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CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION  
RATE BOARD HEARING  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2016

- - -

LOCATION:

Philadelphia Protestant Home  
6500 Labor Road  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19111

REPORTED BY:

SHEILA KLOS, Registered Professional Reporter

HELD BEFORE:

NANCY BROCKWAY, Hearing Officer  
SONNY POPOWSKY, Board Member  
BERNARD BRUNWASSER: Board Member  
MICHAEL CHAPMAN: Board Member

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p> <p>1                    --- 2                    PROCEEDINGS. 3                    --- 4                    HEARING OFFICER: Hello. My name is 5 Nancy Brockway. I am the Hearing Officer hired 6 by the Philadelphia Water Rate Board to conduct 7 hearings for them to gather information about 8 the proposed rate increase by the Philadelphia 9 Water Department. The counsel after the 10 referendum last year set up this process where 11 we have now a Rate Board which reviews the rate 12 increases. And that process is under way now. 13 And this is actually part of the process. 14                    With me up here, we have the Chair of 15 the Rate Board, Bernard Brunwasser. And one of 16 the members, in fact, the Consumer Advocate 17 Representative of the Rate Board, Sonny 18 Popowsky. 19                    A couple of logistics, rest rooms are 20 down the hall to my left down that way. And we 21 have a, we have a court reporter here to take 22 down what people say so that we can have a 23 record of it when we refer back to it. 24                    We are going to start with a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p> <p>1                    me know if you can't see the PowerPoint and I 2 can redo it. It's not normally this pink. 3                    But we want to thank you all for 4 attending tonight to hear about the Water 5 Department's proposed rate increase. I have a 6 quick presentation and Josie will be 7 following. The rate the Hearing Officer talked 8 about, this new process. So in 2012, the 9 citizens of Philadelphia voted in a new 10 independent rate-making board. We have members 11 of the rate-making board here today. The 12 process is the Water Department has to make its 13 case when it wants to increase rates. We want 14 to talk about why we need more revenues. There 15 is a financial plan. There is technical 16 hearings, public hearings. The Rate Board 17 hears our case. We have public meetings. The 18 public also has an opportunity to testify. And 19 then a decision is made after the evidence is 20 shown. 21                    The other important piece of that is 22 the public's role. So we are thrilled we have 23 the people, our citizens, our rate pairs come 24 to these meetings. You are the one we get our</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p> <p>1                    presentation that the Water Department is going 2 to make explaining their reasons for asking for 3 a rate increase. Then we are going to have a 4 short presentation from the representative of 5 the Public Advocate, the Public Advocate is 6 hired by the Board to represent small users. 7 And then we are going to open it up to 8 questions, comments and questions. 9                    The Commissioner of the Water 10 Department is here. If there are any 11 particular questions for the Water Department, 12 the Board is probably not going to be able to 13 answer your questions because what we do is we 14 review the rates. We don't develop the rates 15 or the system. 16                    So without further ado, I'll turn it 17 over, actually I don't know, I call you Joanne, 18 I don't know your last name. 19                    MS. DAHME: Joanne Dahme. Joanne is 20 fine. 21                    Good evening, everybody. I am Joanne 22 Dahme, Public Affairs Manager for the Water 23 Department. I apologize for the color, I think 24 I did something to one of the cables. So let</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p> <p>1                    money to fund our daily operations, fund our 2 capital programs. So we find it's really 3 important you understand what we are doing and 4 what you are paying for. 5                    So what does the Philadelphia Water 6 Department do? So we are a water, waste water 7 and storm water utility. We take, your 8 drinking water comes from the Schuylkill or the 9 Delaware River. We pump it from the river. 10 It's delivered to one of our three water 11 treatment plants. There we process it. We 12 make the water safe to drink, top drinking 13 water quality. We deliver that in a 3000 mile 14 water infrastructure system to your home, to a 15 business. It goes down the drain after you use 16 it to our sewer system, to a waste water 17 treatment facility. We have three waste water 18 treatment facilities where we clean up that 19 water and we return it in the condition where 20 it was cleaner than when we took it out. So we 21 have that complete, that whole water cycle. 22                    We also manage storm water in the City. 23 To the best of our ability, we minimize 24 flooding and we also manage the storm water to</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p> <p>1 reduce pollutants to our water ways to make 2 sure that they are protected. A big component 3 of what we do, we have a replacement. So with 4 a large infrastructure, you have to replace 5 that infrastructure. You have to maintain it, 6 you have to operate it. 7 We also need to ensure that the 8 facilities that support these systems are 9 replaced and upgraded. We are an older city, 10 so we have older facilities and an aging 11 infrastructure. 12 So why do we need a rate increase? So 13 look at five major reasons. We talk about 14 reinvestment in our aged infrastructure. As I 15 mentioned, we are an aging city. The average 16 age of our water system is about 70 years old. 17 There is an increased cost to maintain that. 18 We are looking to replace more miles of water. 19 We do than and we have done that in the past 20 because we need to make sure we have a reliable 21 system. 22 We also need an increase in the 23 investment in our three waste water treatment 24 facilities and water treatment facilities and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p> <p>1 another slide on this, but we have lots of 2 programs. We recognize a lot of people are in 3 need. We have low income customers. We have 4 surprises that happen when people have a 5 leaking water service. So we have a number of 6 programs we apply discounts to some customers 7 who are eligible and also some grant programs. 8 And then like businesses and residents 9 everywhere, we have to deal with general 10 inflation. The cost of the goods you purchase 11 in order to have the cost effective operation 12 increase. The cost of those services. We see 13 chemical costs rising. Chemicals are a really 14 important component of our water treatment 15 processes. We need the chemicals and we have 16 to buy at the price that the market is 17 supplying. 18 So I talked about an aging 19 infrastructure. So we have over 6000 miles 20 that keeps our water and sewer system in good 21 repair. Our goal is to make sure we minimize 22 water main breaks, that we ensure there is a 23 reliable service. We do that to the best of 24 our ability. But again, we recognize we need</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p> <p>1 all the components that go along with that. 2 Another big part is environmental 3 regulations. So we adhere to the Safe Drinking 4 Water Act and also the Clean Water Act. One of 5 the big tickets under the Clean Water Act is 6 our \$2.4 billion program called Our Green City 7 Clean Waters Program. This is all about 8 managing storm water, providing more capacity 9 in our sewer system so we don't have raw sewage 10 going into our waterways. That's a federal 11 mandate, something that every city with a 12 large, or I should say with a combined system 13 has to do. 14 We have over the years seen a change in 15 use in water pattern when people are drinking 16 bottled water. Conservation is an important 17 item. We see that in appliances. People 18 conserve water more than they did in the past. 19 We also lost one of our wholesale customers. 20 So we have additional capacity that we can 21 supply water and we also treat waste water. We 22 lost one of our wholesale customers to buy 23 water from us. 24 Customer Assistance programs. We have</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p> <p>1 to sort of step up the rate we are replacing 2 water mains. We have been doing about 22 miles 3 a year. We are looking to do 28 miles per year 4 which is costly. Every time we replace a mile 5 of water main, it's about \$1.5 million which is 6 a costly operation. And we are moving towards 7 that 28 miles because a good rule of thumb is 8 that you replace approximately one percent of 9 your existing system. And that sort of pushes 10 us to that goal. That's a national goal. 11 We mentioned regulations. Another 12 component. Safe Drinking Water Act, Clean 13 Water Act. We have to always ensure that we 14 meet and, of course, we want to meet. Our goal 15 is public health. We want to make sure we 16 provide the top quality drinking water and to 17 the best of our ability we protect our water 18 ways and streams, our drinking water complies. 19 So we mentioned assistance available 20 for those who need it. So we have a variety of 21 programs. We have a senior citizen discount at 22 25 percent for eligible seniors. We provide a 23 discount to nonprofit charitable organizations. 24 We have a grant program for eligible low income</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p> <p>1 customers. We have many other programs, 2 basement protection for flooding, Cost-Managed 3 Control Program. 4 One of the newer programs which is the 5 implementation and development of is built into 6 this rate increase. It's a program caused 7 recently by City Council and signed by the 8 Mayor in 2015 called an Affordability Program 9 Affordable Rates. It's a system designed, 10 targeted to low income customers. And it's a 11 little different from our grant program. It's 12 looking at customers who are not, it's waiting 13 until you are delinquent to get assistance. It 14 is recognizing that if you are at a certain 15 income level, you should pay an affordable 16 bill. This program is a program that has been, 17 is a part of this rate case. So the Rate Board 18 will be taking a look at this program in 19 addition to other elements of our request. 20 So how will the rate increase impact 21 your water bill? So this is a slide for a 22 typical customer. The proposed increase is 23 11.7 percent over two years. And that increase 24 will take effect, if it is approved the way we</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p> <p>1 authorities, other utilities that supply 2 drinking water in this area. And then there is 3 also the sewer side. 4 To the best of our ability, we try to 5 make sure that again, our rates are affordable. 6 We do not, we are not a for-profit utility. So 7 we don't have a board of investors or people 8 looking to gain some additional funding. We 9 need to recover what we need in order to 10 operate cost effectively and meeting our 11 mandate. 12 We also compare favorably nationally. 13 So we see a lot of large cities on this chart 14 and some smaller cities. We are like somewhat 15 in the middle of the pack. But this is sort of 16 a snapshot that shows our existing rates in, 17 it's not dark blue there. It's more black on 18 the top. You see sort of the red which shows 19 where our increase would be in year one. 20 But all of these cities, this is sort 21 of like a snapshot in time because every one of 22 these cities is dealing with similar issues 23 that we are. Federal mandates to do more, to 24 clean up their water ways and have more</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p> <p>1 are submitting that, it will take effect August 2 1st, 2016. 3 For the first year, that rate of 4 increase will be 6.2 percent. So the typical 5 customer, we talk about each year who is using 6 about 600 cubic feet of water will see their 7 increase by \$4.20 a month. That second year 8 when the second component of that increase 9 would be paid is a 5.5 percent increase. That 10 is an additional \$3.90 per month. So that at 11 the end of that two-year period, a typical 12 monthly bill would increase about \$8 a month. 13 For senior citizen, the increase would be less. 14 This is again for eligible senior citizens. 15 Those who are receiving 25 percent discount 16 will see that 25 percent discount on those two 17 figures. So the increased rates would be the 18 same, but we see that the cost for year one 19 would be \$3.10 and the second year, \$3. 20 When we look to see what our peer 21 utilities are doing, we do stack up fairly and 22 accurately well in the middle of the pack or 23 towards the lower end of that. So this is sort 24 of the regional water side looking at other</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p> <p>1 drinking water protection. 2 So what would a typical residential 3 water bill pay for? This shows you the rate on 4 year one with that increase. This is typically 5 what you pay for that monthly bill. So about 6 \$25 of that goes to your drinking water side. 7 It's a service for that. The service charge is 8 related to the deliver and the treatment of the 9 safe drinking water and the usage, how much you 10 use in your property. The sewer side is again, 11 based on how much water you use that goes down 12 the drain. But there is also a service charge 13 component, what's related to the waste water 14 collection and the waste water treatment. 15 We also manage storm water, so there is 16 a storm water fee component to that. There is 17 a cost of service. So how we manage storm 18 water on the streets, storm water coming from 19 properties. And some of the federal programs 20 that we are required to do to manage storm 21 water. And a general service charge for 22 billing and collections and some of the 23 functions. 24 What does a typical customer get from</p>

