

1 PHILADELPHIA WATER, SEWER AND STORM WATER RATE  
2 BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

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8 IN RE: Notation No. PA nn HRG

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10 DATE: Tuesday, April 22, 2025

11 LOCATION: Zoom Teleconference

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13 Reported by: Jill Piper

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Job No.: 53438

1 ATTENDANCE

2 MARLANE CHESTNUT, HEARING OFFICER

3 DELAND BRYANT, BOARD MEMBER

4 ANDRE DASENT, PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT

5 GLEN ABRAMS, PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT

6 CARL SHULTZ, PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT

7 BROOKE DARLINGTON, WATER REVENUE BUREAU

8 CHARLOTTE EDELSTEIN, PUBLIC ADVOCATE

9 MICHAEL SKIENDZIELEWSKI, PUBLIC OBSERVER

10 LANCE HAVER, PUBLIC OBSERVER

11 RANDY GIANCATERINO, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

12 CONSTANCE THOMPSON, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

13 BARBARA HILL-CISSE, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

14 JOCELYN TOSS, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

15 JOANNE GREEN, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

16 CAROL MAXWELL-REAVES, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

17 J D. LEE, RENTAL BUSINESS CUSTOMER

18 TIAWANA GRIFFIN, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

19 LINDA POINDEXTER, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

20 DANIEL KOMISARCHIK, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

21 JOYCE WALLACE, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

22 KATIE NOCERA, INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER

23

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1	INDEX OF EXAMINATION	
2	EXAMINATION:	PAGE
3	Statement of Randy Giancaterino	20
4	Statement of Constance Thompson	26
5	Statement of Barbara Hill-Cisse	29
6	Statement of Joanne Green	39
7	Statement of J D. Lee	46
8	Statement of Tiawana Griffin	57
9	Statement of Linda Poindexter	62
10	Statement of Daniel Komisarchik	66
11	Statement of Joyce Wallace	76
12	Statement of Katie Nocera	84
13	Statement of Carol Maxwell-Reaves	90
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		

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2 PROCEEDINGS

3 - - -

4 THE COURT: Good evening, Andre.

5 MR. DASENT: I see Glen Abrams and  
6 the audience as an attendee, and he'll be  
7 giving the short talk, the introduction.

8 THE COURT: Very short  
9 introduction.

10 MR. DASENT: Very short. Very  
11 short. He's practiced this afternoon.

12 THE COURT: Okay. Deland, we'll  
13 give it a minute or two to make sure --

14 MR. BRYANT: I'm sorry. I missed  
15 what Andre said. I'm sorry.

16 THE COURT: He was just saying that  
17 Glen Abrams would be giving their  
18 introductory remark.

19 MR. BRYANT: Okay. I'll make him a  
20 panelist. Thank you.

21 THE COURT: In terms of panelists,  
22 I think you need to make Jill the panelist  
23 also.

24 MR. BRYANT: Great. Give me the

1 name one more time.

2 MR. DASENT: Glen Abrams.

3 MR. BRYANT: Thank you.

4 MR. DASENT: Yes.

5 THE COURT: And Charlotte?

6 MR. DASENT: Oh, yes. Charlotte,  
7 yeah.

8 THE COURT: She needs to be a  
9 panelist also?

10 MR. BRYANT: Okay. I was going to  
11 ask you that. Let me know who else needs to  
12 be a panelist (indiscernible).

13 THE COURT: Yeah. Jill is the  
14 court reporter.

15 MR. BRYANT: No problem. She's on.

16 THE COURT: I see her here.  
17 Charlotte's here. I think it's 6:06. So I  
18 think now we will get started. Is everybody  
19 ready?

20 MR. DASENT: Yes.

21 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you,  
22 everyone, for attending. Thank you for  
23 taking the time to attend this public hearing  
24 being held to address the Philadelphia Water

1 Department's request to increase its rates  
2 for service.

3 My name is Marlane Chestnut.  
4 That's C-H-E-S-T-N-U-T, and Marlane is M-A-R-  
5 L-A-N-E, and I've been selected by the  
6 Philadelphia Water, Sewer and Storm Water  
7 Rate Board to oversee the hearing process and  
8 to write a recommendation for the Rate Board  
9 to consider with respect to this rate  
10 request.

11 The Rate Board's members none of  
12 whom are paid or appointed by the mayor and  
13 approved by city council to independently  
14 review and set rates charged for water,  
15 sewer, and storm water service in  
16 Philadelphia.

17 There is a court reporter who will  
18 produce a stenographic record of this  
19 hearing, so please be sure to speak slowly  
20 and clearly.

21 The transcript for this hearing and  
22 the other public and technical hearings, as  
23 well as all documents produced in this case,  
24 will be posted on the Rate Board's website

1 under the "Rate Proceedings" tab in the  
2 section that says "2025 General Rate  
3 Proceeding."

4 Now, the website for the Rate Board  
5 is [phila.gov/departments/water-sewer-storm-](http://phila.gov/departments/water-sewer-storm-water-water-board)  
6 [water-water-board](http://phila.gov/departments/water-sewer-storm-water-water-board). But an easier way to do  
7 it is you type in [phila.gov](http://phila.gov), hit  
8 "Departments" near the top right, and then  
9 just type "Sewer" and that will take you to  
10 the home page for the Water, Sewer and Storm  
11 Water Rate Board. And then you can choose  
12 the "Rate Proceedings" tab.

13 As I said, all the documents  
14 produced in this proceeding are there, and  
15 hopefully, it's easy to navigate. As you're  
16 aware, on March 31st, 2025, the Philadelphia  
17 Water Department filed a formal notice of  
18 intent to raise rates for water, sewer, and  
19 storm water service in September 1st, 2025  
20 and, again, on September 1st, 2026.

21 The amount of increase for  
22 individual customers varies with your water  
23 usage.

24 But as the Water Department is

1 permitted to recover all of its requested  
2 increase, then for a typical customer not  
3 receiving the senior discount or other  
4 discounts for service, it's projected that  
5 the monthly bill will increase from  
6 approximately \$82 in September, 2025 -- I'm  
7 sorry, from \$76 to 82 -- I'm sorry, from \$82  
8 to \$91 in September of 2025, and then from  
9 \$91 to approximately \$97 per month,  
10 September, 2026.

11 At this point, the formal  
12 participants to the proceeding are the Water  
13 Department, the Water Revenue Bureau, which  
14 is a part of the city's Department of  
15 Revenue, which does the billing and  
16 collections for the Water Department and  
17 administers the department's customer  
18 assistance programs.

19 The public advocate, whose role is  
20 to represent the interest of residential and  
21 small commercial customers, a group of large  
22 water companies and two individual customers.  
23 We've had a pre-hearing conference to address  
24 procedural issues and to adopt a schedule.



1           In May, we will have what are  
2   called technical hearings to examine the  
3   statements and exhibits submitted by the  
4   participants, which I will consider and use  
5   to develop my report containing my  
6   recommendation for the Rate Board. You're  
7   welcome to observe these hearings. Links  
8   will be posted on the Rate Board's website.

9           The Rate Board will consider my  
10   rate report as well as the positions of the  
11   various participants and make its decision in  
12   July. Again, all transcripts and documents  
13   will be posted to the Rate Board's website  
14   under the 2025 General Rate Proceeding tab.  
15   In terms of how I will conduct this hearing,  
16   I will first call on people who have  
17   registered.

18           If you have not registered and want  
19   to comment, that's fine, we will get to  
20   everybody. Everybody can make a statement.  
21   Or you can send a letter or comment by email  
22   to the Water Board at  
23   waterrateboard@phila.gov, that's  
24   waterateboard, altogether with no hyphens, no

1 spaces, then the "at" symbol, then phila dot  
2 gov, anytime between now and the close of the  
3 record on May 28th.

4 We will post all these email  
5 comments and letters at the 2025 General Rate  
6 Proceeding tab. I can assure you that the  
7 written comments as well as the comments  
8 given at this hearing will be included in the  
9 record of this proceedings and will be  
10 considered by me and the Rate Board.

11 When it is your turn, I will call  
12 your name and deal in -- well, let me back up  
13 for a second. This is perhaps a slightly  
14 different version of Zoom than you are used  
15 to because it contains more robust security  
16 protection to avoid disruptions on bad  
17 behavior.

18 So what will happen is that when  
19 you indicate you would like to make a  
20 statement, you will raise your hand. And  
21 what Deland will do, he will change your  
22 status from attendee to panelist. That will  
23 allow you to become un-muted and allow you to  
24 let yourself be seen on the video. But

1 please be aware there's a slight delay for  
2 Deland to do that, so please be patient.

3 I will ask your name, if you're a  
4 customer of the Water Department, and if you  
5 are appearing on behalf of a group. And if  
6 yes, if you're authorized to speak for that  
7 group. Please try to confine your remarks to  
8 the subject of the proceeding, the rates  
9 proposed for fiscal year 2026 and fiscal year  
10 2027.

11 If you have a question about the  
12 proposed rates, if we can answer briefly, we  
13 will. Otherwise, someone will get back to  
14 you with an answer.

15 If you have a service or individual  
16 billing issue, please contact either the  
17 department or the Public advocate directly  
18 and I will ask them to provide -- or I guess  
19 the Water Revenue Bureau also, and I will ask  
20 them to provide information for you to  
21 contact them.

22 After your statement, you may be  
23 asked brief questions for the purpose of  
24 clarification, by me or by any of the

1 participants here.

2 If you have not registered, I'm  
3 going to make a statement. When you raise  
4 your hand, we'll get to you. And, again, to  
5 raise your hand, look for a hand on the bar  
6 that contains the Zoom controls. It's either  
7 along the bottom or the top, depending on  
8 what device you're using. Look under  
9 "Reactions" and then select the raised hand.

10 If you are participating  
11 telephonically, I was told that you dial and  
12 hit the "star" button, then the number "9" to  
13 raise your hand for us to recognize you.  
14 Now, again if you have dialed in  
15 telephonically, hit the "star" button, then  
16 the number "9", and that raises your hand.

17 I won't impose a time limit at this  
18 point, but please try to limit yourself to no  
19 more than three or five minutes to ensure  
20 that we do hear from everyone. After you're  
21 done, you're welcome to stay, but you  
22 certainly don't have to. You're free to  
23 leave at any time. And I should add that we  
24 will not tolerate disruptive behavior.

