they object, then there is no way for us to
24 have Ms. Milch appear at the hearing and answer
25 those questions.

1 I mean, I want to be fair to the utility to
2 you ask questions about it, and so forth. But at
3 the same time, if this is something that Ms. Milch
4 can describe, tell us what it is, I can ask her
5 some questions about it. And then the bottom line
6 is what I have seen over the years is that, at all
7 the service hearings, the information is admitted
8 into the record and it's given the weight it's due
9 by you and the other Commissioners as you deem
10 appropriate to use.

11 Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Yeah. I think that's
13 what I said, that we will just -- we can put it in
14 the document file, and it doesn't need any
15 cross-examination to be in the document file
16 because anybody can deposit something into the
17 document file, and if we want to go past that point
18 is when we can take some action.

19 MR. KELLY: Yes, sir, but my concern is that
20 if it's just in the docket file, are we going to be
21 able to rely upon it when we do our briefs in this
22 case? That is -- that's my concern, is that, you
23 know, if I don't take whatever is just filed in the
24 docket file, if it doesn't become part of the
25 record in the hearing, then neither our office or

1 the utility or anybody else can rely upon it in
2 briefs. And that's something I think that is
3 important to us to -- I mean, if documentation is
4 so important to a customer that they have gone to
5 the trouble of compiling it and putting it
6 together, I mean, my -- I mean, obviously, what I
7 want to do is I want to move it into the record so
8 that it can be relied upon by our office as well as
9 reviewed by the Commissioners and staff as evidence
10 that's in the record.

11 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: I understand what you
12 are saying, Mr. Kelly. We will put it in the
13 document file, and if we need to go past that
14 point, we can do that in the technical hearing.
15 Either you or somebody else can bring that
16 information up, and if we can use it when
17 cross-examining a witness, or we will just have a
18 discussion at the time, but right now, it's just
19 going to sit in the document file as soon as Ms.
20 Milch sends it in.

21 Mr. Friedman, did you have anything else you
22 wanted to add?

23 MR. FRIEDMAN: No. I was just going to say
24 it's impossible for me to cross-examine something I
25 haven't seen, in spite of Mr. Kelly's comments.

1 Magnolia Oak Court, Longwood, Florida, 32779. I
2 have been on this water system for 42 years.
3 Everything I am going to tell you is what I know to
4 be the truth, and basically, today I am going to be
5 asking questions.

6 I spoke a week ago, I have been -- I initiated
7 a petition, I have got three petitions going right
8 now. I wanted to get on the record -- I have got
9 over 300 people that have signed petitions and I
10 want to get it on the record so I need guidance as
11 to get it on the record -- get the petition on the
12 record. So can you tell me how do I that?

13 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: I don't know if you were
14 listening as I was talking to Ms. Milch. If you
15 get on our website, Florida Public Service
16 Commission dot com and submit it to the Clerk, and
17 if you make sure it has this document number,
18 20200139 --

19 MR. JOSWICK: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: -- we will make sure it
21 goes into the document file for this hearing.

22 MR. JOSWICK: Okay. Now, I have had a lot of
23 information, people have shared their concerns with
24 me. I have got a video of a back yard where there
25 was an overflow of sewage. I don't know all the

1 details of it. I don't know if I should be
2 submitting that kind of information or having the
3 residents submit that information. I am kind of at
4 a loss as far as this goes. So, you know, I don't
5 know what submit, what's important, what's
6 pertinent, that kind of thing.

7 Most all the people that contact me say
8 something similar to what Steve had mentioned, that
9 they had a stop watering their lawns, or the grass
10 is dying. I've got retirees saying I can't
11 afford -- mother and I live together, we're on
12 Social Security, we just can't afford this.

13 I asked the Commissioners last time I spoke to
14 get their pencils out. I want to ask you to do
15 that again in the minute or so I have got left.
16 Again, three columns. I want you to write down
17 median. I want you to write down UTI 2019 rate,
18 and UTI 2021 rate.

19 What I am going to give you is figures that
20 the Universally of Florida collected. They did a
21 survey of public owned companies, utility water
22 companies, back in September.

23 All Florida Public Utilities have a median
24 cost of \$77.51, this was for 6,000 gallons, which
25 you used in your case overview. Currently, in

1 2019, the UCI cost for that is \$91.46. The
2 proposed cost will take it to 117.36. And this is
3 from the study, like I say, from Florida did in
4 September.

5 So this is a concern people have, is how much
6 can we afford to -- (inaudible) -- saying no rate
7 increase, and an extensive study to say what's
8 going to be done, where the faults lie and what the
9 correction measures need to be, and then that
10 presented, in layman's terms, to all of the people
11 that are footing the bill today. When you look at
12 the 70-page petition, there is so many terms, you
13 can't understand what -- what's being asked, other
14 than you come down to the dollar amount.

15 So that's what this petition is asking to give
16 you -- give you a heads-up on what you will see in
17 the petition. There is, like I say, three of them,
18 a little over 300 people, and we have been slow
19 getting started only because of COVID, and we are
20 on a roll right now. So you will -- you will get
21 the signatures of a lot of people. And I will
22 conclude there.

23 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: David, thank you very
24 much for your testimony.