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1 that? So when we look at how much a typical  
2 customer uses, approximately 150 gallons a day.  
3 If you break that monthly bill down to what you  
4 pay on a daily basis, it's about \$2.40 a day  
5 for 150 gallons of water. That's water taken  
6 from the river that we treat, we deliver and we  
7 take back from you, that we clean up and put  
8 back in the river. So when we look at it, we  
9 think it's comparable to sort of a cup of  
10 coffee you might get at Dunkin Donuts or the  
11 cost of a Sunday New York Times. So when we  
12 look at it that way, it seems like a more  
13 perspective, really a good cost. You get a  
14 good deal for \$2.40. So that is the overview.  
15 So I guess I will hand it back to  
16 Nancy.  
17 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you very much,  
18 Joanne. Now we will have a presentation from  
19 Josie Pickens who is representing the Public  
20 Advocate, chosen to represent small users in  
21 this rate case.  
22 MS. PICKENS: Thank you, Hearing  
23 Officer. Good evening, everyone. My name is  
24 Josie Pickens. I'm one of the attorneys that's

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1 from Community Legal Services in the Energy  
2 Unit. And we are a team of attorneys selected  
3 as the public advocate to represent residential  
4 customers and others small users in this  
5 proceeding. We want you to know that you have  
6 a public advocate. That we have retained a  
7 team of experts to review every page of this  
8 filing to determine whether this rate increase  
9 is appropriate and reasonable, that the legal  
10 standard is just and reasonable and it's  
11 something that has to take place.  
12 We want you to know this increase is  
13 not an inevitable conclusion. We are reviewing  
14 this filing. Our experts are particularly  
15 concerned with the fact there is more than \$200  
16 million in the department's Rate Stabilization  
17 Fund. And that's more than or just about three  
18 times what the department thought would be in  
19 that fund when they did their last rate  
20 increase. So we are going to question whether  
21 this rate increase is actually necessary.  
22 We want to hear from you. Your  
23 testimony is very important to us. It's not  
24 just a procedural matter or something that's

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1 just done to be done. It actually is part of  
2 the record in this case. And when our experts  
3 are drafting their position statements and when  
4 we are writing our legal briefs, we are going  
5 to look at the record. And that will help us  
6 shape the issues in this case.  
7 I do want to encourage you to testify  
8 about your experiences, about how this rate  
9 increase will impact you and your household and  
10 your community. We know that for some people,  
11 a 12 percent increase is just simply  
12 unacceptable. And we are deeply concerned  
13 about issues of affordability of water service  
14 in Philadelphia. And I know that some of you  
15 are as well.  
16 But we want to hear the whole range of  
17 issues that you have. Again, it becomes the  
18 part of the record and helps us to shape issues  
19 in the case. I'll be here at the end of the  
20 testimony. If you want to talk to me, and I  
21 have some material that you can take back to  
22 your community. We want to encourage other  
23 people to participate in the other hearings  
24 that are taking place as part of this

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1 proceeding. So thank you all.  
2 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, Josie. So  
3 at this point, at this point, we'd love to hear  
4 from you about your comments. What I usually  
5 do is I ask if there is any elected or  
6 appointed official who is here tonight that  
7 would like to speak. And ask them to come  
8 forward at this point. And if not, we will  
9 open the mics up.  
10 So if you want to speak, come up to the  
11 mic here please and give your name clearly so  
12 that the court reporter can take it down.  
13 MS. WERSINGER: Hi. Kathleen  
14 Wersinger. I want to say that Romani Reynolds  
15 and myself are here from Councilman Chelle  
16 Parker's office tonight and we have a few  
17 concerns. And I also have one or two questions  
18 I'd personally like to ask.  
19 My first question is --  
20 HEARING OFFICER: State your name.  
21 MS. WERSINGER: My name is Kathleen  
22 Wersinger. One of the questions that has been  
23 asked to us is, how much of the new rate  
24 increase, if you take that at 100 percent, how

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<p>1 much is going to the infrastructure? How much 2 is going for salaries? How much is going for 3 different areas? Like the infrastructure I 4 understand really needs to be replaced. So is 5 90 percent of the money of the increase going 6 to that? That was my first question. 7 And my second question is, the Rate 8 Increase Board. Are you all Philadelphia 9 residents? 10 HEARING OFFICER: We can only answer 11 the second question. I am a contract hiree. 12 I'm not a Philadelphia resident. But I don't 13 have a part in the decision-making. Everyone 14 else on The Board is a Philadelphia resident. 15 As far as questions about the makeup of 16 the request and what it's going for, I'd have 17 to turn that over to the Commissioner of Water 18 because it's their case and they know what's 19 going on. 20 MS. McCARTY: Good evening. My name is 21 Debbie McCarty, the Commissioner of the Water 22 Department. And I'm going to defer to our 23 Deputy of Finance. She knows this stuff off 24 the top of her head.</p>	<p>1 request was they submitted a request for this 2 increase. What other documentation did they 3 submit? 4 HEARING OFFICER: They had submitted 5 what is 5000 pages of information which is all 6 available on both their website and on the 7 Water Rate Board's website. You can get 8 summaries of it in a couple of different ways. 9 The Water Rate Board has put out its summary of 10 what it's asking for -- excuse me, not what it 11 is asking for. What the department is asking 12 for. The Department has put out its summary. 13 And then you can go in and look at the 14 testimony. Some of the items are fairly 15 general and accessible. So you can just read 16 them without having to go through all of the 17 spreadsheets. 18 MR. LONG: Does this documentation 19 include the financial statement? 20 HEARING OFFICER: Yes. 21 MR. LONG: They did? 22 HEARING OFFICER: Yes. 23 MR. LONG: I understand they have over 24 2000 employees working at the Water</p>
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<p>1 MS. LaBUDA: Good evening. My name is 2 Melissa LaBuda. I'm a deputy commissioner in 3 the Water Department. 4 So to answer your question, the real 5 answer is that the rate increase doesn't even 6 cover all of our expenses. So the revenues 7 that we requested cover about 1/3 of costs 8 related to infrastructure, 1/3 of our costs 9 related to environmental mandates and 1/3 of 10 our costs are related to pension and health 11 care and other inflationary measures. 12 MS. McCARTY: And the bridge, the 13 bridge between the rate increase and our cost 14 is money coming out of the Rate Civilization 15 Fund. And in fact, in fiscal year '16, we 16 didn't seek a rate increase. We have had a 17 zero percent in fiscal year '16. And we are 18 using the rate civilization fund to cover the 19 structural deficit that we face. 20 HEARING OFFICER: Sir, state your 21 name. 22 MR. LONG: My name is Christopher Long. 23 I'm a resident. I got a couple questions I 24 want to ask you and them. Basically, the</p>	<p>1 Department? 2 HEARING OFFICER: Here I'm going to turn 3 it back to Commissioner McCarty. 4 MS. McCARTY: Yes, we have about 2000 5 employees. 6 MR. LONG: Of those 2000, how many are 7 administration? 8 MS. McCARTY: Off the top of my head, I 9 couldn't tell you. 10 MR. LONG: Is it 40 percent, 50 11 percent? 12 MS. McCARTY: Off top of my head, I 13 couldn't tell you. We have a lot of employees 14 who do various jobs throughout the department. 15 MR. LONG: But the goal of the Water 16 Department is to supply the City with clean 17 water. 18 MS. McCARTY: And take away waste water 19 and manage storm water. 20 MR. LONG: So if we have 60 percent in 21 management and only 40 percent providing water, 22 don't you think we should cut back on the 23 management side? 24 MS. McCARTY: I don't believe those</p>