1 I doubt anybody here will do that,  
2 but please be advised that if you do, we will  
3 not hesitate to block you visually or to mute  
4 you.

5 Again, thank you for taking the  
6 time to participate. I also want to thank  
7 the customers who took the time to send  
8 comments by email. We've received a number  
9 of comments which will be listed on the Rate  
10 Department's site. And I can assure you that  
11 every one of these is read.

12 It's important that the Rate Board  
13 hear directly from you, the people who will  
14 be directly affected by any change in rates.  
15 Now, before hearing from members of the  
16 public, I'll ask the Water Department, the  
17 public advocate, and any other formal  
18 participant who wishes to do so to introduce  
19 yourself and make a very brief comment  
20 concerning your interest in this proceeding.

21 After that, I would ask if there  
22 are any public officials here who wish to  
23 make a comment and then we'll open this  
24 hearing to members of the public. Okay? So,

1 with that said, I guess we'll start with Mr.  
2 Abrams. Or, Mr. Dasent, did you want to --

3 MR. DASENT: Yeah.

4 THE COURT: -- introduce Mr. Abrams  
5 or --

6 MR. DASENT: Yeah.

7 THE COURT: -- directly?

8 MR. DASENT: Give me a moment to  
9 introduce him. Thank you, Judge Chestnut,  
10 first of all, and thank everyone for being in  
11 attendance this evening. We want to hear  
12 from you, and we're anxious to get your views  
13 on the proposed rate increase.

14 My name is Andre Dasent. I serve  
15 as outside counsel to the Philadelphia Water  
16 Department. With me this evening are Carl  
17 Shultz and Brooke Darlington, also outside  
18 counsel. But, most importantly, with us is  
19 Glen Abrams, our deputy commissioner for  
20 communications and engagement, and he'll give  
21 a brief introductory statement.

22 MR. ABRAMS: Good evening,  
23 everyone. As Andre said, my name is Glen  
24 Abrams, and I serve as deputy commissioner of

1 communications and engagement at the  
2 Philadelphia Water Department. Today, I'm  
3 speaking on behalf of the department in this  
4 proceeding.

5           We first want to thank all of you  
6 for joining the hearing to share your views  
7 about the ratencrease request that the Water  
8 Department has filed with the Philadelphia  
9 Water, Sewer and Storm Water Rate Board. The  
10 Water Department provides drinking water,  
11 sanitary sewer, and storm water services to  
12 residential, commercial, and institutional  
13 customers within the city.

14           These services are essential and  
15 the foundation of public health in  
16 Philadelphia. We recently requested an  
17 adjustment in rate and charges so that we  
18 have sufficient resources to continue current  
19 and planned programs and to pay for  
20 significantly increasing operating cost in  
21 fiscal years 2026 and 2027.

22           Additional revenues are needed to  
23 ensure that clean water is delivered as  
24 safely and reliably as possible and that

1 wastewater treatment and storm water  
2 management services meet your needs and the  
3 needs of our shared environment, while also  
4 meeting our regulatory requirements.

5           The Water Department recognizes  
6 that any increase in rates can be a hardship,  
7 especially right now. But this increase is  
8 necessary to maintain essential services and  
9 address the department's current and planned  
10 projects. The Water Department is not a for-  
11 profit corporation, and your monthly water  
12 bill supports the work we do, not the city  
13 budget or taxes.

14           We are engineers, laborers,  
15 scientists, customer service representatives,  
16 and, most importantly, neighbors and fellow  
17 consumers of the water every Philadelphian  
18 depends on. When we request higher rates, we  
19 only request what we project will be needed  
20 in the coming years, and we show our  
21 customers why we are requesting these amounts  
22 through this public rate-setting process.

23           You can find a slide presentation  
24 on the Rate Board website that helps explain



1     why a rate increase is necessary at this  
2     time.

3                 Finally, we want you to know that  
4     Philadelphia has robust and comprehensive  
5     customer assistance programs which help low  
6     income customers pay their bills, including  
7     the Tiered Assistance Program, or TAP, the  
8     Senior Citizen Discount, and other programs  
9     that are more flexible than ever.

10                If you are experiencing hardship,  
11     we want to help. You can use one application  
12     for TAP, the senior discount, or other  
13     programs available to assist households.  
14     These programs are accessible through our  
15     website at [www.phila.gov/water-bill-help](http://www.phila.gov/water-bill-help), or  
16     by calling 215-685-6300, Monday through  
17     Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

18                And if you have specific billing  
19     questions, we ask that you email us. Mr.  
20     Dasent has offered his email, so that is --  
21     and I will put it in the chat. But it's  
22     Andre, A-N-D-R-E, dot c dot dasent, D-A-S-E-  
23     N-T, at gmail dot com. And he'll get those  
24     requests to us, and so that we can answer

1 your questions.

2 But the purpose of today's session  
3 is to hear from you, our customers. We  
4 appreciate you taking the time to share your  
5 views with us today, and we look forward to  
6 hearing from you. Thank you.

7 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Abrams.  
8 I do want to mention that the slide  
9 presentation that Mr. Abrams referenced is or  
10 will be posted on the Rate Board under the  
11 "Public Hearing" tab -- under the "Public  
12 Hearing" table. Okay. Thank you. I guess  
13 Ms. Edelstein?

14 MS. EDELSTEIN: Hi. Good evening,  
15 everyone. My name is Charlotte Edelstein,  
16 and I'm an attorney at Community Legal  
17 Services, or CLS. CLS has been appointed to  
18 serve as the public advocate in this rate  
19 proceeding.

20 The public advocate's job is to  
21 independently represent the interests of  
22 residential and small commercial customers in  
23 receiving water services at just and  
24 reasonable rates. We encourage you to share

1 your concerns about the proposed rate  
2 increases by speaking here tonight or by  
3 providing input to the board in writing.

4 If you'd like more information  
5 about our work as the public advocate, or if  
6 you would like assistance providing  
7 information to the board, please contact us  
8 directly. You can reach us by phone at 215-  
9 227-9988 or by email at publicadvocate at C-  
10 L-S phila, P-H-I-L-A, dot org. Thank you.

11 THE COURT: Thank you. Are there  
12 any other participants here who would like to  
13 make a statement? I don't see anybody.

14 MR. BRYANT: Ma'am, we do have one.  
15 Well, he lowered his hand now, so maybe not.  
16 And there is one. Yeah. There's several  
17 people. So it starts with, there's a Randy,  
18 because he has --

19 THE COURT: No. I'm asking, at  
20 this point, are there any formal  
21 participants? Mr. Haver, Mr.  
22 Skiendzielewski? No? Okay. Then let's go  
23 ahead then to -- I have a list that Deland  
24 had given me of people who had contacted him.

1 And it wasn't clear for most of them,  
2 actually, that they intended to participate  
3 in tonight's session as opposed to presenting  
4 a public comment.

5 So I think we should -- I mean,  
6 I've seen -- if somebody's here and available  
7 to ready to speak, we'll go with you first,  
8 okay? And then I'll go through the list to  
9 see if any of those people are present also,  
10 okay? Deland, did you want to start us with  
11 somebody?

12 MR. BRYANT: Yes. Hold on. Randy  
13 Giancaterino, I'll make you a panelist. Hang  
14 on.

15 THE COURT: Where is -- okay.  
16 There you are. Okay. Randy? Yeah. There  
17 you are.

18 MR. GIANCATERINO: How are you?

19 THE COURT: Good. Hi. First off,  
20 can you give and spell your name for the  
21 record, please?

22 MR. GIANCATERINO: My first name is  
23 Randy, R-A-N-D-Y, G-I-A-N-C-A-T-E-R-I-N-O.

24 THE COURT: I'm sorry. G-I-A-N --

1 MR. GIANCATERINO: A-N -- G-I-A-N-  
2 C-A-T-E-R-I-N-O.

3 THE COURT: Got it. And your  
4 address, please?

5 MR. GIANCATERINO: It's 1322 Tasker  
6 Street.

7 THE COURT: And I assume you're a  
8 customer of the Water Department?

9 MR. GIANCATERINO: Yes.

10 THE COURT: Are you appearing on  
11 behalf of the group?

12 MR. GIANCATERINO: Not on behalf of  
13 the group, but my comment would affect  
14 others, I think, you know, public -- other  
15 consumers.

16 THE COURT: Okay. Go ahead.

17 MR. GIANCATERINO: In light of the  
18 increase in the -- in the rates just -- first  
19 of all, I thank you for the opportunity to  
20 speak, number one. But, again, in light of  
21 the increase in the -- in the rates, I'm  
22 asking for consideration if -- regarding the  
23 storm water runoff. That's, that's a  
24 significant part of the bill when, when you

1 look at the bills.

2 And if there was any consideration  
3 for the future to have incentives, for  
4 residential incentives, to reduce the storm  
5 water runoff, and that would help some  
6 customers. So I'm not saying this needs to  
7 be in correspondence with the rate, but since  
8 the rates have increased because some  
9 properties and some, some customers, they  
10 keep the water on their property.

11 And since it's such a significant  
12 part of the bill, when you break down the  
13 bill in three parts, that if there's any  
14 incentive to keep the water on the property,  
15 whether it's through barrels, some people  
16 have grass lawns in, in certain parts of the  
17 city, and the water stays on the property and  
18 it never gets to the curb or to sewer.

19 Yet they -- we as customers, some  
20 of us, depending on our homes and all that,  
21 there are -- we're, we're charged with, with  
22 a standard service that's not delivered.

23 So if you're keeping the water on  
24 the property, then there's not much runoff to

1 the sewer. And, again, because it's such a  
2 significant, I don't -- it could be up to  
3 half the bill, it adds up.

4 And that could help, if there's a  
5 built-in, and I understand a couple of years  
6 ago that there, there was an incentive in the  
7 -- in the business sector that the -- that  
8 the Philadelphia Water Department gave  
9 businesses incentives, but not residential.

10 So if it would help -- if it was  
11 help with the rain barrel program that used  
12 to be, there's ways to keep the water on your  
13 property. And I think a lot of people, more  
14 -- too many people, they don't really look at  
15 their water bill. But if you look at the  
16 water bill, it's broken down to at least  
17 three sections. And one of them is, is  
18 runoff.

19 So I don't know where this, this  
20 request needs to go, but I just want it to be  
21 heard and just bring that up to those who  
22 make decisions. And I don't know if your  
23 board could have an influence over that.