25 Mr. Friedman, any questions?

1 MR. FRIEDMAN: I do have one question of Mr.
2 Joswick.

3 Could you identify for me what document it is
4 that you are saying you got this information for
5 that you made that --

6 MR. JOSWICK: Yeah, if you give me -- if you
7 give me -- all I got is the Florida water and
8 wastewater cost from the University of Florida.
9 It's -- it's, you know, the rate data survey by UF
10 and Raftelis September 2020.

11 MR. FRIEDMAN: Okay. Did -- so that includes
12 government utilities as well, does it not?

13 MR. JOSWICK: It says -- it says: Comparison
14 of public owned utility companies.

15 MR. FRIEDMAN: Okay. I know which one. I
16 have got a copy of that. I know what you are
17 talking about.

18 Thank you very much, Mr. Joswick.

19 MR. JOSWICK: You are welcome. You are
20 welcome.

21 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Ms. Morse?

22 MS. MORSE: Thank you, Commissioner. I think
23 Mr. Kelly has a couple of questions for the
24 witness.

25 MR. KELLY: Yes, sir.

1 Mr. Joswick, each of the people that, to your
2 knowledge, have signed your petition, are they all
3 customers of Utilities Inc. of Florida?

4 MR. JOSWICK: Yes.

5 MR. KELLY: Are they all in your service area,
6 or they are in a -- over various service areas?

7 MR. JOSWICK: I don't know what you consider
8 service areas. They are in communities all around.
9 They are all adjacent to each other here.

10 MR. KELLY: Okay. All right. And you
11 indicated you had sent that information in today to
12 the Public Service Commission's Clerk's Office?

13 MR. JOSWICK: That's what I will do. I didn't
14 know where to send it, but I'm going to follow up
15 with what I've been instructed to do to get it to
16 the PSC website and make sure I got the docket
17 number on there and submit that. Like I say, I
18 have been watching some of the other on-line and
19 the numbers keep going up.

20 MR. KELLY: All right. Thank you, sir. I
21 just wanted to clarify that. I appreciate it.

22 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Commissioners?

24 Okay. Mr. Joswick, thank you very much.

25 Also, other things you want to submit -- if there

1 is other things you want to submit to the docket
2 file, I mean, you can submit as much as you want.
3 So if there is something you think maybe we can
4 use, feel free to submit that as well. And if you
5 would include the docket number, that -- the docket
6 number of this case, that would help us all figure
7 out exactly which docket it goes into.

8 MR. JOSWICK: Yes, sir. All right. I will --
9 (speaker lost connection) -- so I am going to mute
10 myself.

11 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you.

12 MR. JOSWICK: Yep. You are welcome.

13 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: All right. Thank you
14 very much for your testimony.

15 All right. Next speaker is Reece Lester.

16 MR. LESTER: Yes, sir.

17 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Reece, welcome. If you
18 can get you to raise your right hand.

19 Whereupon,

20 REECE LESTER

21 was called as a witness, having been first duly sworn to
22 speak the truth and testified as follows:

23 MR. LESTER: Yes.

24 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you very much.

25 If you can get to you restate your name and

1 address, and if you are a Utilities Inc. of Florida
2 customer.

3 PUBLIC COMMENT

4 MR. LESTER: Hi. My name is Reece, and my
5 wife's name is Elizabeth Lester. We live at 11354
6 Merganser Way. That's in the Summertree community
7 in New Port Richey. I hope these guys at Longwood
8 will give me a few minutes. So I want to thank you
9 and the other staff for this opportunity to share
10 our comments.

11 As homeowners in Pasco County, we are
12 requesting on our own behalf and behalf of our
13 neighbors, not that I have done a survey, I only
14 talked to maybe a half dozen friends about this
15 call. I had hoped more would participate.

16 We have 900 homes, about, in our community,
17 and we would like to request that this increase for
18 the Utilities Inc. be greatly reduced. We
19 understand the need for increasing costs with all
20 the other costs rising, but that's part of our
21 issue is, with across-the-board rising cost of
22 living, this approximate increase for us would be
23 about \$240 a year based on 5,000 gallons per month
24 of usage, and it's burdensome for many of us. The
25 reality is that most of our goods and services are

1 rising as well, and not to mention taxes, fees
2 increases.

3 And I think it's also worthy to note the need
4 for water softening in our community. We moved in
5 in 2018, and we realized immediately that due to
6 corrosion of plumbing fixtures, and spotting of
7 dishes, the glasses and so forth in the dishwasher,
8 we were going to have to do something, and our
9 system costs us about \$2,000, plus the ongoing
10 expenses of supplies and services.

11 So it's in light of these kinds of things that
12 we are petitioning the Florida Public Service
13 Commission to require Utilities Inc. to find other
14 ways to achieve reasonable profit margins necessary
15 for them to continue their operations, and we
16 respectfully submit this today.

17 Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Reece, thank you very
19 much. Let's hold and see if we have any questions.