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1 fractions are accurate, though.  
2 MR. LONG: You stated in a  
3 presentation, I was at the last meeting in 2013  
4 when you asked for a rate increase, the same  
5 presentation. And it's the same boom, boom,  
6 boom. But anyway --  
7 MS. McCARTY: I would like to say I  
8 think we are asking for a little different.  
9 I'm proud of the Affordability Program that we  
10 are requesting.  
11 MR. LONG: That was another thing I  
12 heard about in 2013. I don't really care about  
13 your programs. I want clean water that I paid  
14 for. These programs that you are funding, that  
15 has nothing to do with me. If you want to give  
16 somebody reduced cost water, that's your  
17 problem, but don't put the cost on me.  
18 The other thing I remember from the  
19 2013, you were selling water to, what was the  
20 county, sir, you brought it? Bucks County.  
21 You were selling them our water at a cheaper  
22 rate than was coming to the City.  
23 MS. McCARTY: Actually, we are a cost  
24 of services utility. We weren't selling to

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1 them cheaper. We were selling it to them, the  
2 cost to it, what it cost to get it to the  
3 boarder and they took it from there. But  
4 that's the wholesale customer we are talking  
5 about that said they are no longer buying our  
6 water. In fact, they were helping to keep our  
7 rates low.  
8 MR. LONG: Really? That's because you  
9 were outsourcing the water.  
10 You said you lost customers because  
11 more people are drinking bottled water and more  
12 people are reusing water and redoing water.  
13 How many of your staff have been replaced with  
14 these reductions in funding?  
15 MS. McCARTY: I'm sorry?  
16 MR. LONG: How many job cuts have you  
17 made?  
18 MS. McCARTY: How many job cuts?  
19 MR. LONG: Yeah.  
20 MS. McCARTY: With expanding regulatory  
21 requirements, we are not cutting jobs. We are  
22 having to increase staff.  
23 MR. LONG: So basically, this increase  
24 is for, to remain status quo. It's not about

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1 fixing the pipes like you said before in 2013.  
2 That's what you said you were doing before.  
3 And this rate increase you had for 2013, this  
4 rate increase you had for 2013, I would like to  
5 see a detailed breakdown of where that money  
6 went that you got in 2013. Can you provide  
7 that?  
8 MS. McCARTY: We have --  
9 MS. LaBUDA: Sir, again my name is  
10 Melissa LaBuda.  
11 MR. LONG: I know who you are.  
12 MS. LaBUDA: Nice to meet you.  
13 All of our financial information is  
14 posted publicly. So not only is the  
15 information on phila.gov Water Rate Board  
16 Water/Water Rate Board, it's also on the  
17 Director of Finance's website. So we are part  
18 of the City of Philadelphia, we have our tax  
19 ID. You can log onto the Director of Finance  
20 website and look at all of our financial  
21 statements for the past five years. We are  
22 doing something called a State Mandated Piper  
23 Report. We do it every quarter. The most  
24 recent quarterly information is as of December

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1 31st. That is also on the Director of  
2 Finance's website. So all of our financial  
3 information on our expenses and revenues is  
4 publicly posted.  
5 MR. LONG: Can you answer what is the  
6 management percentage per worker percentage?  
7 MS. LaBUDA: I wish I had that statistic  
8 off the top of my head, but I don't.  
9 MR. LONG: You are the Financial  
10 Manager. You don't know the percentage of  
11 management you have at your company?  
12 MS. LaBUDA: Management can be defined  
13 in many different ways.  
14 MR. LONG: Department heads and things  
15 like that?  
16 MS. LaBUDA: We also have many general  
17 laborers who may manage an employee that have a  
18 management title but also perform an everyday  
19 work function. So I do not know that  
20 statistic, unfortunately.  
21 MR. LONG: The company that does some  
22 of your audits, what is it, Raptelis?  
23 MS. LaBUDA: So the financial audit is  
24 completed by the City Controller's office.

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1 MR. LONG: You all use the independent  
2 contractor, Raptelis; right, Financial  
3 Consultants?  
4 MS. LaBUDA: They were hired to do a  
5 management audit as requested as part of the  
6 last rate proceeding. And that's very  
7 different than a financial statement.  
8 MR. LONG: How much did that cost for  
9 that audit?  
10 MS. LaBUDA: I'm sure you know the  
11 figure better than I do. I think we spent  
12 \$700,00.  
13 MR. LONG: \$700,000 for that?  
14 MS. McCARTY: That was required as part  
15 of the mediation in the last rate case. So we  
16 were required to do that.  
17 MR. LONG: I understand the system you  
18 are all using for your billing services, Basic  
19 2?  
20 MS. LaBUDA: Yes, that's correct.  
21 MR. LONG: After this audit, what was  
22 the findings of the audit?  
23 MS. LaBUDA: The system is sound and  
24 works and has an audit trail in it.

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1 MR. LONG: It also states you have  
2 redundant processes in place and people  
3 overlapping jobs. So what do we do to correct  
4 overlapping job descriptions of employees?  
5 What I'm saying here, Ma'am, you have a  
6 system that is losing money and you are still  
7 trying to stay status quo. And you want us to  
8 keep your jobs because some of you all need to  
9 lose jobs anyway because you got too much  
10 management. And see, how would I say it? I  
11 don't want your salary on my back. I just want  
12 clean water. I don't care about your programs.  
13 I don't care about your stock options, your  
14 stock rating. I don't care about that. Just  
15 provide us with clean water. This young lady,  
16 I see her every meeting. What does she do  
17 other than give me some presentation? It's a  
18 waste of money. It's a waste of money.  
19 MS. McCARTY: We hear you and I'm sorry  
20 you feel that way. We have a lot of employees  
21 that work very hard day in and day out to get  
22 you that clean water. And they need support  
23 from other staff. It's not necessarily the guy  
24 operating the pump and making sure the filter

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1 is performing the way it needs to perform. And  
2 I heard what you are saying. And all of our  
3 employees work, live and work in the city, they  
4 have to. So it's their rate just as well as  
5 you. We are very sensitive to keeping our  
6 water, waste water and storm water services as  
7 affordable as possible and maintain it as cost  
8 effectively as possible.  
9 MR. LONG: What are the steps you are  
10 taking to make the system cost effective? What  
11 employee changes are you going to make as far  
12 as like everybody else in companies cutting  
13 back employees, having one employee do three  
14 job? Are you all doing that? What kind of  
15 steps are you taking to cut costs?  
16 MS. McCARTY: We have over the years cut  
17 staff.  
18 MR. LONG: I asked that and you said you  
19 didn't cut anyone.  
20 MS. McCARTY: Not with this rate  
21 increase we are not. But over the years, we  
22 have cut back on staff. We are doing things,  
23 we believe in doing things smarter, and that's  
24 part of it.