24 THE COURT: Well, I can tell you

1     that there are -- I don't remember -- Okay.  
2     I don't want to misspeak here, but incentives  
3     for residential customers to manage their  
4     storm water, I'm not sure if the department  
5     already has that, has looked at that as where  
6     that is. But how about if someone gets back  
7     to you on that?

8                 MR. GIANCATERINO: Yeah.

9                 MR. DASENT: We're happy to respond  
10    in writing to that request, Judge Chestnut.  
11    And we have evaluated various alternatives  
12    for all customer groups to have incentive to  
13    manage storm water. There are also rate  
14    design changes that are being evaluated that  
15    will be helpful to sort out various types of  
16    properties, whether a row house or a single  
17    or a duplex.

18                So what we can give you from a  
19    subject matter expert, a good response that  
20    will be to, to your question. And, randy, if  
21    you would, I just have to figure out how to  
22    be in touch with you. My email is in the  
23    chat.

24                THE COURT: There is no chat.



1 MR. DASENT: My email is my name,  
2 Andre, A-N-D-R-E, dot c, like cat, dot  
3 Dasent, D-A-S-E-N-T, at gmail dot com. And  
4 we're happy to respond to you, but if you  
5 correspond with me, I'll have your email on  
6 my system and I can get right back to you.  
7 We'll also post, more importantly for  
8 everyone, responses to customer requests this  
9 evening.

10 So if you have a question, we'll  
11 try to field it and get a subject matter  
12 expert to answer you. Thank you.

13 MR. GIANCATERINO: Yeah. Okay, so.  
14 Andre, just give it to -- the email, it's not  
15 in the chat. Give it to me one more time. I  
16 think I have everything in terms of your  
17 email address.

18 MR. DASENT: Yeah. Awesome. My  
19 name, Andre, A-N-D-R-E --

20 MR. GIANCATERINO: Okay.

21 MR. DASENT: -- dot c, like cat, my  
22 middle initial, dot Dasent, D-A-S-E, like  
23 Edward, N-T at gmail dot com.

24 MR. GIANCATERINO: All right.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. DASENT: Yeah.

3 THE COURT: Yeah. And as Andre had  
4 mentioned, when somebody has asked for more  
5 information, usually the company or the  
6 public advocate, depending on who's  
7 appropriate, will provide a listing of their  
8 responses, and we'll include that in the  
9 record, okay?

10 MR. GIANCATERINO: Yes. Thank you.

11 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

12 Deland?

13 MR. BRYANT: Yes. Give me one  
14 second. We have Constance Thompson. Hold  
15 on.

16 MS. THOMPSON: Hello?

17 THE COURT: Hold on a second.

18 Okay. Constance Thompson?

19 MS. THOMPSON: Yes. C-O-N-S-T-A-N-  
20 C-E T-H-O-M-P-S-O-N.

21 THE COURT: And your address,  
22 please?

23 MS. THOMPSON: 6742 North 16th  
24 Street.

1 THE COURT: And are you a customer  
2 of the Water Department?

3 MS. THOMPSON: I am.

4 THE COURT: Okay. And are you  
5 appearing on behalf of a group?

6 MS. THOMPSON: No. Myself.

7 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you. Ms.  
8 Thompson, go ahead.

9 MS. THOMPSON: My question,  
10 comment, complaint, the Water Revenue Bureau,  
11 they're not collecting the money that's due  
12 them. So I feel you keep raising the prices  
13 of water and like Ryan (sic) said -- (clear  
14 throat) excuse me -- the, the drop off, the  
15 runoff, everything's going up.

16 I have neighbors that I know for a  
17 fact their bills are in the thousands of  
18 dollars and they have not paid. I'm one  
19 person, one person that lives in a row house.  
20 How is my bill \$100? There is something  
21 wrong.

22 And I have a barrel. I got the  
23 barrel because I saw an ad for the rain  
24 barrel, and at that point in time, it was

1     touted as you would get some kind of  
2     incentive. I never got an incentive. So I,  
3     like Ryan, if we have a rain barrel and the  
4     rain never leaves your property, why can't we  
5     get some kind of discount?

6             Also with the senior discount,  
7     that's not enough. If somebody's made  
8     \$22,000, you're destitute. You need to bring  
9     that up, you know, for people to get help.  
10    22,000, I mean, I don't know who you can help  
11    with that. But I'm going to be retired next  
12    year, and, the water bill, if it keeps going  
13    up, I won't be able to get help because I  
14    don't make too much money. That's my  
15    complaint. Those are my comments.

16            THE COURT: Thank you. I guess I  
17    should ask this too did anybody want to ask  
18    any clarifying questions for Ms. Thompson? I  
19    think it's clear what your concern is, and  
20    that's uncollectibles on your high bill.

21            MS. THOMPSON: Yes.

22            THE COURT: And I can tell you that  
23    there are issues that, certainly, I look at,  
24    and the Rate Board looks at too. But, yes.

1 Okay?

2 MS. THOMPSON: Thank you.

3 THE COURT: Thank you. I  
4 appreciate your taking the time. Deland, do  
5 you --

6 MR. BRYANT: We have a Bobbi. Hold  
7 on.

8 MS. HILL-CISSE: Hello?

9 THE COURT: Hi.

10 MS. HILL-CISSE: Good evening?

11 THE COURT: Bobbi, how do you say  
12 your last name?

13 MS. HILL-CISSE: It's Cisse. So my  
14 actual name is Barbara, B-A-R-B-A-R-A. And  
15 it's Hill, H-I-L-L hyphen C-I-S-S-E, so  
16 Sierra Sierra Echo, as far as the last name.

17 THE COURT: Okay. Great. Thank  
18 you. And are you a customer of the Water  
19 Department?

20 MS. HILL-CISSE: Yes, indeed.

21 THE COURT: And your address? I'm  
22 sorry.

23 MS. HILL-CISSE: 3131 Hurley Street  
24 and 3133 Hurley Street.

1 THE COURT: Okay. And are you  
2 appearing on behalf of a group?

3 MS. HILL-CISSE: No. I'm not. But  
4 I am the social media person from McVeigh  
5 Recreation Center, which is currently closed.  
6 But I do kind of provide information to  
7 people via that vehicle, FYI..

8 THE COURT: Great. So why don't  
9 you go ahead with your statement, please?

10 MS. HILL-CISSE: Yes. So I wanted  
11 to say that, you know, although I'm not low  
12 income, you know, I care about people who  
13 are, right? So I just had a couple of  
14 questions. The first statement would be,  
15 unless there is an urgent, I mean, risk of us  
16 losing part of this, the water infrastructure  
17 or something, I think that if we can -- that  
18 we could maybe wait a minute.

19 So was there any type of a  
20 feasibility study on what the impact would be  
21 on not raising the rates at this moment?

22 MR. DASENT: We're happy to answer  
23 that question, Judge.

24 THE COURT: Can you answer briefly?

1 MR. DASENT: I mean, we --

2 THE COURT: Wait. I'll be honest,  
3 Ms. Cisse, that's the entire case presented  
4 by the --

5 MR. DASENT: Exactly.

6 THE COURT: -- Water Department.  
7 Maybe Mr., in your record, there are specific  
8 statements that do --

9 MR. DASENT: Yeah.

10 THE COURT: -- talk about the  
11 impact of not receiving rate relief?

12 MR. DASENT: Yes. PWD statement  
13 2A, in fact, speaks exactly to the issue of  
14 what would happen if we don't have rate  
15 relief. Would we default on our obligations?

16 And in 2027, we would. We will not  
17 be able to meet the 90 percent test different  
18 covenants that we have to get people to buy  
19 our bonds and the bonds funded the  
20 construction program. And we need to do  
21 construction to improve our infrastructure.

22 So you see, all these things are  
23 connected. And we have made a proposal  
24 that's based upon a cost of service study and

1     you can see the, the C tables indicate --  
2     that are attached to (indiscernible)  
3     testimony, Statement 7, explain the revenue  
4     requests that we're making over the years  
5     they'll be covered and the various  
6     obligations or requirements we're trying to  
7     meet. The various tables, sort of lay it out  
8     within the expense, construction expense,  
9     etc.

10                 THE COURT: Okay. To make it  
11     easier for customers such as this -- well, I  
12     think your question is pretty specific,  
13     ma'am. Maybe Andre, you could direct her to  
14     the right schedule?

15

16                 MS. HILL-CISSE: Well, what I'll --

17                 MR. DASENT: She can --

18                 MS. HILL-CISSE: What I'll say is,  
19     full disclosure, I haven't -- you know, you  
20     said that the presentation will be online at  
21     some point. I haven't viewed anything. I've  
22     just been sharing the information for people  
23     to hopefully take advantage of or have some  
24     say, but I will definitely look at that.



1                   MR. DASENT: Okay. So that's one  
2    approach. And the other would be, if I might  
3    -- if I have your question correct, we can  
4    post an answer to it by our finance  
5    department or our CFO can speak to the issue  
6    and we can write a response for you.

7                   MS. HILL-CISSE: Okay.

8                   MR. DASENT: And I think you're  
9    saying, basically, where have we laid out our  
10   case? In summary, and I can direct you to  
11   the tables that make that point as concisely  
12   as possible.

13                  MS. HILL-CISSE: Okay. And do I  
14   have an opportunity to ask another question?

15                  THE COURT: Sure.

16                  MS. HILL-CISSE: So I guess that,  
17   operationally, and as you said, you know,  
18   I've, I've -- you know, during the voting,  
19   there's been things on the ballot, you know,  
20   asking about, you know, bonds, etc. But as  
21   Ms. Thompson mentioned, there are -- there  
22   are bills that aren't collected.

23                  So, you know, that, that is one  
24   avenue to which you could actually recoup the

1 funds to maintain state of good repair. But  
2 what I wanted to know is what, if any,  
3 technological or environmental benefit to the  
4 quality of the water that's going to be  
5 delivered to us? Like, what's the value  
6 benefit for me as a customer?

7 MR. DASENT: I'm happy to answer  
8 that question in writing, but in a nutshell,  
9 this is a lawyer's delivery. We have let  
10 service line replacement funded as a part of  
11 this rate increase.