20 Mr. Friedman, any questions? You are muted.

21 MR. FRIEDMAN: All right. How about this?

22 Thank you. Thank you, Commissioner Graham.

23 We have no questions of Mr. Lester. Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Mr. Kelly?

25 MR. KELLY: We have no questions. Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Commissioners?

2 Okay. Reece, thank you very much for your
3 testimony today, and I hope you and your wife have
4 a happy holiday.

5 MR. LESTER: Thank you. Same to you.

6 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Our next speaker
7 is Vernon Hooper. Mr. Hooper, you are on the line?

8 MR. HOOPER: I am sorry, I didn't hear you.

9 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Vernon, is that you?

10 MR. HOOPER: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. If I can get you
12 to raise your right hand so I can swear you in.

13 Whereupon,

14 VERNON HOOPER

15 was called as a witness, having been first duly sworn to
16 speak the truth and testified as follows:

17 MR. HOOPER: Yes, I do.

18 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you very much.

19 If I could get you to restate your full name
20 and your address, and if you are a Utilities Inc.
21 of Florida customer.

22 PUBLIC COMMENT

23 MR. HOOPER: Yes.

24 My name is Vernon Hooper. I live at 936

25 Forest Breeze Path in Leesburg, Florida, and I am a

1 Utilities Inc. customer.

2 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. You are good to
3 go.

4 MR. HOOPER: Okay. I would like to protest
5 this rate increase application on the basis that
6 the water quality here in my community is very
7 poor. It's discolored at times. It has odors. I
8 have a whole house filter that I must change at
9 least twice a year, and I also have a reverse
10 osmosis filter at my sink, and the filter itself
11 requires changing at least twice a year.

12 First usage of water in the morning has a
13 strong odor of chlorine. Our first water treatment
14 system that was in the house had to be replaced
15 after approximately six years because the inside of
16 it was completely deteriorated due to sand and
17 contaminants in the water system passing through
18 it.

19 Our water pressure is so low in our community
20 that our 1,239 homes must break down into several
21 smaller sections to enable us to use our irrigation
22 systems. There is not enough water pressure to run
23 all the irrigation -- all the houses at one time.

24 Moving here 15 years ago from the state of
25 Maryland, our first monthly water bill and

1 wastewater bill was higher than our quarterly bill
2 was in Maryland. If you are not familiar with the
3 cost of living in the state of Maryland is much
4 higher than it is in Florida. Our water is --
5 water and wastewater is almost as costly as our gas
6 and electric is today.

7 I feel the response to this meeting is light,
8 and I believe that is because of the lack of
9 notification. If not for the efforts of Mrs. Sarah
10 Lewis, I would not known of or participated in this
11 meeting. I feel it is incumbent upon the Public
12 Service Commission to inform citizens of meetings
13 of this nature.

14 Several years ago. We had a meeting in our
15 community that was attended by Florida Utilities
16 Incorporated and several members of the Public
17 Service Commission. All the issues I brought forth
18 today were raised in that meeting by -- it was
19 attended by over several hundred residents, and all
20 the conditions still exist today. Nothing has been
21 addressed.

22 Our community has private wells on site, and a
23 wastewater treatment plant that were all provided
24 by the original developer, and Florida Utilities
25 purchased those from Pembroke Utilities

1 Incorporated.

2 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Is that it, Mr.
3 Hooper?

4 MR. HOOPER: That's all I have to say. Yes.

5 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Well, thank you very
6 much. Let me see if there is any questions.

7 Anybody have any questions of Mr. Hooper? You
8 just raise your hand.

9 Mr. Kelly.

10 MR. KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11 Mr. Hooper, you indicated that -- and I
12 apologize, I was writing as you were speaking --
13 that several years ago, there was a meeting for a
14 rate case with the Public Service Commission and
15 the utility, and you indicated, since that meeting
16 and today, that the same, as you described them,
17 poor water quality conditions that existed then
18 still exist today. Can you tell me approximately
19 when that last meeting was? Was that in 2016 or
20 '17, or do you recall the year, or how long ago
21 that was?

22 MR. HOOPER: No, I can't tell you positively,
23 but I think it was longer ago than 2016.

24 MR. KELLY: Okay. And so assuming it was
25 before 2016, up until today, do I understand you

1 correctly, that the same conditions that existed
2 then still exist today?

3 MR. HOOPER: Yes, sir. That's correct.

4 MR. KELLY: Okay. Thank you, sir. I
5 appreciate your testimony.

6 MR. HOOPER: Certainly.

7 MR. KELLY: That's all --

8 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Any other questions?

9 MR. FRIEDMAN: Commissioner Graham, I have
10 one.

11 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Yes, Mr. Friedman.

12 MR. FRIEDMAN: Yes. Thank you.

13 Mr. Hooper, did you participate -- you said it
14 was 2012, I think, or was about 2012. Did you
15 participate in the vote among the Pembroke
16 customers as to whether they wanted to fund the
17 project to make their water quality in Pembroke?

18 MR. HOOPER: I don't recall that.

19 MR. FRIEDMAN: Okay. I have no further
20 questions. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Mr. Hooper, I
22 apologize for butchering your name.

23 MR. HOOPER: Not a problem.

24 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you very much for
25 your testimony today, and I hope you have a happy

1 holiday.

2 MR. HOOPER: Thank you very much.

3 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Our next speaker
4 is Susan Aloisio. Susan, are you on the line?
5 Susan on Spyglass Cove? Susan going once. Susan
6 going twice. Okay, we will circle back to Susan at
7 the end.