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1 So for instance, at our treatment  
2 plants, we operate with less operators. They  
3 have more responsibility than they had maybe  
4 ten years ago.  
5 MR. LONG: That's my point, Ma'am. I  
6 want more operators at the treatment plant  
7 because they provide me with clean water. I  
8 need less of you type of people.  
9 MS. McCARTY: Okay, I understand.  
10 MR. LONG: That's what I'm saying.  
11 MS. McCARTY: Okay. Thank you.  
12 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.  
13 Is there anyone else who would like to  
14 come up?  
15 MR. BAKER: My name is Mark Baker. I'm  
16 a resident. And I think this rate increase  
17 that is being requested is ridiculous. You  
18 don't have a good relationship with your  
19 customers. Right now I'm going through hell  
20 where I am now trying to get the water bill put  
21 in my name. I didn't have any problems with  
22 PECO or PGW. It's only the water company where  
23 I hit a roadblock.  
24 I had to go up to the municipal

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1 building up here on Welsh Road. They gave me  
2 the runaround. They told me first that I got  
3 to ask somebody in the neighborhood to vouch  
4 for me and write a letter, which it's like I  
5 don't know anybody in the neighborhood. You  
6 know, that's stupid. And the only person I  
7 know in the neighborhood is somebody who I  
8 happened to work with over a quarter of a  
9 century ago. So she went with me to vouch that  
10 she was a neighbor. That wasn't good enough.  
11 They said, Well, you got to write a letter and  
12 then we have to get it notarized. So we went  
13 and got it notarized. We went back up. They  
14 said, I went up with all of my other documents  
15 too proving that I'm not in the other property  
16 anymore, that I'm taking over my mother's  
17 property who has been in a nursing home for  
18 over a year.  
19 We went up there four times and we  
20 didn't get one damn thing accomplished because  
21 of that. And then they come out, then they  
22 come up and say, Well, they tell me it's not,  
23 it's a tax bill, not a utility bill. And then  
24 the last thing when we went up there for the

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1 fourth time they said, Well, you guys aren't  
2 neighbors because I live on a corner house and  
3 my neighbor, I don't care what they say, she is  
4 my neighbor, she lives in a twin house across  
5 the driveway from me. We are within spitting  
6 distance of each other.  
7 And I mean it's just ridiculous. I'm  
8 still waiting, I'm still trying to get that  
9 water bill in my name.  
10 HEARING OFFICER: One thing I should  
11 have mentioned before is that there are  
12 representatives of the Water Department here  
13 who can try to help work through issues. And I  
14 bet that Commissioner McCarty is going to  
15 respond in a similar vein.  
16 MS. McCARTY: So it sounds like the  
17 house isn't in your name yet because it sounds  
18 like it's a tangled deed issue potentially?  
19 MR. BAKER: Right.  
20 MS. McCARTY: I'm not sure that we can  
21 help you with that tonight. But Byronette  
22 Watson is sitting back, Byronette Watson, she  
23 just raised her hand. It probably would be a  
24 good idea to talk to her and she can help you

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1 through that matter. And I'm sorry for your  
2 troubles. I can hear the frustration in your  
3 voice.  
4 MR. BAKER: They knew that we are in  
5 the process. And I got representation of  
6 getting it in my name. And they have the nerve  
7 one day to come up and shut my water off. They  
8 had to come back up there the same day. They  
9 didn't have any business shutting it off in the  
10 first place.  
11 MS. McCARTY: I'm sorry. These are  
12 challenging, the tangled deeds are very, very  
13 challenging.  
14 MR. BAKER: I also happened to know  
15 somebody else in the same position. She didn't  
16 see any results for over a year after her  
17 mother had died. I'm dealing with my mother in  
18 a nursing facility and everything. The last  
19 thing I need is aggravation. I don't need to  
20 be dealing with idiots.  
21 MS. McCARTY: I got that. I got that.  
22 And again, I'm really sorry. Hopefully Ms.  
23 Watson can assist you this evening.  
24 MR. BAKER: It also took eight months

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1 for them to get around with the other house  
2 when I was without an income for awhile. And I  
3 had to get the RAT Program and recovering from  
4 hip surgery. Then I had no income. It took  
5 over eight months. It's like I said, I can get  
6 any other bill in my name. It's easy to get a  
7 gas bill and electric bill in your name. It's  
8 just as easy to do that as it is to get a car  
9 in your name. It's a Water Department.  
10 MS. McCARTY: The way we ensure that  
11 folks pay is that the property, the bill is  
12 tied to the property unlike the other utilities  
13 you mentioned. So that's why the process is a  
14 little different. And there are, I'm sure you  
15 have heard that there are cases when people  
16 falsely claim and play with deeds and show that  
17 they are not really the owner of a property.  
18 MR. BAKER: I am as legit it as they  
19 come.  
20 MS. McCARTY: I'm not saying you are  
21 not.  
22 MR. BAKER: I have lived in your, in my  
23 own property for 31 years.  
24 MS. McCARTY: Ms. Watson can help you

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1 hopefully. I'm really sorry.  
2 MR. BAKER: Like I said, you don't  
3 deserve a rate hike.  
4 MS. McCARTY: I understand.  
5 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you for your  
6 comment.  
7 Another gentleman.  
8 MR. BURKHARDT: My name is Jack  
9 Burkhardt. I'd like to know from the Water  
10 Board, whatever. Since the last rate increase,  
11 what have you done about the delinquent  
12 property owners or just the delinquent bills  
13 that are not being paid and the rest of us are  
14 stuck with?  
15 HEARING OFFICER: That's another  
16 question I'd have to turn over, that's another  
17 question that we on the Board have to turn over  
18 to the Department. Because what the Board does  
19 is to review their request for an increase. We  
20 don't run the Department.  
21 MR. BURKHARDT: My question is why are  
22 you requesting another increase from the decent  
23 people who are paying when a lot of people are  
24 not? What is the City doing to collect that

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1 money? Simple as that. This is the problem.  
2 Everything always gets twisted into all  
3 different other departments just like with this  
4 gentleman was saying. Why does it take that  
5 long to transfer here probably somebody who is  
6 trying to pay your bill versus a lot of people  
7 who are not paying your bill, whether it's city  
8 tax, whether it's wage tax or whatever else?  
9 They manipulate the system and the rest of us  
10 are stuck holding the bill. And most of us are  
11 seniors who are trying to do the best we can to  
12 pay our bills because that's the way we were  
13 brought up.  
14 MS. McCARTY: We are happy to try to  
15 address that.  
16 MR. BURKHARDT: Pardon me?  
17 MS. McCARTY: We are happy to try to  
18 answer your question. We do have a program to  
19 recover, identify customers that are not  
20 paying. And people are shut off. But as I  
21 mentioned to that gentleman before you, to  
22 recover that and to get people to pay the bill,  
23 I will introduce Susan Crosby from our Law  
24 Department and this is what she does.

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1 MS. CROSBY: Good evening. Susan with  
2 the Law Department, the Divisional Deputy City  
3 Solicitor. Me and my staff are in charge of  
4 suing delinquent water customers. We sue them  
5 in municipal court and we also sue them in the  
6 Court of Common Pleas. So we file  
7 approximately between 1000 and 1200 lawsuits  
8 each month to collect those outstanding  
9 delinquencies.  
10 In addition, twice a year we place  
11 liens on all property that have delinquent  
12 bills. In addition, we select certain  
13 properties who have very large balances for  
14 sheriff sale and we sheriff sale those  
15 properties.  
16 MR. BURKHARDT: That whole system always  
17 takes years and years to go through. That's  
18 what my whole point is. Why does it take that  
19 long? Just like this gentleman said. I know  
20 during this past summer I called in about the  
21 Water Department shut the water off. The next  
22 day, somebody turned the water on because they  
23 had to fill the pool. I called the Water  
24 Department. We'll look into it. Why the hell

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1 didn't somebody turn that damn water back off  
2 again? No, it has to go through the system.  
3 Why? What system? I'm still paying the  
4 water bill.  
5 MS. McCARTY: So you called 685-6300?  
6 MR. BURKHARDT: Yes, I did. They were  
7 very polite. Let me say that they were very  
8 polite about the whole situation and asked what  
9 the situation was. I explained to them. But  
10 the answer still came out, We'll look into it.  
11 When I asked when? We'll look into it.  
12 MS. McCARTY: So the call taker can't  
13 necessarily commit to when we can do it. But  
14 those calls we take very seriously and we do  
15 follow up with illegal restorations. One of  
16 the nice things about our metering system, we  
17 have a whole unit called Revenue Protection and  
18 that's the sort of stuff they do, look for  
19 accounts that have been shut off. And then  
20 when we get the next meter read, check to see  
21 if there is forward usage. And if there is,  
22 we'll go back out and shut them off.  
23 In addition to that, when we get tips  
24 such as yours, we'll go out and shut them off.