12 Over the two years of the rate  
13 increase, we're trying to remove a number of  
14 lead service lines, in both -- in every area  
15 of the city that we've located. And the cost  
16 associated with that, doing outreach for  
17 that, doing inventory of the lead surface  
18 lines that exists, and protecting against  
19 that health risk are very much part and  
20 parcel of this rate increase.

21 I can explain it a little better  
22 with a subject matter expert writing the  
23 answer. And if you would like that as  
24 another answer we provide and post at the

1 Rate Board website, I'm happy to do that.

2 MS. HILL-CISSE: Okay. So, thank  
3 you. And --

4 THE COURT: Let me say something  
5 here. Which is that, it's all the approach -  
6 - yeah. In these types of cases, you really  
7 have to balance competing interest. Because,  
8 as a customer, you do want the Water  
9 Department to have enough money to give you  
10 safe, reliable service. But you don't want  
11 the Water Department receiving more money to  
12 make it difficult for people to pay for that  
13 service.

14 So it really is kind of a balancing  
15 in terms of how much is enough, but not too  
16 much. Because my approach is, obviously, to  
17 give them as little money as possible to  
18 still make sure that your water is safe to  
19 drink and use.

20 MS. HILL-CISSE: Well, what I would  
21 -- what I'd like to add and I agree with you  
22 on that, is that I'm a person that I would  
23 prefer to pay for something that I see value  
24 in.

1                   So I don't -- it's not necessarily  
2    -- you know, everything else aside, again,  
3    full transparency, I, I think it's kind of  
4    tough that we have to pay for a free  
5    resource, which is water, but it has to be  
6    delivered, right? Through some type of  
7    vehicle or mode.

8                   But, you know, it's, it's for me,  
9    more of, I would like to see some  
10   advancement. And, and he did mention that  
11   there would be some replacements of some of  
12   the more legacy or older, you know, systems  
13   that are there. But like the other two  
14   callers, I have the property next to me, and  
15   it's just land. And I'm paying storm water  
16   for something that has patio for furniture on  
17   it.

18                  So it would just be more beneficial  
19   or more easily digestible for me to resolve  
20   in my mind why I'm paying more if I'm getting  
21   the same, you know, as far as what we see,  
22   right? We -- I, I can't see in the ground  
23   and see the new pipes, but, you know, I would  
24   need to, to understand and to see the benefit

1 as it relates to me and my quality of life,  
2 and that's why I've called in. So thank you  
3 both.

4 THE COURT: Thank you very much.

5 MS. HILL-CISSE: Thank you all.

6 Yeah. Thank you.

7 THE COURT: I appreciate your  
8 remarks.

9 MS. HILL-CISSE: Yes.

10 MR. DASENT: Judge Chestnut?

11 THE COURT: Yes.

12 MR. DASENT: I'm sorry to interrupt

13 --

14 THE COURT: Yeah.

15 MR. DASENT: -- but Ms. Thompson  
16 also asked about the senior discount  
17 threshold or her observation dealt with it,  
18 it seems too low. But I think I need to cite  
19 for the record what the threshold is going to  
20 be increased to. Because it's higher than  
21 the 22,000.

22 I don't have that right in front of  
23 me, but I'd like to post that response also  
24 so Ms. Thompson can see as she's more

1 qualified for that age-qualified GBB income-  
2 qualified as well.

3 THE COURT: Okay. Deland, do we  
4 have another person?

5 MR. BRYANT: Yes, we do. Well, it  
6 was Joanne. So I don't want to skip her. So  
7 we'll go to Jocelyn Toss (phonetic). Hold  
8 on. Hold on. I want to make sure she's  
9 connected and -- okay. Jocelyn, she's  
10 declined to become a panelist. I'm going to  
11 un-mute her to see if she would like to  
12 speak, so hold on.

13 THE COURT: Okay.

14 MR. BRYANT: And it appears she has  
15 left. So there is a Joanne G.

16 THE COURT: Oh, yeah. Joanne G.  
17 I've seen your hand up. Yeah.

18 MR. BRYANT: Yes. So we're --

19 THE COURT: So right here, your  
20 thumbnail is right in front of my nose here,  
21 so.

22 MR. BRYANT: I am promoting her  
23 now. So hold on.

24 MS. GREEN: I'll join as a panelist

1 or stay an attendee?

2 MR. BRYANT: Well, I made you a  
3 panelist, so.

4 MS. GREEN: Okay.

5 MR. BRYANT: Hang on. Hang on.  
6 You are coming through now. So Joanne is a  
7 panelist. I think you're here, so.

8 THE COURT: I heard her, but it  
9 looks like it's still muted. I don't  
10 understand that.

11 MR. BRYANT: Okay.

12 MS. GREEN: Sure.

13 MR. BRYANT: All right.

14 MS. GREEN: Can you hear me?

15 THE COURT: Okay. I can hear you  
16 now.

17 MS. GREEN: Okay. All right. So I  
18 had put my --

19 THE COURT: Wait. Wait. First off  
20 --

21 MS GREEN: Sorry.

22 THE COURT: First off, we need your  
23 name.

24 MS. GREEN: Joanne, J-O-A-N as in

1 Nancy, N as in Nancy. Last name, Green, as  
2 in color. Address is 1634 Farrington Road, F  
3 as in Frank, A-R-R-I-N-G-T-O-N Road. And the  
4 zip is 51.

5 THE COURT: And are you a customer?

6 MS. GREEN: Yes, I am.

7 THE COURT: And are you appearing  
8 on behalf of a group?

9 MS. GREEN: No.

10 THE COURT: Okay. Go ahead then,  
11 Ms. Green.

12 MS. GREEN: I'm a retiree from the  
13 City of Philadelphia working with the revenue  
14 -- Water Revenue. And I think I just want to  
15 piggyback off of Ms. Thompson. And, you  
16 know, we talk about rate increases to make  
17 sure we get a better quality of water and  
18 things of that nature, which is awesome.

19 But what I don't understand is why  
20 don't we -- why make a revenue request  
21 instead of finding avenues to -- for the  
22 customers that have these major outstanding  
23 bills, which could basically go towards what  
24 the rate increase is being implemented for.



1 Like, is there anything that the city is  
2 doing in order to collect all of these back  
3 bills? So millions of dollars in back bills.

4 MR. DASENT: Well, as if -- if I  
5 may Judge Chestnut?

6 THE COURT: Briefly, but yes. Your  
7 question, let me make sure.

8 MR. DASENT: Yeah.

9 THE COURT: You're concerned about  
10 the amount of the uncollectibles?

11 MS. GREEN: Yes.

12 THE COURT: And if anything can be  
13 done to increase the revenue received from  
14 those customers.

15 MS. GREEN: Exactly. So the rate  
16 increase doesn't have to be --

17 THE COURT: Right.

18 MS. GREEN: Yeah. We can balance  
19 it off.

20 THE COURT: Again, this is one of  
21 those difficult areas because, of course, we  
22 do want to. I mean, everybody would like the  
23 Water Department to collect as much as  
24 possible, but on the other hand, we really

1 don't want to hurt people who can't afford  
2 what is a necessary service so. But, yeah.  
3 Mr. Dasent, did you want to --

4 MR. DASENT: Yeah.

5 THE COURT: -- make a very brief  
6 response --

7 MR. DASENT: Yeah. There are --

8 THE COURT: -- to her question?

9 MR. DASENT: Yeah. There are  
10 constraints on what we can do with  
11 collections. WRB is trying to be aggressive  
12 and collecting what's due within the  
13 parameters of what we're allowed to.

14 For example, there are thresholds  
15 under which we -- if you have certain  
16 disabled person or a younger person or an  
17 elderly person in the house, there are  
18 restricts surrounding can you shut off or is  
19 it appropriate to shut off? And so those  
20 sort of hamstring are more vigorous  
21 collection effort. WRB and PWD also want to  
22 be very humane about this.

23 In other words, realizing dollars  
24 for folks that owe us a lot of money and

1 giving, finding a way through payment plans  
2 and strategies to help those who are  
3 vulnerable that owe us some money and we'd  
4 like to collect it, but we'd also like to  
5 keep you as a customer. And it's balancing.  
6 I can provide you more detailed response if  
7 you'd like with input from WRB.

8 MS. GREEN: Okay.

9 THE COURT: Ms. Edelstein, I'm  
10 sorry. I didn't mean to ignore you here.  
11 Did you want to jump in and respond to this  
12 or any other of the comments?

13 MS. EDELSTEIN: Flowers to me, I'm  
14 all set. Thank you.

15 THE COURT: Okay. But listen, I  
16 can tell you, I understand completely about  
17 wanting, especially people who have larger  
18 users and can pay. It's not inability to pay  
19 --

20 MS. EDELSTEIN: Exactly.

21 THE COURT: -- to pay. And there's  
22 a difference between people who are unwilling  
23 to pay and those who are unable to pay. I  
24 work as an ALJ for the Public Utility

1 Commission. I can tell you, some of those --  
2 and I did thousands of those types of cases.  
3 And some of them are just heartbreaking.

4 And I found that the utilities,  
5 despite their reputation, generally tried to  
6 work with people.

7 MS. EDELSTEIN: Okay.

8 THE COURT: But there are people  
9 who've used the system. I mean, there's no  
10 question about that. And they need to be  
11 identified and gone after.

12 MS. EDELSTEIN: Okay.

13 THE COURT: Okay. Does that answer  
14 your concern?

15 MS. GREEN: That's it. Thank you.

16 THE COURT: Thank you. Thank you  
17 for taking the time.

18 MS. GREEN: Mm-hmm.

19 THE COURT: Okay. Who do we have  
20 next?

21 MR. BRYANT: Hold on one second. I  
22 lost -- we lost Andre.

23 THE COURT: Yeah.

24 MR. BRYANT: Hold on.

1 THE COURT: Did he run away?

2 MR. BRYANT: No. No. Hold on.

3 He's back. Okay.

4 MR. DASENT: I see you.

5 MR. BRYANT: Okay. Andre, yes.

6 MR. DASENT: There you go.

7 MR. BRYANT: There was a slip on.

8 Okay. Great. All right. We have Carol

9 Maxwell-Reaves -- hold on -- next. She has

10 declined to be a panelist. So we'll unmute

11 her and see if she'd like to speak?

12 THE COURT: Okay. Carol? And I

13 don't see the rest of her name there, so.