8 MS. ALOISIO: I am on. I am on. Hello?

9 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Hi, Susan. How are you
10 today?

11 MS. ALOISIO: I'm good. How are you?

12 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: I am good.

13 If I can get you to raise your right hand, I
14 want to swear you in.

15 Whereupon,

16 SUSAN ALOISIO

17 was called as a witness, having been first duly sworn to
18 speak the truth and testified as follows:

19 MS. ALOISIO: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you very much.

21 If I can get to you restate your full name and
22 address for the record, and if you are a Utilities
23 Inc. of Florida customer currently.

24 PUBLIC COMMENT

25 MS. ALOISIO: My name is Susan Aloisio. 2836

1 Spyglass Cove, Longwood, Florida, 32779. And, yes,
2 I have been a Utilities Inc. customer for 18 years.

3 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Ma'am, you have
4 three minutes to address the Commission.

5 MS. ALOISIO: Okay. I have contacted
6 Utilities Inc. on several occasions. I have also
7 spoken with Commissioner Lee Constantine. I have
8 spoken to just about everybody I can.

9 When I purchased this home 18 years ago, my
10 water bill was \$22 a month. I have not made the
11 house any bigger. I have not changed my marital
12 status. I am the only one that lives in it. I
13 just got my bill today. It was just shy of \$70.
14 That is almost tripling -- over tripling my bill,
15 and nothing has changed. The usage is the same.
16 Everything.

17 And there is two major issues I have problems
18 with. One is the fact that I know people that live
19 right across the street from me, they have a
20 four-bedroom, two-bath with a pool, two people
21 living there, and they are paying less than I am,
22 and they are also Utilities Inc. customers. It's
23 totally inequitable in the way these rates have
24 passed through. That's Issue No. 1.

25 Issue No. 2 is my toilets are black from this

1 water. I mean, I have to clean them just about
2 every single day. And calling Utilities Inc., they
3 absolutely do not avail themselves to you. They do
4 nothing. It's just like, well, that's the way it
5 is and you need to accept it.

6 Thank you. Did I do --

7 (Multiple speakers.)

8 MS. ALOISIO: Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: No. No. No, you didn't
10 at all. Thank you very much for your testimony.

11 Is there any questions for Ms. Aloisio?

12 MR. FRIEDMAN: I have --

13 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: I don't see -- Mr.
14 Friedman, go ahead.

15 MR. FRIEDMAN: No, I was just go to ask her,
16 she mentioned the billing thing, and we noticed --
17 we pulled up her information and noticed that she's
18 got a one-inch meter in her house, which may go to
19 explain, to some sort, why her bill may be a little
20 bit higher than her neighbor's, even though the
21 neighbor has got a bigger house. So she should
22 probably, if she wants to get a smaller meter,
23 should contact the utility directly about seeing
24 about whether she wants to replace that meter with
25 a five inch by three-quarters.

1 MS. ALOISIO: We've already been down that
2 road, sir, and it doesn't make any sense to me,
3 because I believe that meter was changed after I
4 took ownership. At least that's what they told me.

5 I don't know what you -- you know, I am not
6 the utility company. I didn't install the improper
7 size meter, and it shouldn't -- oh, I know what it
8 was. They wanted to charge me a couple hundred
9 dollars to change out that meter. It's not my
10 equipment.

11 It's an inequitable process in what they have
12 done. And, you know, meter size, no meter size, it
13 doesn't make any sense. All I know is that when I
14 got there, I had maybe had the same size meter, my
15 bill has tripled. That is inexcusable. There are
16 people that live, you know, that that may be the
17 difference whether they can buy groceries or not.
18 It's just awful what this company has done.

19 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Mr. Kelly, did you have
20 a question for Ms. Aloisio?

21 MR. KELLY: No, I don't. I appreciate her
22 testifying today.

23 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Commissioners?
24 Commissioner Brown.

25 COMMISSIONER BROWN: Thank you.

1 I am just going to call you Susan because I
2 don't want to butcher your last name.

3 Thank you so much for participating here and
4 all -- obviously, if you can't have resolution of
5 the problems that you are having with the utility,
6 the Commission always has a -- is a resource, and
7 we have a customer service center that can
8 hopefully resolve any type of problem you have with
9 billing or quality of service. So just wanted to
10 assure you that there is -- there are remedies.

11 MS. ALOISIO: Okay. Well, just for your
12 knowledge, I actually sent a letter to the
13 President of Utilities Inc. I went to their
14 offices. I did everything. And I just was met
15 with, you pay it or, you know, we will cut your
16 water off.

17 And then they couldn't get my billing figured
18 out, so then they weren't able to send it to me,
19 even though this has gone on on a monthly basis for
20 18 years, and they charged me a late fee, and I
21 have never been late in my entire existence. I got
22 the bill by mail today -- or on the computer. I
23 have already paid it.

24 And when I talked to them, they said, oh, well
25 we are not -- we are going to waive the late fee.

1 Really? What are you waiving? I have already paid
2 it. You can't figure out how to apply it because
3 of what's gone on.