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1 Sometimes, though, we have gotten tips, I have  
2 gotten them and the customer has actually made  
3 a payment agreement. So that's why we don't go  
4 back and shut them off. And that's not always  
5 obvious to someone giving a tip. We very much  
6 appreciate it. And whenever you see it, please  
7 do continue to report those things because it  
8 helps all of us. You are right.  
9 MR. BURKHARDT: My original question.  
10 Since the last rate increase, have you  
11 increased the amount of money you have  
12 collected from the deadbeats? That's really  
13 what my question is. I know all of this, you  
14 go through all kinds of motions that takes  
15 years while everybody is laughing at us  
16 including a lot of the slum landlords that were  
17 getting more and more into this area who I'm  
18 sure they are all waiting to pay their water  
19 bill on time. So has there been any real  
20 increase since the last rate increase in your  
21 collection from the dead beats.  
22 MS. CROSBY: I can only speak to the  
23 collection of the Law Department when the cases  
24 are referred to our group and we start

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1 collecting. In fiscal year '15, we increased  
2 our collections by 25 percent and for fiscal  
3 year '16, we are on par to increase those  
4 collections even further.  
5 Mr. BURKHARDT: I hope so.  
6 MS. CROSBY: So we are doing it and we  
7 are increasing. I think we are on par to go by  
8 30 to 40 percent in fiscal '16.  
9 MS. McCARTY: If I may add. I think  
10 Susan, among others, have been much more  
11 aggressive. And I'm really pleased that we are  
12 going after those delinquent folks that need to  
13 be addressed more aggressively than we have in  
14 the past. We recognize it's very important.  
15 It is sometimes very challenging and it can  
16 take longer than any of us want. But we are  
17 more aggressively going after them and we  
18 continue, we intend to continue to do so.  
19 MR. BURKHARDT: Okay. Thank you for  
20 listening to us.  
21 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you for your  
22 comments. Is there anyone else who would like  
23 to make a comment?  
24 MR. LONG: Can we do follow-up?

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1 HEARING OFFICER: Let's let the people  
2 who haven't spoken first and we'll come back.  
3 This lady and this gentleman over there.  
4 MS. LASKUS: My name is Kay Laskus. I  
5 recently received a solicitation. And when I  
6 looked it up on the internet, it was from a New  
7 Jersey water company. And in reading it  
8 lightly, you might not realize that it was from  
9 an outside water company. They were  
10 threatening that if something should happen to  
11 my outside pipes, the Water Department would  
12 not repair them and offering to sell me an  
13 insurance policy.  
14 That concerned me for a whole variety  
15 of reasons. When I looked on the website  
16 trying to determine what part of the pipes, the  
17 outside pipes the Water Department will take  
18 care of, it was not clear to me. And I also  
19 thought that possibly some citizens receiving  
20 such a solicitation might confuse it with the  
21 Water Department and go ahead and, in fact, I  
22 found, I brought the issue up at a local  
23 community meeting yesterday and there were  
24 people that had purchased. So it was a

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1 concern.  
2 And then on top of that, I thought if  
3 there is such a thing as insuring the outside  
4 water pipes, wouldn't the Water Department  
5 benefit financially from such an activity?  
6 MS. McCARTY: I missed the first part.  
7 Is this Home Serve? Is that the name of the  
8 company?  
9 MS. LASKUS: I have forgotten. When I  
10 looked it up, it was an enormous water company  
11 in New Jersey.  
12 MS. McCARTY: American Water?  
13 MS. LASKUS: Yeah, that was it.  
14 MS. McCARTY: There are a couple  
15 companies, Home Serve and American Water. Home  
16 Serve started three years ago sending out  
17 mailings to different parts of the City. In  
18 fact, I have gotten a couple. I have gotten it  
19 through AARP and I have gotten it in other  
20 directions. And they say, Your home is built  
21 before 1950. You need to be concerned about  
22 the age of your pipe.  
23 And so it can be very intimidating if  
24 you don't know. And I applaud you for going

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1 on-line and trying to know, so to speak. So  
2 our customers are responsible for the water  
3 pipe from the connection to the water main all  
4 the way into the meter. And then for the  
5 drainage part of your system, from your home  
6 all the way to the connection to the sewer. So  
7 the service and the supply to the water  
8 supply.  
9 And what the companies do is that we  
10 are somewhat unique. The part of the pipes in  
11 the street, most of other places is utility.  
12 So the Water Department takes responsibility  
13 for. And then the property owner is  
14 responsible basically from the curb into the  
15 home. And so they typically only insure from  
16 the curb into the home.  
17 So I think you have to read the  
18 information. It might be worthwhile.  
19 Sometimes they have good prices. But you want  
20 to make sure what they are insuring. And are  
21 they doing the whole thing or just part of  
22 it? Because that makes a difference. And a  
23 lot of times when one part goes, you might want  
24 to do both parts whether it's the drainage or

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1 the water line.  
2 And then you had, why doesn't the Water  
3 Department profit from this? I think your  
4 other part company.  
5 MS. LASKUS: Why don't you offer such a  
6 policy? It sounds like a very lucrative  
7 policy. I did some rough calculations.  
8 MS. McCARTY: We actually did look into  
9 that and had wanted to offer it at least for  
10 the street part. And that was over ten years  
11 ago. And City Council didn't want to proceed  
12 with it. So we thought it would be a good  
13 thing. And in fact, right now we are looking  
14 at a different option. It's very informative.  
15 We put our Request For Information from various  
16 folks that are in the business of doing this  
17 because we recognize it could be a service to  
18 our customers. But that's about all I can tell  
19 about it now because we are still figuring out  
20 what we can do and what might make sense. Does  
21 that answer your question?  
22 MS. LASKUS: Yes.  
23 MS. McCARTY: Thank you.  
24 MS. LASKUS: Can I bring up one other

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1 issue? I'm with a local group trying to  
2 develop a public bank for Philadelphia. And if  
3 there were such a thing, we would be able to  
4 finance the infrastructure at a much better  
5 rate. So I'm hoping you know about it. We had  
6 a hearing in counsel on Monday and I hope you  
7 are backing us.  
8 MS. McCARTY: Thank you.  
9 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.  
10 MR. BERGER: I am coming to this meeting  
11 a little unprepared. I didn't realize you were  
12 having this meeting. I was in the nursing  
13 home. I'm have a few quick points. I have  
14 three points to throw out very quickly.  
15 HEARING OFFICER: Sir, give us your  
16 name, your name for the record.  
17 MR. BERGER: My name is Sal Berger. My  
18 father, Daniel Berger is a resident here. I  
19 live nearby in East Oak Lane, formally Oak  
20 Lane. There was a storm water charge being  
21 added to our bills. I don't know if that issue  
22 was brought up. I came a little late. It  
23 would seem the methodology of the whole storm  
24 water charges needs to be go through another

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1 public review because I think there is some  
2 very serious questions on the financial and  
3 scientific methodology used to calculate  
4 exactly what a storm water charge is,  
5 particularly with buildings such as East Oak  
6 Lane.  
7 For example, the septic systems, that  
8 the water is actually going back to ground  
9 water and not running down the drain which is  
10 fundamental. Motus operandi for having the  
11 storm water runoff charges because the ground  
12 water is not being managed appropriately  
13 because it's being run through your sewer  
14 system.  
15 I think there has to be some review of  
16 the methodology for storm water runoff.  
17 Housing structures, houses that were built at  
18 the turn of the century that were never tied  
19 into the sewer system anyway because East Oak  
20 Lane didn't have a sewer system until after the  
21 second World War. So all of the houses there  
22 have septic systems in the back of their house  
23 that were built around the turn of the century.  
24 My house on North 11th Street was built in 1897