14 MR. BRYANT: I have Carol Maxwell-

15 Reaves.

16 THE COURT: Okay.

17 MR. BRYANT: And I've asked her to

18 unmute. Ms. Reaves, if you can hear us, you

19 can unmute.

20 THE COURT: Ms. Reaves, can you --

21 oh, there you go.

22 MR. BRYANT: All right.

23 THE COURT: I guess you can put

24 your hand down.

1 MR. BRYANT: And I think she's  
2 available.

3 THE COURT: Okay. Ms. Maxwell-  
4 Reaves, can you give and spell your name for  
5 the record, please? Ms. Maxwell-Reaves, can  
6 you hear me?

7 MR. BRYANT: She is unmuted and  
8 she's not speaking. We can put -- we can  
9 mute her and she can come -- we can come back  
10 to her, if you'd like.

11 THE COURT: I was thinking we get  
12 back to her --

13 MR. BRYANT: All right.

14 THE COURT: -- if she's not ready  
15 to comment.

16 MR. BRYANT: All right. The next  
17 person we have is John Jacks (phonetic) --

18 THE COURT: Okay.

19 MR. BRYANT: -- or Jason.  
20 (indiscernible).

21 THE COURT: Jackson? Okay. Mr.  
22 Jackson, can you give and spell your name for  
23 the record, please?

24 MR. LEE: Actually, that, that took

1 my name off of my email. That's not my real  
2 name. My first name is J. I just didn't  
3 bother to change it then.

4 THE COURT: Okay.

5 MR. LEE: My first name is J, just  
6 one letter, not J-A-Y. Middle initial D, as  
7 in Delta, and then Lee, Lima, Echo, Echo.

8 THE COURT: Okay. That's easy  
9 enough.

10 MR. LEE: Yes, it is.

11 THE COURT: And could you give us  
12 your address, please?

13 MR. LEE: Yes. Now, I am  
14 representing my family's business, so I'll  
15 give you the address that is one of our  
16 rental properties.

17 THE COURT: That's fine.

18 MR. LEE: It's 3214 North Reese, R-  
19 E-E-S-E, Street.

20 THE COURT: Okay. And, obviously,  
21 that's a location with a customer?

22 MR. LEE: Yeah. That's the rental  
23 property. Yes.

24 THE COURT: Okay. And I guess go

1 ahead then, sir.

2 MR. LEE: All right. So I have a  
3 two part, I guess, comment, comment. The  
4 first part is I do understand the people's  
5 issue with not paying -- you know, not paying  
6 customers or whatever, so that's  
7 understandable. And I do wish you go after  
8 those people that don't pay. But I used to  
9 work at the Philadelphia Water Department.  
10 This is back in the '90s.

11 So if things have changed, please  
12 don't crucify me because I'm, I'm outdated.  
13 But I worked at the Philadelphia Water  
14 Department for, you know, about a year or six  
15 months or so.

16 And what I am concerned about is, I  
17 know the Water Department is asking for more  
18 money. And I think that one of the things  
19 they either should do, hopefully, they did do  
20 this, but should thoroughly do, is to look at  
21 the inefficiencies that are across the Water  
22 Department and see if they can relieve those  
23 inefficiencies.

24 I'll give you two examples. I



1 worked at the Wheat Sheaf plant that's over  
2 in, in, in -- along the Delaware River.

3 THE COURT: I'm sorry. Was that  
4 Wheat Sheaf?

5 MR. LEE: Wheat Sheaf. That's the  
6 -- that's the, the facility that I worked at  
7 in the '90s. And it was inefficient.

8 One of the things was they, they  
9 kind of had an adversarial relationship with  
10 the -- with, with the people who lived in the  
11 neighborhood. People would take pictures of  
12 trucks leaving the facility uncovered and  
13 then that would potentially generate  
14 lawsuits.

15 And they had to spend money,  
16 obviously, to fight, you know, to fight  
17 lawsuits and things like that, where it would  
18 be better if they just followed protocol and  
19 they wouldn't have to deal with that kind of  
20 stuff. And then I also -- and I worked as an  
21 engineer, so I do know that some of their  
22 designs didn't quite work.

23 So they didn't bother to, really,  
24 you know, when you -- when you make a bad

1 design, you, you kind of work with it to make  
2 it better, as opposed to just pick it up,  
3 throw it down a hole and start over from  
4 scratch. So they, they were pretty  
5 inefficient, and I'm guessing that even  
6 though that was 30 years ago, they probably  
7 still are a little inefficient.

8               So I think they should look at  
9 their processes and, and, and their protocols  
10 and see if they can get some of that money  
11 back by just being more efficient. That's  
12 one of -- that's one of my concerns.

13              The other concern is I -- over the,  
14 the, the 20-so years that we've owned that  
15 property, before you call up the Water  
16 Department, "Hey, I need to turn the water  
17 off. I don't have a tenant, and I don't want  
18 to pay a water bill for, you know, three or  
19 four months with no tenant." And they would  
20 come out and turn off the water. No problem.

21              I've just recently been in this  
22 situation with no tenant and haven't had a  
23 tenant for about two, three years now. And I  
24 wanted to turn the water off because I was

1     tired of the bills. Now, you have to call a  
2     plumber to do it yourself.

3             And when I called the plumber out  
4     there, the plumber couldn't turn the water  
5     off because I guess there was so much dirt  
6     and trash down in the, the little corridor  
7     where they -- where they had to stick the  
8     tool to, to turn off the valve. They  
9     couldn't turn it off.

10            So it's like, "Well, we can charge  
11    you, you know, over \$100 to try and turn it  
12    off. But if we can't, you're screwed." So  
13    not only do I have to, you know, pay to get  
14    my -- pay to do it myself to get my water  
15    turned off, but I can't do it because access  
16    to their equipment is blocked by, you know,  
17    trash and dirt being down in that facility --  
18    down in that corridor.

19            And do I have to pay to clean it  
20    out or is that the Philadelphia Water  
21    Department's responsibility? You know, so  
22    disrepair, I guess, is probably what I'm  
23    getting at.

24            So you put it on the customers, and

1 then the customer can't even do it because  
2 the, the, the department is not keeping  
3 their, their, their equipment in good  
4 condition. Now, granted, that might be an  
5 argument to -- that they need more money.  
6 But my point is, one, I think they're  
7 inefficient and they should clean that up.

8 And, two, this having to pay for a  
9 plumber yourself, I, I think that's a little  
10 bit nonsense, just to get your water turned  
11 off.

12 So the end result is my water is  
13 still on. I'm not going to turn it off  
14 because I can't get it turned off and I just  
15 have to keep paying for a water bill or the,  
16 the, the, the minimum payment or whatever,  
17 because I can't turn it off. That frustrates  
18 me a little bit.

19 But the biggest thing is, you're  
20 asking for more money, and I don't think you  
21 run your operation efficiently enough to  
22 justify asking for more money when you didn't  
23 clean up your house first.

24 THE COURT: Okay. I would think

1 that the department would be interested in  
2 hearing about your current difficulties. I'm  
3 not sure -- I'll be honest, in the '90s  
4 things maybe were different than they are now  
5 --

6 MR. LEE: Yeah. That's 30 years  
7 ago.

8 THE COURT: -- but something, so if  
9 you have, like, a current situation, please  
10 contact Mr. Dasent and he will look into it.  
11 And maybe there is a neighborhood problem  
12 there that really the Water Department should  
13 be looking at.

14 MR. LEE: I guess, the only -- the  
15 only neighborhood problem would probably be  
16 the -- because the Reese Street is one of  
17 those small streets where sometimes you have  
18 to drive on the curb in order to park because  
19 it's so narrow.

20 So I can see how trash and dirt and  
21 everything else gets down into those -- into  
22 those, I don't know what you call them,  
23 corridors, because it's about four or six  
24 feet down below ground where, where the shut

1 off valve is.

2 And it's probably, like, about a  
3 half a foot of dirt on top of it. So imagine  
4 if you paint it over a screw, right, and then  
5 you try to get a screwdriver in it to undo it  
6 and all the paint is in the way of the  
7 thread, so you can't get a screwdriver in  
8 there. That's the situation that I was in.

9 THE COURT: Yeah. I don't know if  
10 that's a generalized city issue, as opposed  
11 to a --

12 MR. LEE: I would imagine it  
13 probably is.

14 THE COURT: -- access. But I'm  
15 sure that Mr. Dasent will look --

16 MR. DASENT: I'd --

17 THE COURT: -- into it and --

18 MR. DASENT: I'd be happy to.

19 THE COURT: -- will get back to you  
20 or contact you for more information, okay?

21 MR. LEE: Okay. No harm.

22 MR. DASENT: Mr. Abrams, it's  
23 better to speak to it if, Your Honor, please.

24 THE COURT: Oh, sure.

1                   MR. ABRAMS: Yes. I'd be happy to  
2 speak to that. And as part of the  
3 information that we'll post the website, the  
4 Rate Board website, we'll, we'll post the  
5 diagrams that are on the Water Department's  
6 website about customer responsibilities. So  
7 the curb trap and the stop that you're  
8 referring to, specifically, is customer  
9 infrastructure.

10                   So that is not owned or maintained  
11 by the Water Department. But the water  
12 service lateral, the sewer lateral, the curb  
13 stop, all of that is the responsibility of  
14 the property owner. So we'll post that  
15 diagram just so it is clear to people. And,  
16 yeah. Those pieces of infrastructure or  
17 private infrastructure do require maintenance  
18 over the years.

19                   So that is why we say at this  
20 point, that it is a private plumber that  
21 needs to come out to turn off water. The  
22 other thing to be clear is that even if  
23 you're not using water, so you will not have  
24 the usage charge, but there still is a storm

1 water charge and a service charge for that  
2 property.

3 MR. LEE: Okay.

4 MR. ABRAMS: So there isn't a  
5 situation where just because you're --

6 MR. LEE: Well, it would be zero,

7 MR. ABRAMS: Listen. Just there  
8 isn't a situation when you're not using water  
9 at a property that is a zero bill just  
10 because the water would be turned off.