4 It's just been a very, very bad experience.
5 And I think -- you know, I think that the Utilities
6 Inc. was totally ill-prepared after the last
7 hurricane we had, and now they've gone out and
8 trying to make up for that because they had so many
9 generators and everything that didn't work, they
10 were just not prepared for it. And to now hit us
11 with another increase, I mean, this is -- this is
12 just ridiculous. And our own commissioner, Lee
13 Constantine, who claims that he did so much and
14 went to bat on our behalf, well, it didn't do any
15 good.

16 COMMISSIONER BROWN: I get your frustration,
17 and I -- we know Senator -- or Commissioner
18 Constantine.

19 Thank you for your participation, and we will
20 consider your comments as we move forward.

21 MS. ALOISIO: Okay. I appreciate it. I
22 appreciate any help.

23 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you very much,
24 ma'am, and I hope you have a happy holiday.

25 MS. ALOISIO: And same to all of you.

1 Bye-bye.

2 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Our next speaker
3 is Danna Elliott. Ms. Elliott, are you on the
4 line?

5 MS. ELLIOTT: I am here. Yes, I am.

6 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: And if I can get you
7 raise your right hand --

8 MS. ELLIOTT: Can you hear me?

9 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: I can. Can you hear me?

10 MS. ELLIOTT: Yes, sir.

11 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: If I can get you to
12 raise your right hand.

13 Whereupon,

14 DANNA ELLIOTT

15 was called as a witness, having been first duly sworn to
16 speak the truth and testified as follows:

17 MS. ELLIOTT: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you very much.

19 If I can get you to restate your full name and
20 your address, and if you are currently a customer
21 of Utilities Inc. of Florida?

22 PUBLIC COMMENT

23 MS. ELLIOTT: My name is Danna Elliott. I
24 live at 625 Grand Vista Trail in Leesburg, Florida,
25 and I am a Utilities Inc. of Florida customer.

1 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Ma'am, you have
2 got three minutes to address the Commission.

3 MS. ELLIOTT: Okay. I wanted to thank
4 everybody for letting me speak today.

5 I moved here in May of 2017, three-and-a-half
6 years ago. I also moved to Pembroke Fairways,
7 which I thought it had about 1,300 homes. It's a
8 senior community. I came from Central Illinois,
9 where we had excellent water. And when we moved
10 here, the water had a bad smell, plus bad chlorine
11 smell, and the water was not clear. I could not
12 drink it, so I had to, and I continue to drink
13 bottled water or I can drink it through the
14 refrigerator filter.

15 When I first moved in, the house, and the
16 driveway, and the street gutters, and my toilets
17 and sinks had rust colored streaks on them and
18 other white residue. I was told that it was
19 because of the hard water here, and I did not have
20 a water softener, so I installed a \$5,000 water
21 softener system. It stopped the smell, but I
22 continue to get the rust and mineral buildup in my
23 home. I have to clean my toilets every day. The
24 driveways and the street gutters constantly turn
25 orange.

1 And about a year after I moved in, this black
2 gunk started appearing. It appeared -- you know,
3 it would form in my faucets, when it would split
4 the water up and I would take a paper towel under
5 it and all this black gunk come out -- comes out my
6 toilet, started coming through the water sprinklers
7 and causing black stains on the driveway and the
8 street gutters, and we have to pay to have that
9 cleaned privately or we get fined for it.

10 I have talked to plumbers, I have talked to my
11 water softener company, and talked to people within
12 the community who were here and told me -- you
13 heard from the former Pembroke resident that, you
14 know, the water -- Utilities Inc. took it over.
15 When this black stuff started, I was informed that
16 Utilities Inc. took a filtration filter off of our
17 system and -- because there was no black stuff for
18 a whole year, and then it just started, and they
19 refused to put it back because they said it was too
20 expensive to maintain.

21 I just wanted to -- you know, I don't
22 appreciate having to pay to clean up all this other
23 stuff, and to have this constant rust and black
24 stuff in my home, and around my home and on my
25 home, and I have to wash my home and get it all

1 taken out. Special washing is required. So I
2 don't feel a rate increase should be implement --
3 implemented because the water is extremely poor and
4 it just -- it's not drinkable.

5 So that's all I have to say, and I would
6 appreciate it if you would reconsider your rate
7 increase.

8 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Ms. Elliott, thank you
9 very much. Let me see if there is any questions
10 for you.

11 Any questions for Ms. Elliott?

12 MR. FRIEDMAN: No questions from the Utilities
13 Inc. of Florida.

14 MR. KELLY: No, sir. No questions. Thank
15 you.

16 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Ms. Elliott,
17 thank you very much for your testimony today, and I
18 hope you have a happy holiday.

19 MS. ELLIOTT: Okay. Thank you very much.

20 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. We have got two
21 more speakers left.

22 Robert Smith. Mr. Smith, are you on the line?

23 MR. SMITH: Yes, I am.

24 This is Robert Smith, and I live at 11608 Old
25 Quarry Drive, Clermont, Florida, and I am a

1 Utilities Incorporated customer, along with my
2 spouse, Deborah. And what else do y'all need?

3 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: I need you to raise your
4 right hand.