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p> <p>1 and wasn't connected to the Philadelphia Water 2 Department Sewer System until they put in the 3 sewer line after the second World War. Our 4 house and houses on the block shouldn't be 5 paying storm water charges using the logic that 6 was developed by the Water Department some 7 years back. But there is a lot of other points 8 to that.</p> <p>9 The second point I'd like to bring up 10 quickly is my question concerns the 11 coordination with other utilities regarding 12 digging up of the street. I have noticed, for 13 example, Oak Lane on 5th Street and 14 occasionally on Cheltenham Avenue just as 15 examples where you have the Water Department 16 digging up the street one week, the gas company 17 digging up another week, Verizon for 18 fiber-optic digging up yet another week. And 19 in the end, the consumer is paying for all of 20 these crews to come out and rip up and replace 21 the street.</p> <p>22 That lack of coordination between the 23 different utility companies and 24 telecommunications companies is very, very</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p> <p>1 And it's not just one valve, but dozens of 2 valves along the street are basically slowly 3 leaking away.</p> <p>4 Even though you are doing all of these 5 upgrades on your meters to monitor more 6 accurately how much water people are using, on 7 the other side of the meter which nobody is 8 monitoring or paying attention to, we have 9 dozens of ancient 30, 40, 50 year old curb 10 valves, the bodies of which are basically brass 11 and starting to deteriorate, crack and 12 basically constantly leaking. I don't know if 13 that's an issue that can be dressed here or 14 not. But I thought I would just throw out some 15 of these points in terms of infrastructure 16 issues and methodology and billing for the 17 storm water charges.</p> <p>18 MS. McCARTY: So I think I captured your 19 three points. But if I didn't, please correct 20 me as I'm going. The storm water charge, you 21 said it was added to the bill. Actually, it's 22 always been there, but we have separated it. 23 It was in the service charge previously. So 24 residential customers were paying storm water</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p> <p>1 costly to the consumer in the end. And it 2 would be nice to see finally some way of having 3 the water department, underground electric 4 utilities, Verizon, occasionally Comcast, 5 certainly the gas company frequently 6 overlapping each other in their efforts. So 7 when there is an upgrade, it would be useful to 8 see if we can try to, as the citizens, the 9 voters who are paying for all of this, to try 10 to have improved coordination. It's pretty sad 11 what I see going on.</p> <p>12 What was the third thing? The third 13 item is there seems to be, a number of my 14 friends are plumbers and they frequently see 15 particularly on routes where there is a lot of 16 heavy SEPTA bus traffic or heavily used roads 17 where the curb valve or the street valve, I'm 18 not quite sure what you call it, the shutoff on 19 the street, on the curb is frequently damaged 20 because of constant vibration from heavy 21 traffic. And they can shut off the valve for 22 the water going into the house to do service 23 work on the house, but the valve itself is 24 leaking. The body of the valve is leaking.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p> <p>1 for quite a long time. And what we did more 2 recently is actually more fairly distribute the 3 bills to the commercial properties.</p> <p>4 Prior to this change, commercial 5 properties paid storm water service charge like 6 the residential based on their meter size. So 7 you could have a huge parking lot that doesn't 8 even have a water service or maybe has a water 9 service with one toilet providing to the 10 service like our homes, and they are paying a 11 little bit. And they have all of this runoff 12 where a large institution who has really big 13 meters but maybe even a smaller footprint is 14 paying way more because they have a couple 15 services that they need backup like a hospital 16 or things like that.</p> <p>17 So what we did is make it fairer for 18 our commercial properties. And it's based on 19 the size of the parcel and the permeous and 20 impermeous part of that parcel.</p> <p>21 MR. BERGER: It is also based on a 22 square footage.</p> <p>23 MS. McCARTY: Impermeous, yes. So how 24 much water does not soak into the ground as you</p>

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1 mentioned earlier?  
2 MR. BERGER: The whole soaking into the  
3 ground business, I'm so glad the Water  
4 Department broke out as a separate line item  
5 the whole business of the storm water runoff  
6 charge because fundamentally there is very  
7 serious problems in the way they calculated,  
8 the types of properties being charged for it.  
9 You are using the same methodology for a house  
10 that has a septic system that has the water  
11 running into it versus a house that is newer  
12 that doesn't have a septic system. There is  
13 some very serious questions as to scientific  
14 validity of this impermeous versus  
15 nonimpermeous cost charges that are being  
16 placed on it.  
17 I'm very happy that you have those  
18 charges now publicly listed. Now we should  
19 take it to the next level of openness and have  
20 a more public review both on the financial and  
21 scientific validity of those charges.  
22 HEARING OFFICER: I'd like to interrupt  
23 just at this point to invite one of the other  
24 members of the Rate Board up. Mike Chapman who

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1 is actually appointed by the Mayor for storm  
2 water issues. Again, we are not in a position  
3 to answer your questions, but we will  
4 definitely take into account what you are  
5 saying and what the department says about it.  
6 MS. McCARTY: So I think I heard you say  
7 that you are connected to the sewer, or no? We  
8 put a sewer in your street?  
9 MR. BERGER: After the second World War,  
10 11th Street Oak Lane was dug up and a sewer  
11 line was put in. But the houses originally  
12 were set up with septic systems. So  
13 consequently, the whole issue of the water  
14 table which is the fundamental argument of  
15 having a storm water runoff charge in the first  
16 place --  
17 MS. McCARTY: To keep it from getting  
18 into our pipe, into our system. So if your  
19 water goes into our pipes, it costs --  
20 MR. BERGER: If you go back to the  
21 brochures that Philadelphia Water Department  
22 put out several years ago at the time they  
23 separated out the storm water runoff charges,  
24 they pointed out that the argument made for the

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1 storm water runoff charges was to help maintain  
2 the performance of the water table in  
3 Philadelphia. And in fact, certain commercial  
4 businesses found ways to get out from under the  
5 storm water runoff charge if you install  
6 certain types of equipment underground to help  
7 with the draining system to help maintain the  
8 water table.  
9 MS. McCARTY: The point is not really to  
10 help the ground water table. The point is to  
11 keep it from getting in the pipes so that the  
12 loose sewage gets to our water ways. Because  
13 the more water runoff that gets into our pipe,  
14 the more combined sewer overflows we have. And  
15 one of the regulatory mandates that Joanne  
16 spoke to and it is a huge initiative on our  
17 part is to reduce the storm water runoff  
18 getting into our pipes. And it's a big program  
19 that the EPA, we are in the fifth year coming  
20 this June to prove that this is the way to go.  
21 The City is taking a very progressive way to go  
22 about it with trying to use, get it out of our  
23 pipes and let it infiltrate into the ground and  
24 ultimately, the ground water ways.

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1 MR. BERGER: My argument is everything  
2 you just mentioned already happened at the turn  
3 of the century in Oak Lane with the septic  
4 system we have. But at the same time, myself  
5 and my neighbors are still being billed for  
6 something that we inherently already had for  
7 the last 100 years.  
8 MS. McCARTY: You pay for today. What I  
9 will tell you is what I know about septic  
10 systems, we don't want the storm water in them.  
11 Because then it overloads them and they stop  
12 performing. I doubt the storm water from your  
13 property actually went into the septic  
14 systems.  
15 MR. BERGER: I invite you to come out.  
16 MS. McCARTY: Going to Number 2. The  
17 coordinating with other utilities digging up in  
18 the street. The Streets Department is in  
19 charge of the streets; right? And we do  
20 coordinate. All of our capital work is  
21 coordinated and it goes to, all of the  
22 utilities have to go to the Streets Department  
23 and say, Look, in 2018 we are planning on  
24 digging up the 6500 -- we are not, but the 6500

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1 of Tabor for instance. And so Streets  
2 Department would say, Okay, PGW is planning on  
3 being there in 2019. You guys, this is how we  
4 are going to work this out. So we do  
5 coordinate the planned and scheduled work  
6 through the Streets Department as we must. And  
7 all utilities must follow that.  
8 Now, the challenge is there is  
9 emergency work. There are things that Verizon  
10 is now doing fiber throughout the City. And  
11 they have gotten permission to go ahead and do  
12 that. But I'm not trying to pick on Verizon.  
13 But things do happen. They do the best to  
14 plan.  
15 The other thing I can tell is you this  
16 new Mayor Kenny is very committed because he  
17 hears folks like you with this complaint and  
18 it's one of his complaints as well that we need  
19 a better coordination. So that is one of the  
20 things I have heard him say quite a few times  
21 when I have been in meetings with him this  
22 short month and-a-half now. And we are looking  
23 at how to do that even smarter and better.  
24 MR. BERGER: All I can say you are

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1 right, there are emergency issues that take  
2 place. But if you take a particular, pick a  
3 particular intersection, for example, Oak Lane  
4 and 8th Street, for example, which is an  
5 intersection over a railroad bridge, a number  
6 of utility lines that run underneath it. And  
7 you pull work records both planned as well as  
8 emergency records. I think you will be sadly  
9 surprised by what you witness when you pull  
10 those electric company, PGW company, Verizon  
11 and Water Department records and see how much  
12 emergency work and nonemergency work was done  
13 at that particular intersection and what the  
14 expense was to tax payers of Philadelphia.  
15 MS. McCARTY: Streets Department  
16 restores the street after utilities and  
17 plumbers are in the street except for PGW. PGW  
18 is responsible for doing that.  
19 MR. BERGER: We know it takes PGW  
20 several months to get the street, the hole  
21 fixed.  
22 MS. McCARTY: The Streets Department can  
23 be frustrated sometimes, so they are working on  
24 that.