11 MR. LEE: Okay. Got it. Got it.

12 MR. ABRAMS: All right. Thank you.

13 THE COURT: Thank you very much,  
14 Mr. Lee --

15 MR. LEE: You're welcome.

16 THE COURT: -- for taking the time  
17 to come to comment.

18 MR. BRYANT: So we have Carol  
19 Maxwell-Reavesback.

20 THE COURT: Okay.

21 MR. BRYANT: All right. So, let me  
22 just unmute her. All right. Ms. Reeves is  
23 unmuted.

24 THE COURT: Okay. Ms. Maxwell-



1 Reaves, are you ready? Can you hear me? Ms.  
2 Maxwell-Reaves? Carol?

3 MR. BRYANT: Yes. I'm not sure.  
4 I'll put her back on mute and let's see maybe  
5 --

6 THE COURT: Yeah.

7 MR. BRYANT: She'll come back  
8 again. I'm not sure.

9 THE COURT: She has her hand up.

10 MR. BRYANT: Yes. All right. We  
11 have a Tiawana Washington, next.

12 THE COURT: Okay.

13 MR. BRYANT: Hold on. Ms.  
14 Washington has declined to be a panelist. We  
15 will unmute her. Let's see if she'd like to  
16 speak.

17 THE COURT: Yeah. There you are.  
18 Okay.

19 MS. GRIFFIN: Good evening,  
20 everyone.

21 THE COURT: Good evening. Ms.  
22 Washington, could you give and spell your  
23 name for the record, please?

24 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes. My, my last

1 name is actually Griffin. It's Griffin on my  
2 water bill. My -- the spelling of my name is  
3 T-I-A-W-A-N-A. And my last name, Griffin, is  
4 G-R-I-F-F-I-N.

5 THE COURT: And your address  
6 please.

7 MS. GRIFFIN: 1229 South 56th  
8 Street. And my zip code is 19143.

9 THE COURT: And you're a customer  
10 of the Water Department?

11 MS. GRIFFIN: Yes. I am a customer  
12 of the Water Department.

13 THE COURT: And are you appearing  
14 on behalf of a group?

15 MS. GRIFFIN: No, I am not.

16 THE COURT: Okay. Then why don't  
17 you go ahead, Ms. Griffin?

18 MS. GRIFFIN: Well, initially, you  
19 know, they said that the water bill -- our  
20 waters bill, will be increasing, you know,  
21 due to construction and things like that.  
22 However, my concern would be when you have  
23 prolonged construction. For example, on my  
24 street, they were replacing pipes. They've

1     been out there for about a year.

2                   And I would say for maybe the first  
3     four to six months, it was -- it was a stall  
4     where they had tore up the street, but you  
5     know what I mean, they weren't doing any --  
6     in, in my opinion, you know what I mean, they  
7     weren't necessarily moving forward and doing  
8     any real work. And, and it's been almost a  
9     year.

10                  So it's an increase in our water  
11     bill and we're paying. But in my opinion, I  
12     think that that four-month stall was very,  
13     very wasteful. You know, was, was very  
14     wasteful. And then my concern is, is that as  
15     the water bill increases along with  
16     everything else, you know what I mean, it's  
17     going to create a hardship for people to be  
18     able to pay and maintain those water bills.

19                  In addition to those unpaid bills,  
20     does the Water Department think that, that by  
21     raising the rates, are they going to increase  
22     the debt for people, one, who haven't already  
23     paid or are not paying those uncollected  
24     bills? And then, two, for those who are low

1 income, it may create a hardship.

2 And, and the other thing is, for  
3 those who are not low income, but the  
4 increase in, in the bills may cause a  
5 hardship and then add to the debt of  
6 uncollected water payments.

7 THE COURT: Obviously that's a  
8 concern. I mean, there's no question that we  
9 need to look at -- I mean, obviously,  
10 affordability is an issue. And, again, as  
11 we've indicated, sometimes you have to  
12 balance different types of interest with  
13 that. But with respect to your particular  
14 situation about the construction on your  
15 street, has that been finished?

16 MS. GRIFFIN: No.

17 THE COURT: It's still ongoing?

18 MS. GRIFFIN: It's still ongoing.  
19 They've been out there for a very long time  
20 and I would say for about a year. So for  
21 about --

22 THE COURT: Or maybe Mr. Dasent  
23 could look into that for you and maybe speed  
24 it up or see what's going on.

1 MR. DASENT: At least explain  
2 what's going on. Yes.

3 THE COURT: Because that seems like  
4 an excessive amount of time. I mean, I don't  
5 know what's involved, but it sounds like it's  
6 probably disruptive.

7 MS. GRIFFIN: And, and I would  
8 think that it's wasteful because I don't know  
9 if -- you know what I mean -- the city is  
10 still paying for people, you know. And, and  
11 it's a point where those individuals, you  
12 know, they're sitting back, they're eating  
13 lunch, they're leaving water bottles, you  
14 know, and things of that nature in front of  
15 people's properties.

16 And it seems like the work itself  
17 was lagging. And then we're kind of footing  
18 the bill for that.

19 THE COURT: Okay. What I'd suggest  
20 is, maybe you could contact Mr. Dasent at his  
21 email address that he'll be happy to provide  
22 again, just in case.

23 MR. DASENT: Sure.

24 THE COURT: He can get back to you

1 specifically, okay?

2 MS. GRIFFIN: Okay. Thank you very  
3 much.

4 THE COURT: Sure.

5 MR. DASENT: Okay. My email  
6 address, Ms. Griffin, is  
7 andre.c.dasent@gmail.com. I'll also try to  
8 find out what the project is and post an  
9 answer at the website if you don't reach out  
10 otherwise.

11 THE COURT: Deland, do we have  
12 anybody else who wanted to --

13 MR. BRYANT: Yes. Yes we do. Next  
14 person is Lynn Xi (phonetic). Hold on.  
15 We'll try it again.

16 MS. POINDEXTER: Okay. Can you  
17 hear me now?

18 MR. BRYANT: I can hear you. Yeah.

19 THE COURT: Yes.

20 MS. POINDEXTER: Okay. Hello.

21 THE COURT: Give us your full name?

22 MS. POINDEXTER: Yeah. My full  
23 name is Linda Poindexter. And I just had a  
24 question.

1 THE COURT: Oh, wait. Wait. Wait.

2 Wait. Wait. I got to --

3 MS. POINDEXTER: Oh, okay.

4 THE COURT: I got to write that  
5 down.

6 MS. POINDEXTER: Okay. Yeah.

7 Linda Poindexter.

8 THE COURT: And that's P-O-I-N-D-E-  
9 X-T-E-R?

10 MS. POINDEXTER: Yes. Yes.

11 THE COURT: And your address,  
12 please?

13 MS. POINDEXTER: 1314 Kimberly  
14 Drive.

15 THE COURT: And are you a customer?

16 MS. POINDEXTER: Yes, I am.

17 THE COURT: And are you appearing  
18 on behalf of a group?

19 MS. POINDEXTER: No. Just for me -  
20 -

21 THE COURT: Okay.

22 MS. POINDEXTER: -- so. Okay. I,  
23 I missed about the first half hour or so of  
24 this webinar, so I just wanted to know if you

1     were going to share it and, like, email it to  
2     everyone or?

3             THE COURT:   What we will do,  
4     there's a written transcript that's being  
5     produced by a court reporter here.   And it  
6     will be posted at the Water Rate Board's  
7     website along with all the other documents  
8     associated with this rate proceeding.

9             MS. POINDEXTER:   Oh, wonderful.  
10    Okay.   So is that --

11            THE COURT:   And also --

12            MS. POINDEXTER:   -- Philadelphia  
13    Water --

14            THE COURT:   -- wait.   Wait.   And  
15    also, I was going to say that Mr. Dasent will  
16    probably -- Mr. Dasent represents the Water  
17    Department here.

18            MS. POINDEXTER:   Yes.

19            THE COURT:   And he has been  
20    compiling or will be compiling answers to  
21    questions that people have raised.   And that  
22    will also be posted at the website.   And  
23    that's --

24            MS. POINDEXTER:   Okay.



1 THE COURT: That's available to the  
2 public to view.

3 MS. POINDEXTER: Okay. And will  
4 there be another webinar later?

5 THE COURT: Yes. We have two more  
6 public hearings for members of the public to  
7 come like this one.

8 MS. POINDEXTER: Okay.

9 THE COURT: We have one at 1  
10 o'clock tomorrow, and then there's an in-  
11 person public hearing at 6 o'clock tomorrow.

12 MS. POINDEXTER: Okay. I'm on the  
13 mailing list, so I'll, I'll go back and look  
14 at that email communication.

15 THE COURT: Okay. And also, I  
16 would suggest that if you haven't, go to the  
17 Philadelphia Water Rate Board's website.

18 MS. POINDEXTER: Okay. Okay. Will  
19 do. Thank you.

20 THE COURT: Sure.

21 MS. POINDEXTER: All right.

22 MR. BRYANT: Okay. We have a call-  
23 in. So I'm not sure the name.

24 THE COURT: Okay.

1 THE COURT: I Have asked to unmute.  
2 Caller?

3 THE COURT: Caller, are you there?

4 MR. KOMISARCHIK: Hi. Good  
5 afternoon. Can you -- can you guys hear me?

6 THE COURT: I can. Can you give  
7 and spell your name, please?

8 MR. KOMISARCHIK: Yes. My name is  
9 Daniel Komisarchik. K-O-M-I-S-A-R-C-H-I-K.

10 THE COURT: I'm sorry. K-O-M-I-S-  
11 A-R-H?

12 MR. KOMISARCHIK: C-H-I-K.

13 THE COURT: Okay. And your  
14 address, please?

15 MR. KOMISARCHIK: Yes. My address  
16 is 333 Avon, A-V-O-N, Street.

17 THE COURT: Okay. And are you a  
18 customer of the Water Department?

19 MR. KOMISARCHIK: Yes, I am.

20 THE COURT: And are you appearing  
21 on behalf of a group or your own behalf?

22 MR. KOMISARCHIK: Not officially.

23 But what I'm about to say is pretty much  
24 going to be relevant to all the residents.

1 THE COURT: Okay.

2 MR. KOMISARCHIK: So it is my  
3 understanding that this is just a, a number  
4 of projects that needed to be done in order  
5 to maintain proper, you know, quality of the  
6 water.

7 But it appears that, you know,  
8 instead of just having one large sum, which  
9 is the amount needed for the project to be  
10 completed, being split up on the amount of  
11 years or months, it's just going to be one  
12 raise that will never going to decrease back.  
13 And the -- and then even more so, the raise  
14 is quite substantial.