5 Whereupon,

6 ROBERT SMITH

7 was called as a witness, having been first duly sworn to
8 speak the truth and testified as follows:

9 yes

10 MR. SMITH: I do. Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Sir, you have
12 three minutes to address the Commission. Welcome.

13 PUBLIC COMMENT

14 MR. SMITH: Well, thank you for the
15 opportunity to chat. I have been hearing so much
16 about bad water quality. Now perhaps I understand
17 why I get so many advertisements from Homeserve
18 about making sure that I have insurance for my
19 interior plumbing and my exterior plumbing, and I
20 would ask the Commission to look into whatever
21 relationship exists between Utilities Incorporated
22 and Homeserve and the other insurers that fix the
23 pipes that are broken.

24 My main concern that I contacted the
25 Commission about was the lack of emergency

1 response, reasonable emergency response, I believe,
2 when we have -- when we have a loss of water
3 pressure. This happened on July 26th, there was a
4 low water pressure. There is a social app called
5 Nextdoor multiple neighborhoods in and around
6 Clermont area, and all of us were experiencing
7 that. There were multiple entries on that social
8 media. And I will tell you some of them I would
9 not repeat in descent company.

10 The Utilities Incorporated has an emergency
11 number to call, and we call the emergency number,
12 the phone rings seven times and it disconnects.
13 Now, UI is well aware of that because I have had
14 communications with them, and I have been told that
15 it's been escalated to management and it's going to
16 get fixed.

17 The app tells you they will respond in 48
18 business hours to your concern. The website, it
19 says they are available 24/7, but nothing happens
20 there, and the phone doesn't answer. So what
21 happens is people go on social media and they
22 are -- they are frustrated because they don't know,
23 gee, is it electronic failure? Is this going to
24 happen during a hurricane too? What's going on
25 with our water system? Do we have to boil the

1 water?

2 And you can go on the Facebook page, and
3 unlike SECO and Duke -- and I have another property
4 elsewhere that's Duke Energy -- and, you know, they
5 are proactive. It's on their Facebook page the
6 minute they have an outage. They have a system by
7 which they tell you what's going on. That doesn't
8 exist for Utilities Incorporated, and I am figuring
9 if they are going to have a rate increase, some of
10 that rate increase ought to at least go to
11 improving customer service.

12 On November 1st, the same thing happened
13 again. And at that time, the same kind of
14 communication, you know, it just there was no way
15 to get ahold of them. Nobody knew whether there
16 needed to be a boil alert or not. It was out. And
17 when we did communicate via the various messaging
18 that they had available, the responses were two
19 hours after they were put in. And in the meantime,
20 there is people who got to get their kids ready for
21 school or get ready for church or other kinds of
22 things, and I just think they need to really be a
23 whole lot more serious about their emergency
24 response.

25 So that was my main reason for wanting to have

1 that addressed by the public utilities commission,
2 and make sure that there is some resolution to that
3 if they get a rate increase.

4 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Mr. Smith, thank you
5 very much for your testimony today.

6 Is there any questions of Mr. Smith?

7 Commissioner -- I am sorry, Mr. Kelly.

8 MR. KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9 Mr. Smith, you indicated, I think it was July,
10 if I wrote that down correctly, where --

11 MR. SMITH: 6th.

12 MR. KELLY: -- July 6th, there was a situation
13 where y'all had -- you and other customers had
14 attempted to contact UIF, and you said that you
15 called their, quote, emergency response number, it
16 would ring seven times and hang up, so there was no
17 way to communicate. And then you indicated again
18 in, I think you said December, it happened again.
19 There was another event that caused an emergency
20 situation, and at that time, were you able when
21 you -- did y'all -- did you or some of your fellow
22 customers attempt to call UIF on that same
23 emergency hotline?

24 MR. SMITH: That second event was on November
25 1st. And, yes, the emergency hotline did not --

1 did not answer.

2 And I will add, Mr. Kelly, I mean, curiously,
3 it used to be printed on the bill what the
4 emergency phone number is. In fact, up through
5 September or October or so, the November bill comes
6 out and the emergency number is curiously no longer
7 on the bill. So I suppose that the response, or
8 the way to handle the fact that the emergency line
9 doesn't answer is to take it off of the -- but it
10 turns out the emergency phone number is the same as
11 their customer service number.

12 This is just -- from my point of view,
13 everybody else is worried about water quality, this
14 is a customer service issue, basic customer
15 service. Your -- you know, you would be closed
16 down if you didn't have a monopoly. So I think
17 that there needs to be more proactivity. So, yes,
18 nothing changed over those months.

19 MR. KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Smith. I
20 appreciate that clarification.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Anybody else got
23 questions for Mr. Smith?

24 Mr. Smith, I want to thank you very much for
25 your testimony --

1 MR. FRIEDMAN: Wait, I got --

2 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: -- actually, thank
3 you --

4 MR. FRIEDMAN: Can I ask a question,
5 Commissioner Graham, about this?

6 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Sure. Sure.

7 MR. FRIEDMAN: Have you looked on the
8 utility's website and their web page -- and their
9 Facebook page about these outages?