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1 The third issue is the plumbers and the  
2 curbside damage. So plumbers are actually  
3 supposed to make sure that those get repaired.  
4 The property owners are responsible for  
5 maintaining the curb stop. That was part of  
6 what this lady was talking about and I was  
7 trying to share where the customers and the  
8 property owners are responsible from the water  
9 main all the way to the meter. And that is  
10 lost water. We are not metering it. But when  
11 a plumber comes upon it, it's incumbent upon  
12 him or her, but mostly himself to make sure  
13 that gets corrected and tell the property  
14 owner, You need to correct this and report it  
15 to us if it's not happening.  
16 MR. BERGER: Maybe that's something they  
17 want to take a look at particularly for high  
18 concentration areas where there is a lot of row  
19 houses particularly facing a very busy street.  
20 For example, Olney Avenue near Girls High. For  
21 example, a very busy intersection. And I have  
22 spoken to plumbers who worked there. And  
23 dozens of those curb valves are constantly  
24 leaking. And I'm sure this is a common problem

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1 throughout the City where there is high  
2 concentration type housing. And at the same  
3 time, there is a lot of street traffic,  
4 particularly heavy bus traffic, heavy,  
5 vehicular traffic which is deteriorating those  
6 valves much more quickly than they perhaps  
7 otherwise would be in a less used street.  
8 But certainly having 50, 60 year old  
9 brass valve that is leaking constantly, the  
10 loss of water to that valve has to far exceed  
11 the cost of replacing the valve itself, and of  
12 course, ultimately we as consumers have to pay  
13 for that.  
14 MS. McCARTY: Right --  
15 MR. BERGER: Just a comment really.  
16 Nothing that you or I can do about it. I'm  
17 bringing it up.  
18 MS. McCARTY: There actually is  
19 something you can do about it. We survey our  
20 3100 miles pipe about 1000 miles a year looking  
21 for leaks. And that is to maintain our system.  
22 And as part of that survey, we'll pick up the  
23 leaks on the curbsides. When we find them, we  
24 issue that property owner a notice of defect to

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1 have that corrected. There is a whole  
2 mechanism and following through to make sure  
3 that they do that.  
4 MR. BERGER: Do you think it's possible  
5 that the curb stop should be taken over as a  
6 responsibility of the Water Department rather  
7 than the individual home owner who probably  
8 never uses --  
9 MS. McCARTY: You are not going to like  
10 this answer, but it's a rate increase. It  
11 costs money.  
12 MR. BERGER: It is probably costing more  
13 money right now to have it repaired.  
14 MS. McCARTY: To be honest, that's part  
15 of the reason we think we did look at some  
16 years ago taking over the pipe in the street.  
17 MR. BERGER: How many millions of  
18 gallons of water is lost from these thousands  
19 of leaking curb stops?  
20 MS. McCARTY: Not just the curb stops,  
21 it's the pipes as well. It's a challenge. You  
22 are right.  
23 MR. BERGER: I appreciate the time you  
24 gave me.

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1 MS. McCARTY: Thank you. You brought up  
2 some good points as well as others.  
3 MR. GERHART: My name is Carl Gerhart.  
4 I'm a resident. To follow up on the storm  
5 water. I kind of missed this, that I can  
6 understand the water that I'm using I pay for.  
7 The sewage I pay for and service charge for the  
8 meter and stuff like that. But how is the  
9 storm water, is that included in this rate  
10 increase? And if it is, can you explain to me  
11 how that has to do because nothing is going to  
12 be really changing? Like I said, water usage,  
13 I could change that. Sewer, I could change  
14 that. And the service charge, sure, that could  
15 be changed. Explain to me how the storm water  
16 charges where that is going to go up or follow  
17 suit with whatever.  
18 MS. McCARTY: As I'm being reminded, the  
19 storm water charge isn't going up that much,  
20 but you really can't change the service charge  
21 either. It's pretty fixed. It's to cover a  
22 fixed charge.  
23 MR. GERHART: The service charge of the  
24 storm water?

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1 MS. McCARTY: You said you could change  
2 the water charge.  
3 MR. GERHART: I can regulate that, how  
4 much I use. The sewer, what I use and the  
5 service charge, I can understand that.  
6 MS. McCARTY: You can't change that;  
7 right? It's always going to be what it is.  
8 MR. GERHART: Right. Right. It's  
9 going to be there. As a follow-up point, it  
10 was stated that they finally broke down the  
11 bill when it came to the storm. Well, my bill  
12 went up when that was discovered. And I never  
13 knew anything about this storm water until I  
14 saw on my bill and then I started questioning  
15 the Water Department or at community meetings.  
16 Really nobody came out with the exact answer  
17 other than when it rains, the water comes down  
18 into the grass. And at some point, it will  
19 eventually work its way to the sewer system so  
20 we have to adjust that. That didn't really  
21 make too much sense. But that's what I'm  
22 trying to figure out. It went up in price even  
23 though that was always supposed to be included  
24 in what you just said in my bill. And yet my

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1 bill went up the \$13 that I'm being charged  
2 plus or minus on my bill.  
3 MS. McCARTY: \$14 charge right now.  
4 MR. GERHART: I think it fluctuates with  
5 usage.  
6 MS. McCARTY: No, not the storm water  
7 charge.  
8 MR. GERHART: It stays the same. My  
9 last bill was \$13.75.  
10 MS. McCARTY: We are giving you a deal.  
11 We have to look at that. So the storm water  
12 charge that we'll be asking for is \$14.17.  
13 MR. GERHART: I got that right, I think.  
14 MS. McCARTY: I think we are paying \$14  
15 and change right now. \$14.15. So two pennies  
16 it's going up, two cents. And the piping  
17 system --  
18 MR. GERHART: What's the piping  
19 system?  
20 MS. McCARTY: The 3500 hundred miles of  
21 pipe that conveys -- not 3500 miles from your  
22 property. 3500 miles of pipe, sewer pipe in  
23 our system throughout the city that convey  
24 water either to the separately stored area, to

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1 a waterway and combined sewer area to a  
2 treatment plant or to one of those combined  
3 areas I mentioned earlier that we have to  
4 reduce that volume. But to maintain those  
5 pipes costs money.  
6 MR. GERHART: The manholes or the sewer  
7 inlets on the street?  
8 MS. McCARTY: That's part of it too,  
9 good point. Thank you.  
10 MR. GERHART: That's what I'm trying to  
11 understand.  
12 MS. McCARTY: That's part of the cost  
13 for storm water.  
14 MR. GERHART: That's another point. It  
15 makes it more clear.  
16 Mr. BRUNWASSER: Sir, if I may. The big  
17 cost for storm water is the large sewers in the  
18 street, the very large sewers because they have  
19 to be big to handle storms. They are  
20 extraordinarily expensive to build and to  
21 maintain. And much of the cost, probably most  
22 of the cost is debt service on the bonds that  
23 were used to pay for the big sewers in the  
24 system. And I think Ms. McCarty mentioned

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1 about one and-a-half million dollars per mile  
2 of water main. And I think sewer main on  
3 average is probably three times, close to three  
4 times that.  
5 MS. McCARTY: Yes.  
6 MR. BRUNWASSER: We have our chief  
7 engineer.  
8 MS. McCARTY: Three times.  
9 CHIEF ENGINEER: About three and  
10 three-quarters, four million a mile.  
11 MR. BRUNWASSER: Roughly four million a  
12 mile. We have all 3000 miles of sewer. Not  
13 all of those are storm. But we have to have  
14 storm sewers throughout the City because we  
15 have to convey the storm so we don't have  
16 flooding. So in order, if the City of  
17 Philadelphia started from scratch right now,  
18 it's 130 square miles. If we were to replace  
19 all of the sewers in Philadelphia, you are  
20 talking about tens of billions of dollars with  
21 a B. That's how expensive it is. And also  
22 about storm water, I should tell you, although  
23 this is old history and you are probably not  
24 going to appreciate it. But fiscal year 2002,

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1 2003 and 2004 the storm water charts  
2 residential went down each year because we  
3 reallocated storm water between the residential  
4 customer who we believe was being overcharged  
5 and the commercial industrial customer that was  
6 being undercharged prior to that time.  
7 So I just wanted to let you know.  
8 Obviously, I don't want you to dig through your  
9 old bills. But honestly, the service charge  
10 which contain, always contained the storm water  
11 component, actually went down three consecutive  
12 years. And you had very low increases in those  
13 three years, something like 2.8 percent in each  
14 year.  
15 MR. GERHART: Thank you very much.  
16 Thank you.  
17 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you for your  
18 comment. Is there anyone else who would like  
19 to make a comment or ask a question? This  
20 gentleman over here said he wanted to follow  
21 up.  
22 MR. LONG: A couple of quick points.  
23 HEARING OFFICER: Can you say your name  
24 again?

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1 MR. LONG: Chris Long, again, a  
2 resident. Now, I heard the commissioner there  
3 make comment about a fixed cost and they locked  
4 in. Well, I understand your point of view as  
5 far as fixed cost can be changed like any other  
6 cost. It doesn't really have to be locked in.  
7 You need to change it or adjust it, it could be  
8 done.  
9 I understand that you are the  
10 commissioner?  
11 MR. BRUNWASSER: No.  
12 MR. LONG: Who is the Commissioner of  
13 the Board? I'm talking about the Board here.  
14 HEARING OFFICER: Mr. Brunwasser is the  
15 chair of the Board. I'm the Hearing Officer,  
16 Nancy Brockway. Mr. Brunwasser is the chair of  
17 the Board. I work for him.  
18 MR. BRUNWASSER: The Board is taking  
19 all of this information in.  
20 MR. LONG: I understand that you used to  
21 be on the Water Board or something, the  
22 financial?  
23 MR. BRUNWASSER: I'm the former Water  
24 Commissioner.