15 I believe this year is about 12  
16 percent. And then next year is about 6 or 7  
17 percent, comes around those numbers. I don't  
18 know any single person that has their  
19 incomes, you know, being increased in, in  
20 such amounts.

21 This is -- this is, you know --  
22 this is quite a substantial raise for, for an  
23 average, average family that does, you know,  
24 laundry, showering, and cooking. That does

1 not qualify for any discounts, that's not  
2 senior, that's, that's quite challenging.

3 So perhaps, you know, the, the  
4 outbreaks could be done a little more  
5 gradually, instead of just jumps like that.  
6 I'm saying 12 percent increase in one year,  
7 that's, that's quite massive.

8 THE COURT: In terms of the --

9 MR. KOMISARCHIK: And then, like I  
10 said, it's not -- it's not -- it's not like  
11 it's going to decrease once the projects are  
12 done.

13 Also, I'm assuming whatever  
14 upgrades are being done, the new equipment  
15 that's going to be in place, you know, that,  
16 that would only be more efficient than the  
17 current one. So if anything, you know, it  
18 should not be constantly going up. We just  
19 had an increase in rates not so long ago.  
20 Now we have one in -- you know, in 2025 and,  
21 and 2026.

22 So, I mean, you know, for, for --  
23 like I said, for the average family, this is  
24 -- you know, that's, that's going to be quite

1 a hardship.

2 I'm saying, I personally, I have  
3 three kids. Like I said, lots of laundry,  
4 lots of cooking, showering, that's, you know,  
5 that's a lot. And I don't think I'm alone in  
6 this boat. I'm, I'm pretty sure, you know,  
7 most, most, you know, middle income families  
8 are, you know, thinking the same thing that  
9 I'm thinking right now.

10 And then this is -- you know,  
11 that's not something like you can just opt  
12 out, right? It's not like -- it's not like  
13 energy, you can just go to another source  
14 and, you know, choose a different provider.  
15 So that's to say the Water Department is the  
16 only provider available, and if they keep  
17 increasing, you know, prices like that, that  
18 is quite hardship.

19 THE COURT: So you're concerned  
20 about the amount of the increase in the  
21 affordability of your water rates?

22 MR. KOMISARCHIK: Correct.

23 THE COURT: Well, I think that's an  
24 issue that, at least, I, certainly, and the

1 Rate Board, and I would like to thank  
2 everybody is very conscious of. But, yes.  
3 If you have specific questions, perhaps you  
4 could contact Ms. Edelstein, and she can  
5 maybe fill you in on some things that I think  
6 might clarify for you about -- I think you  
7 had a question about multi year projects,  
8 Charlotte?

9 MS. EDELSTEIN: Yeah.

10 THE COURT: How they're included in  
11 the rate request? Because I'm not -- correct  
12 me if I'm wrong -- but I'm pretty sure that  
13 only the amount spent within the rate period  
14 are going to be part of the rate. Is that --

15 MR. DASENT: Judge Chestnut, that  
16 is correct.

17 THE COURT: That's correct? Okay.

18 MR. DASENT: But we have a large  
19 utility with 100-year-old or thereabouts  
20 equipment and mains and sewers, and  
21 everything needs to be replaced over time.  
22 And so it is a continuum. And I hear the  
23 caller, and I -- we have to balance the  
24 interest of ratepayers and maintaining the

1 utility. It's, it's, it's difficult.

2 THE COURT: Well, I think, Ms.  
3 Edelstein, if you could give him contact, Mr.  
4 Komisarhchik here, and tell him the things  
5 you're looking at. Because that really --

6 MS. EDELSTEIN: Yeah. I guess --

7 THE COURT: -- is -- the role of  
8 the public advocate is to scrutinize the  
9 claims and the expenses sought by the  
10 company. So maybe you could fill -- maybe  
11 ask specific questions, or even maybe you  
12 could tell him the things that you are  
13 looking at or send him a copy of your  
14 testimony that's filed or something.

15 MS. EDELSTEIN: So --

16 THE COURT: Komisarchik, are you  
17 still there?

18 MR. KOMISARCHIK: Yes, I'm here.

19 THE COURT: Well, why don't you  
20 write down her email address and she can  
21 follow up with you if you'd like.

22 MS. EDELSTEIN: Yes. So if you  
23 want to know, get more information about what  
24 we're doing on this or just have other

1 general questions, you can email us at  
2 publicadvocate, that's P-U-B-L-I-C-A-D-V-O-C-  
3 A-T-E at C-L-S phila, which is P-H-I-L-A, dot  
4 org.

5 And then if it's easier, or for  
6 anyone else who has joined recently, you can  
7 also call us and just leave your phone number  
8 or your email address at 215-227-9988 and  
9 we'll get back to you.

10 THE COURT: Did that answer your --  
11 have we heard your concerns?

12 MR. KOMISARCHIK: Well, not really.  
13 I mean, my concern is that, like I said, if  
14 it's a single, you know, series of projects,  
15 the projects are going to be completed  
16 somehow. Are we -- you know, are you  
17 supposed to anticipate rate decrease sometime  
18 down the line or it's just going to increase  
19 every year?

20 THE COURT: Well, I think that's  
21 what the rate case is about. You'll have to  
22 look at the company's maybe a summary of the  
23 filing, because, yes. Plants may become more  
24 efficient, but the cost of items used,



1 salaries may go up. I mean, it's a kind of  
2 an all-steadying process. Yes. But I would  
3 hope their operations are more efficient over  
4 time.

5 But it's not really something we  
6 can get into detail tonight. But if you  
7 would like to look at the filing, maybe you  
8 have questions, or maybe Ms. Edelstein can  
9 walk you through. But it might be helpful  
10 for you to look at -- and this is not just  
11 for you, but for anybody with concern about  
12 your rates and what goes into them, learn if  
13 your testimony do.

14 If you look at the public  
15 advocate's testimony that they're going to  
16 file in this case, that's where they review  
17 the company's filing, take issue with what  
18 the company has claimed. And that might give  
19 you a better understanding of how these  
20 claims are looked at and examined and  
21 alternatives are presented, okay? And again,  
22 I will urge you --

23 MR. KOMISARCHIK: Thank you.

24 THE COURT: -- to do that, to go to

1 the Water Rate Board's website, and under the  
2 tab that says, I don't know, "Rate  
3 Proceedings" I think.

4 MR. DASENT: That's right. That's  
5 right.

6 THE COURT: It is 2025 Rate  
7 Proceeding, General Rate Proceeding. That  
8 will show you what the company has filed, and  
9 then it'll show you what the public advocate  
10 and the other participants will file in  
11 response to what the company did. But if  
12 anybody wants a more detailed understanding,  
13 that's the place to look, okay? Okay, then.  
14 Thank you very much, sir. Deland do we have  
15 somebody else?

16 MR. BRYANT: Yes. We next have KB.  
17 Hold on.

18 THE COURT: Okay.

19 MR. BRYANT: She has declined to be  
20 promoted and she has left. So w one more  
21 person. We have Carol Maxwell-Reaves again.  
22 We will try.

23 THE COURT: Oh, her again. Yes.

24 MR. BRYANT: Well, we actually have

1 another person too, but she was first, so.

2 Hang on.

3 THE COURT: Right.

4 MR. BRYANT: I'm going to unmute  
5 her. Ms. Reeves, are you --

6 THE COURT: She looks still muted  
7 to me.

8 MR. BRYANT: Ms. Reaves?

9 THE COURT: Ms. Reaves? Ms.  
10 Maxwell-Reaves? Carol? Carol, can you hear  
11 me? If you can, why don't you lower your  
12 hand? Carol? Well.

13 MR. BRYANT: And Hearing Officer, i  
14 would like, I can try to find her email and  
15 email her tomorrow and see if we can get her  
16 available for one of the sessions tomorrow.

17 THE COURT: That's a great idea.  
18 Thank you.

19 MR. BRYANT: That's if you like.

20 THE COURT: Yeah.

21 MR. BRYANT: All right.

22 THE COURT: I'm not sure what else  
23 we can do.

24 MR. BRYANT: I'll still leave her

1 hanging here and maybe we can come back to  
2 her at the very, very end, so we'll do that.

3 THE COURT: Sure.

4 MR. BRYANT: All right. We have  
5 another person, Joyce. So let me see if I  
6 can promote her. All right. She will be  
7 joining as a panelist.

8 THE COURT: Okay. I see Joyce.

9 MS. WALLACE: Hello?

10 THE COURT: Hi. Can you speak up,  
11 Joyce? It's a little hard to hear you.

12 MS. WALLACE: Can you hear me now?  
13 Yeah.

14 THE COURT: Yeah. That's much  
15 better. Thank you. Can you give and spell  
16 your name for us, please?

17 MS. WALLACE: My name is Joyce, J-  
18 O-Y-C-E. Last name, Wallace, W-A-L-L-A-C-E.

19 THE COURT: And your address,  
20 please?

21 MS. WALLACE: Yeah. 1952 Georgian  
22 G-E-O-R-G-I-A-N Road, Philadelphia, PA 19138.

23 THE COURT: And Ms. Wallace are you  
24 a customer of the Water Department?

1 MS. WALLACE: Yes.

2 THE COURT: And are you appearing  
3 on behalf of a group?

4 MS. WALLACE: No.

5 THE COURT: Okay. And why don't  
6 you go ahead and tell us your concerns?

7 MS. WALLACE: Concerns are  
8 definitely for the rate increase. We just  
9 had one, September 2024. Looking at some of  
10 the, the other things that were brought up, I  
11 want to talk about was, one, uncollectibles,  
12 which they did already talk about.

13 Also about efficiency, which is to  
14 infrastructure. Also as far as a rate  
15 increase for the seniors, you're raising  
16 across the board for those. And you're  
17 looking for more funding to help to pay the  
18 bills. Like, say, I'm just newly retired, so  
19 I tell you, my water bill has gone from \$89.  
20 It's actually like 140 for some reason now.

21 They change the meter and then the  
22 bill just, like, it just went up higher. And  
23 I'm not saying that that's the whole thing,  
24 but, literally, that's a lot of money

1 difference whether it was monthly. I  
2 remember when that about used to be every  
3 quarter, now it's monthly. And that bill  
4 wasn't even that much on the quarterly basis.

5           So the increase is kind of  
6 shocking. I think my mom, she was still  
7 living at 97 years old, she could not afford  
8 to pay that on her Social Security income nor  
9 her pension, with -- along with electric  
10 going up and the gas going up.