10 MR. SMITH: In fact, I got a written
11 communication back from Utilities Incorporated
12 relative to my concern that I had expressed, and,
13 yes, I have had communications with them, and it
14 seems -- my impression of that is that this would
15 be fixed.

16 (Multiple speakers.)

17 MR. FRIEDMAN: I am sorry, go ahead. I am
18 sorry to interrupt you go ahead.

19 MR. SMITH: And on November 1st -- on November
20 1st, nothing had changed. Again, you know, you go
21 to -- you can go to Facebook Messenger and message
22 them, you don't get a response until two hours
23 later. You know, in the meantime, people -- people
24 are, you know, wondering if the water that, you
25 know, that they have in their hot water heaters are

1 even, you know, any good. I mean, I think that's
2 the problem, is that there was no action between
3 the two points in time. But, yes, I have had
4 communications via both the app and the website.

5 And let me say this, the people who are
6 communicating with me, or who have communicated
7 with me, have been courteous and kind in every way,
8 but nothing changes.

9 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: You are muted, Mr.
10 Friedman.

11 MR. FRIEDMAN: No, I am just -- I just -- I
12 wanted to ask somebody here in my office something.

13 So the time it took two hours, that was on a
14 Sunday, was it not?

15 MR. SMITH: Yes, it was.

16 MR. FRIEDMAN: Okay. That's all. Thank you
17 very much.

18 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Mr. Smith, thank you for
19 your testimony. What you said today here is
20 actually exactly what I was looking for. I am
21 looking for specifics in customer service, your
22 experience. So I do appreciate your details, and I
23 hope you have a happy holiday, sir.

24 MR. SMITH: And you too as well. And thank
25 you to the Commission for listening to me.

1 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. And our last
2 speaker that I have is Louis Canarelli?

3 MR. CANARELLI: Canarelli.

4 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Canarelli. Mr.
5 Canarelli, welcome.

6 MR. CANARELLI: Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: If I can get you to
8 raise your right hand -- sir, if I can get you to
9 raise your right hand so I can swear you in.
10 Okay. Sir, are you there?

11 MR. CANARELLI: You are cutting out on me.
12 Whereupon,

13 LOUIS CANARELLI
14 was called as a witness, having been first duly sworn to
15 speak the truth and testified as follows:

16 MR. CANARELLI: Yes, I do.

17 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Give your full
18 name and address, and if you are a Utilities Inc.
19 of Florida current customer.

20 PUBLIC COMMENT

21 MR. CANARELLI: Full name is Louis Canarelli.
22 I am at 610 Chelsea Road in Longwood, 32750, and I
23 am a Utilities Inc. customer, and --

24 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Sir, welcome. You have
25 three minutes to address the Commission.

1 MR. CANARELLI: I am basically calling today
2 to protest this rate hike again. Every time I turn
3 around since Utilities Inc. has taken over, there
4 is rate hikes. We have been at this address for 47
5 years. We were -- nothing has changed on my
6 service. Same pipes. Same everything.

7 My bills, when Utilities Inc. took over from
8 Sanlando, were \$30 a month. My last bill was \$64
9 and something cents. The usage of water has
10 remained pretty constant.

11 I am not happy with the water quality lately
12 because I used to drink the water from the tap all
13 the time. Now what I want to drink water or make
14 coffee, I have to take it through the filter on my
15 refrigerator. I don't believe there is anything
16 wrong with the tap water, but it doesn't taste
17 good.

18 My wife tells me she's got to clean the
19 bathrooms a lot because of brown stains on the
20 bottom of the bowls, a ring. I looked inside the
21 tanks, the tanks are all rust covered on the
22 inside.

23 As far as the service goes, I had an incident
24 here a few months ago where my sewers were backing
25 up and then they would clear at night and in the

1 morning it would be okay.

2 I called my plumber. He came out with a snake
3 and snaked it out. It went away for a few days,
4 all of a sudden it came back again. So I called
5 him again. He came out, snaked it again, and it
6 cleared up.

7 So the third time it happened I called him.
8 He came out, he said, look, you are going to have
9 to get ahold of the -- one of these big plumbing
10 companies that comes out. He said it would be
11 about 500 bucks. They will look at your pipes, and
12 there may be weeds or not weeds, but weeds in your
13 pipes and all. They will clean it, and if it has
14 to be fixed, it will be fixed. I said, okay. I
15 said, I can do that, I said, but it's clear now.
16 That lasted a day or so and it started backing up
17 again.

18 In the meantime, I am talking to my neighbor
19 who just moved in, and I really hadn't met him.
20 Matter of fact, he was talking to my wife, and he
21 mentioned to her he was having sewage problems.
22 Well, he was having the same problems we were
23 having.

24 So I had my plumber three times, cost me over
25 \$400. He had a plumber out two or three times. He

1 said it cost him about \$300. His water was backing
2 up into my pipes and mine was going into his.

3 I called the Sanlando one afternoon before
4 this happened, by the way, I am sorry, before I
5 found out from him -- Utilities, yeah -- I called
6 Utilities Inc., they said they would come out in
7 the morning, and they did.

8 They sent a crew out. They looked in there.
9 They said it's your problem. I said, hum, okay. I
10 mean, they looked in there and I figured they knew
11 what they were talking about. So I said okay, and
12 it started clearing up again after they poked
13 around, and they left, and I was going to call this
14 other company.