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1 MR. LONG: Really?  
2 MR. BRUNWASSER: Yes.  
3 MR. LONG: So they expect you to be  
4 unbiased in this?  
5 MR. BRUNWASSER: I pay a water bill  
6 too. And I don't work for the Water Department  
7 any longer.  
8 MR. LONG: Right. I know not anymore.  
9 The comments you made to that gentleman, it  
10 sounded like you already decided about the  
11 increase.  
12 MR. BRUNWASSER: No. I was telling him  
13 historical information that, I worked for the  
14 department for 40 years. So I have a fair  
15 amount of historical knowledge. And I just  
16 wanted to apprise him of how we got to where we  
17 are. That's all.  
18 MR. LONG: I just wanted to make it  
19 clear to you that the increase they got in  
20 2013, they still haven't explained how they  
21 spent that money on improving the system. So  
22 why do we need to give them another increase  
23 when they can't tell us how they improved the  
24 last? I don't understand that.

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1 HEARING OFFICER: Obviously, we are not  
2 in a position to tell you. I think we had a  
3 discussion before when you were up about how  
4 the Water Department has to set all of that up  
5 in their filing, to the great big filing. We  
6 have not yet absorbed it all. That's what we  
7 are going to do in the next several months is  
8 to look at it and to probe it. The public  
9 advocate is going to put their experts forth  
10 and probe it. You might want to talk to Ms.  
11 Pickens here about your concerns.  
12 MR. LONG: Don't you think that would  
13 be an important piece of information you should  
14 have at this meeting?  
15 HEARING OFFICER: We don't have it now  
16 at this meeting. Maybe the Department could  
17 speak to that.  
18 MR. LONG: Another point I'm making.  
19 You got too big. It's out of control. You  
20 still want to get fed. You still get fed off  
21 our backs. That has to end. Are we going to  
22 be back here two years later with the same  
23 question we need to increase? What are you  
24 doing to improve your processes, the system?

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1 Where is the money going? Nobody can explain  
2 that to me.  
3 HEARING OFFICER: I want to say before  
4 the commissioner gives the Department's  
5 response at this point, your comment helps the  
6 Board figure out what needs to be reviewed in  
7 order to decide whether or not to give a rate  
8 increase.  
9 MR. LONG: I hope, I appreciate that.  
10 I want somebody to look at this with a fine  
11 tooth comb. What I'm saying, like the  
12 gentleman said, some of the services we get  
13 from the Water Department, they are terrible.  
14 And I can sympathize with this gentleman that  
15 called down to the Customer Service. It's a  
16 joke. Just you look at it, it's chaos. And  
17 this was brought up in the 2013 meeting. I  
18 don't see no improvement there either. So I  
19 got a problem. Where is this money going?  
20 Nothing is getting improved. I just don't, I  
21 don't get it.  
22 MS. McCARTY: So we have been installing  
23 many miles of water main since 2012.  
24 MR. LONG: It was 2013.

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1 MS. McCARTY: Okay. But what I can tell  
2 you before we ask for a rate increase, we do a  
3 very in depth --  
4 MR. LONG: Cost benefit analysis?  
5 MS. McCARTY: Well, we actually dig down  
6 and look at what it costs to do things. And  
7 every year the various units have to come  
8 before the commissioner and present what their  
9 budget is and why they need what they need.  
10 And people don't always get what they want and  
11 get what they ask for. And those are  
12 opportunities for management to do their job  
13 and try to make sure that we are staying on  
14 target to be as cost effective as possible.  
15 And that, those budgets are part of  
16 what we look at, our consultants look at to  
17 determine what the rate increase would need to  
18 be so we can cover the cost and continue to  
19 provide the services that we provide.  
20 I'll also say if you have got any  
21 specific Customer Service issues, I'm happy to  
22 speak with you afterwards and try to address  
23 those issues as well. That goes for everybody  
24 in the room, by the way.

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1 MR. LONG: That's another point I'm  
2 getting to. I think we made this more bigger  
3 than it really is. You are a utility company.  
4 You provide more --  
5 MS. McCARTY: Waste water services.  
6 MR. LONG: That's the gist of it, and  
7 you provide service to your customer. And you  
8 also need a Billing Department. So you collect  
9 the money, make sure where it's. You are so  
10 big now, it's no way to shut it down. It would  
11 collapse if you didn't get an increase.  
12 My question is, this is going to keep  
13 going on and on and on no matter what because  
14 you are not improving anything. Your general  
15 counsel, who is your general counsel, Ma'am?  
16 MS. McCARTY: Scott Schwartz.  
17 MR. LONG: Scott Schwartz? And we had  
18 the young lady, this other legal person here?  
19 MS. McCARTY: Susan Crosby.  
20 MR. LONG: Think about how many Scott  
21 Schwarts and Susan, I forgot about her last  
22 name.  
23 MS. McCARTY: Crosby. Actually, our  
24 lawyers don't really get paid that much, I'm

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1 ashamed to say.  
2 MR. LONG: They get paid.  
3 MS. McCARTY: We all get paid  
4 hopefully.  
5 MR. LONG: You got a lot of different  
6 managers on there. I'm sure their salary is  
7 way over six figures.  
8 MS. McCARTY: I wish.  
9 MR. LONG: When is this cost going to  
10 get breaked down? I want the cost to be with  
11 the work fixing the pipe and providing the  
12 water. I don't want to see it in management. I  
13 want it right here.  
14 MS. McCARTY: I hear you. I got it.  
15 MR. LONG: Thank you.  
16 MS. McCARTY: Thank you.  
17 MR. BURKHARDT: Jack Burkhardt again.  
18 I would like to know what can the Water  
19 Department do with the City Sanitation  
20 Department to keep the streets a little cleaner  
21 so this junk doesn't all go down into the  
22 sewers? Which I knew, lately I know have to  
23 had to be cleaned lot more than we ever did  
24 years ago in account of just the trash that's

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1 laying on the street. Again, it's a cost to  
2 us, the rate payer. I think that should be  
3 borne a little on the City Streets Department,  
4 the Sanitation Department or Licenses and  
5 Inspection with all the junk that's laying  
6 around. Thank you for your time.  
7 MS. McCARTY: Excellent point. We are,  
8 as part of our Storm Water Program, being asked  
9 by our regulators to look at trash. And we are  
10 studying an area and monitoring. Plastic bags  
11 is a big issue. But the other thing is all  
12 that trash we removed, the Streets Department  
13 actually does pay for that. We don't pay for  
14 the disposal, the Streets Department pays for  
15 that.  
16 MR. BURKHARDT: The Water Department  
17 pulls it out. So it's cost again. Who is  
18 paying for that? The Water Department;  
19 right?  
20 MS. McCARTY: I believe so, yes.  
21 MS. LaBUDA: Yeah.  
22 MS. McCARTY: It's part of the storm  
23 water charge.  
24 MR. BURKHARDT: Exactly. That is what

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1 my point is. Why are we penalized again? I  
2 have been here for a few years. I know the  
3 amount of time we have had to clean our system  
4 compared to years ago because a lot of people,  
5 pardon the expression, are slobs.  
6 MS. McCARTY: All of those people from  
7 New Jersey.  
8 MR. BURKHARDT: Again, who is paying for  
9 it is the rate payer. And I think it's  
10 unfair. Some, I think that burden should be  
11 put on the other City departments.  
12 MS. McCARTY: Good point.  
13 MR. BURKHARDT: I think that should be  
14 considered when you are trying to put another  
15 bill on us. I know it's only a small amount.  
16 And I call the City, the Water Department.  
17 They are trying to do some of the storm water  
18 conservation. I have been to a couple  
19 meetings. I think that's a terrific idea. But  
20 on the other, I just think it's a little unfair  
21 again for us to be penalized for other people  
22 who are not pulling their weight. Thank you.  
23 MS. McCARTY: Thank you.  
24 HEARING OFFICER: Thank you much very

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1 much. Is there anybody else who would like to  
2 make a comment or ask a question?

3 It looks as if everyone who has wanted  
4 to make a comment or request has done that.  
5 And we want to thank all of you, even those who  
6 didn't come up to the mic because your interest  
7 in this process is important to us as this Rate  
8 Board looks over the request by the Department.

9 The Rate Board was created as an  
10 independent body because there was a concern  
11 that the Department shouldn't set its own  
12 rates. So this is a new thing that hasn't been  
13 done before. But it is the job of the  
14 gentlemen here and the other two members of the  
15 Rate Board to take an objective look at the  
16 request. And we'll take your comments into  
17 account. I want to thank the Philadelphia  
18 Protestant Home for their hospitality. I  
19 understand the Water Department has put out  
20 some refreshments. And I want to thank them  
21 for that. And if there is nothing else, we can  
22 close this meeting. Thank you very much.

23 (Whereupon, the hearing was concluded  
24 at 7:25 p.m.)

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