15 Well, then my neighbor tells me after this
16 that he is having a problem. I said, well, it's
17 got to be Utilities. I said, I will call them
18 Monday. He said, okay.

19 Well, Saturday it was all backed up again. So
20 I called the emergency line and I get a technician
21 that calls me. And I said, listen, this is what's
22 happening. He says, well, it's got to be whatever
23 you are putting down the -- (inaudible) -- I said,
24 please, there is two houses here that have this.
25 Oh, well, it's got to be something you guys are

1 putting down there. I said, two houses on the same
2 line are having the same problem, and it's stuff we
3 are putting down? He said, well, all I can do is
4 come out and lift the manhole cover. I said, what
5 good is that to me? He said, well, that's all I
6 can do. He says, you want me to come out? I said,
7 no. If that's all you are going to do, I don't
8 need you to come out. And he said, well, I will
9 put a work order in Monday morning. I said, okay,
10 that's fine, because it was draining at night and
11 we could live with it.

12 Well, I told my neighbor what happened, and he
13 got annoyed. He called and made the guy come out.
14 They guy came out. He lifted up the manhole cover
15 and left.

16 Monday morning I called early and I said, I
17 wanted to know about the work order. And they
18 said, well -- I don't remember if they said they
19 didn't have the work order, or they didn't know
20 anything about it. I said, fine, I want to talk to
21 a supervisor. Well -- I said, I want to talk to a
22 supervisor now. This has been going on for weeks.

23 So I got ahold of the supervisor and he
24 answers, very nice young man, and tells me -- I
25 told him what happened. He said, well, let me

1 explain how it works. I said, I know how it works.
2 I have a four-inch pipe. It goes into a line into
3 a six-inch pipe. He said, well, my guys tell me
4 it's in your line. I said, well, your guys didn't
5 know, and neither did I at the time, that my
6 nextdoor neighbor has the same problem, so I think
7 maybe you need to come out and take a look at this.
8 And they did. And they -- they looked in my pipes,
9 and they said, well, maybe it's here. Then they
10 looked in his pipe and maybe it was there. And
11 whatever they were doing, they were here for hours.

12 Finally, the supervisor said, well, I am going
13 to have to get the truck, the vacuum truck, because
14 they looked, his line is a lot shorter than mine,
15 and they couldn't find anything in his line either.

16 They came out with the vacuum truck in late
17 afternoon. They put it on, boom, everything was
18 cleared, and it has stayed clear since then. But
19 it cost me over \$400. It cost him over \$300.
20 There was not even, you know, maybe we could give
21 you some kind of rebate, or take it off the bill
22 for a while. Nothing. We were just happy that it
23 was cleared. I guess they figured that was good
24 enough.

25 Well, I was not happy about that at all, and I

1 am not happy about the way the water tastes lately,
2 so I am certainly not happy about the rates all the
3 time. I mean, you know, they are providing us with
4 water, but it's the people of Florida's water.
5 It's not like they are making the water. They are
6 taking it from underground in the state, so the
7 product they are delivering costs them nothing.
8 The only bills they have is delivering it to us.

9 And the wastewater is the -- excuse me -- the
10 biggest part of the bill, and most people use the
11 water to water the lawns or wash the cars, it
12 doesn't even go into the wastewater. They said,
13 well, we will give you a different meter. Well, it
14 costs a fortune for the different meter, so what's
15 the point? I am sure that they --

16 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Mr. Canarelli.

17 MR. CANARELLI: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Mr. Canarelli, you are
19 about 10 minutes, so hold on for a second let me
20 see if there is any --

21 MR. CANARELLI: I am sorry.

22 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: That's all right. You
23 had me intrigued in your story. I wanted to hear
24 the end of your story.

25 I want to see if there are any questions from

1 anybody for Mr. Canarelli.

2 Anybody have any questions?

3 Mr. Kelly?

4 MR. KELLY: No, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
5 have no questions.

6 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. All right. Mr.
7 Canarelli, thank you so very much for your
8 testimony, and I hope you and your wife have a
9 happy holiday.

10 MR. CANARELLI: Same to you. And turn down
11 this rate increase.

12 Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Thank you, sir.

14 MR. CANARELLI: Bye.

15 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Staff, is there any
16 other -- any other person that signed on late,
17 because that's all the names that I have.

18 MR. TRIERWEILER: No, Commissioner. That was
19 all of them.

20 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Well, I want to
21 thank everybody for their time today. We have
22 another hearing, service hearing, coming up at six
23 o'clock this evening, so I look forward to seeing,
24 I guess all of you, or most of you again at 6:00.

25 Thank you very much for your time, and we are

1 adjourned.

2 (Proceedings concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF LEON)

I, DEBRA KRICK, Court Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard at the time and place herein stated.

IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I stenographically reported the said proceedings; that the same has been transcribed under my direct supervision; and that this transcript constitutes a true transcription of my notes of said proceedings.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

DATED this 22nd day of December, 2020.



DEBRA R. KRICK
NOTARY PUBLIC
COMMISSION #HH31926
EXPIRES AUGUST 13, 2024