11           So we're not alone here, and  
12 people's pay stays the same. And then we  
13 don't -- we don't want to raise minimum wage.  
14 And here we are trying to take more money off  
15 what we're getting.

16           And landlords raise their, their  
17 price without doing a door-going thing. They  
18 don't pay or anything else when they raise  
19 these rents. So I want -- I want -- I want  
20 to know the rates, you're going to move more  
21 towards efficiency, I, I hope, like I heard  
22 the young lady, say, in reference to working  
23 on her street for a whole year. And, you  
24 know, that's her street.

1                   But I know that when it comes to  
2   the piping of these old houses, I have a  
3   older house, only when something wrong, I  
4   have never, never seen anybody out there  
5   replacing our lead pipes. And they're saying  
6   about replacing those things as part, part of  
7   the rate increase as well. But it's not like  
8   it's planned.

9                   Is there somewhere online where  
10   they have planned places to go, because they  
11   know the, the houses are older? Or only  
12   something happened and I had to pay for that  
13   part that goes from the street to the  
14   pavement -- to the pavement to inside my  
15   house. So that's a question where, are these  
16   things being part of that as well? Can you  
17   hear me?

18                  MR. DASENT: Yeah.

19                  THE COURT: I hear you, but -- Mr.  
20   Dasent, did you want to --

21                  MR. DASENT: Yeah. I was trying to  
22   think of how to respond to that question. I  
23   mean, there are a number of projects that  
24   replace water mains. As a part of

1 replacement of water mains, when we spot  
2 there's a lead service line, we replace that  
3 with the customer's permission. We also try  
4 to finance any assistance for replacement of  
5 lead service lines through our help program.

6           So there are vehicles to try to  
7 solve that problem. As a part of this rate  
8 increase, we're trying to also fund a larger  
9 program following up on a federal mandate to  
10 replace lead service lines, and there are  
11 quite a few in the city.

12           And so we have maps that show that.  
13 And we have the preliminary plan to launch a  
14 program which will begin under the Lead and  
15 Copper Rule revised regulations in 2028, and  
16 has to conclude by 2037.

17           So it's a long-term program  
18 citywide, and it's supposed to eliminate lead  
19 service lines. It's an important health  
20 issue. And we're looking at that and trying  
21 to use the moneys that we get from this rate  
22 increase to support that effort.

23           There are other things that are  
24 going on also as well, but I just wanted you



1 to know that that was part of what we're  
2 doing, and we're looking at, all  
3 neighborhoods in the city and trying to find  
4 the best way to make lead service lines sort  
5 of a thing of the past.

6 MS. WALLACE: Okay. Because I  
7 would say recently I had to have my lines  
8 replaced. And what I'm saying is this, I pay  
9 for that through the help program. Okay.  
10 That's fine. But they knew mine was a  
11 problem, these houses in my block are all the  
12 same age. I did not see anyone like, okay,  
13 this is what happened. This got paid for  
14 now.

15 So are we -- are we targeting this,  
16 this neighborhood, this block because that  
17 happened in this block so that the customer  
18 has to keep on paying for these net service  
19 lines? Because I had to pay that.

20 THE COURT: Well, I think maybe  
21 someone should get back to you on that.

22 MR. DASENT: Okay.

23 MS. WALLACE: Okay.

24 THE COURT: Because it sounds like

1 you have specific questions that maybe could  
2 be gone into. Would the easiest thing, I  
3 guess, be for you to contact Mr. Dasent?

4 MR. DASENT: Yeah. I'm happy to  
5 field your question that way. Or if you are  
6 reluctant to reach out to me, based upon what  
7 you said today, I can give you background of  
8 what we're doing on lead service line  
9 replacement, what the proposals are, what --

10 MS. WALLACE: Yeah. So I'll check  
11 that --

12 MR. DASENT: -- the pilot projects  
13 are.

14 MR. WALLACE: I'll check into that  
15 as well. But just to make sure my question  
16 is addressed, I -- it wasn't really a  
17 question. I guess a statement and a question  
18 at the same time, that you'll deal with now.  
19 Is there a certain year that the houses are  
20 built that you definitely know that the lead  
21 lines need to be replaced?

22 MR. DASENT: Yeah. Sure. My  
23 understanding is, as a lawyer, no. We are  
24 doing an inventory, though, of the city, and

1 we're required to. That will give us a  
2 better idea of what's lead, what's galvanized  
3 steel, and what are other categories that we  
4 don't have to replace? And then from that,  
5 once we've identified those and have a  
6 definitive inventory, we'll replace those.

7 And part of the effort will be for  
8 folks like in the Public Affairs Division of  
9 PWD, to educate folks as to the problem,  
10 first, the fact there is a program and how to  
11 sort of benefit from what we're doing in the  
12 city to remove lead service lines and make  
13 them a thing of the past. can offer you --

14 MS. WALLACE: Okay. Thank you for  
15 the --

16 MR. DASENT: -- a post and answer  
17 on that point.

18 MS. WALLACE: Okay. Thank you very  
19 much. And I do have your -- I have your  
20 email.

21 THE COURT: Okay. Great. I  
22 suggest that you contact Mr. Dasent. He can  
23 give you specific information about your  
24 property, hopefully.

1 MR. BRYANT: All right. There is  
2 another person, a KB --

3 THE COURT: Okay

4 MR. BRYANT: -- I think. All  
5 right. Let me join her as a panelist. And  
6 KB is up.

7 MS. NOCERA: Hi there. Can you  
8 hear me?

9 THE COURT: Ms. B, can you give us  
10 your name, please, and spell it?

11 MS. NOCERA: Sure. And apologies.  
12 This is an old account. It's not my name.  
13 My first name is Katie, K-A-T-I-E, last name  
14 Nocera, N-O-C-E-R-A.

15 THE COURT: And your address,  
16 please?

17 MS. NOCERA: 2628 Edgemont Street.  
18 And that's E-D-G-E-M-O-N-T.

19 THE COURT: And are you a customer,  
20 Ms. Nocera?

21 MS. NOCERA: Yes.

22 THE COURT: Okay. And are you  
23 appearing on behalf of the group?

24 MS. NOCERA: No.

1 THE COURT: Okay. Go ahead and  
2 tell us your concerns and questions.

3 MS. NOCERA: Sure. First, I  
4 actually have a question brought up by the  
5 previous caller about the lead pipe  
6 replacement. You had mentioned that this was  
7 as a result -- well, first of all, it's a  
8 good thing. I agree with it. But you said  
9 it's a result of a federal mandate to replace  
10 those lead pipes.

11 So how come the money is then being  
12 drawn from raised rates for the customers of  
13 the water supply and not coming from taxes  
14 that we already pay to the federal government  
15 if this is a federal mandate?

16 THE COURT: I think there are a lot  
17 of unfunded federal mandates.

18 MR. DASENT: Yes, there are.

19 THE COURT: Unfortunately.

20 MR. DASENT: The bane of our  
21 existence. Yeah.

22 MS. NOCERA: So maybe that's a  
23 question I should take to the federal  
24 government?

1 THE COURT: Yeah. Or talk to your  
2 representative.

3 MS. NOCERA: Okay. Do you know the  
4 name of which representative that would be?

5 MR. DASENT: Well, you could try  
6 John Fetterman, at the Senate level. And I  
7 don't know who your congressional  
8 representative is.

9 MS. NOCERA: All right. Thank you.  
10 I'll have to ask him. My other question was  
11 to either confirm or put to rest a rumor that  
12 I had heard about this increase. And that is  
13 that it was a result of the tariffs that are  
14 probably going to be coming into effect.

15 If that is the case, how do we know  
16 that the rates won't be subject to every new  
17 tariff that is proposed? And then if it's  
18 not, that's great news. But I'd like to hear  
19 from you.

20 MR. DASENT: Judge Chestnut, if I  
21 may.

22 THE COURT: If you want to.

23 MR. DASENT: If a filing predates -  
24 -

1 THE COURT: But I'll

2 (indiscernible) this filing was made in --

3 MR. DASENT: Yes.

4 THE COURT: -- February, which was

5 --

6 MR. DASENT: We didn't know.

7 THE COURT: -- prior to the

8 imposition of these tariffs.

9 MR. DASENT: Yeah.

10 THE COURT: Because, yes.

11 Obviously that's a concern in terms of future

12 supplies and things. But I don't think it

13 has any impact at all on this filing just

14 because of the timing. Mr. Dasent --

15 MS. NOCERA: Okay.

16 THE COURT: -- do you agree with

17 that, or?

18 MR. DASENT: Yes. We, we put

19 together the filing toward the end of, of

20 last year, and then it was filed early, the

21 advanced notice. You know, I've forgotten

22 what it is now. Late January, early

23 February. And then the formal notice. But

24 it all predates the new tariffs.

1           They do put pressure on us, though,  
2   in addition, too, even though it's not a part  
3   of the rate increase, costs that we have to  
4   bear in terms of supplying service, but I'll  
5   stop there.

6           MS. NOCERA:   Okay.   Excellent.  
7   Thank you for clearing that up.

8           One final question, if I have time.  
9   And forgive me if this is not the space to  
10   ask.   But is this rate increase an indication  
11   of further increases from other Philadelphia  
12   services such as garbage and, potentially,  
13   like, gas from, like, PGW?   Do we have to  
14   worry about something coming from other  
15   services that we already pay for?

16          THE COURT:   I don't think anybody  
17   in here is in a position to answer that with  
18   any kind of assurance.   Unless I take a crack  
19   at it, but --

20          MR. DASENT:   There's no connection  
21   between the Water Department proposal and  
22   whatever PGW might do, for example.   They're  
23   just on separate tracks based upon their own  
24   cost and whatever grants and other assistance



1 one utility may get and others may not.

2 Gas utilities, for example, get  
3 grants to help them make certain repairs to  
4 pipelines, which water utilities have, maybe  
5 loans like Pennvest. And we do take  
6 advantage of that. But they are different  
7 entities and affect it differently, and I  
8 couldn't connect that to city trash at all.  
9 They're just different operation altogether.

10 MS. NOCERA: Okay.

11 THE COURT: Did that answer your  
12 question, or?

13 MS. NOCERA: It did. Thank you.  
14 Those are all the questions I had. Thanks so  
15 much for your time.

16 THE COURT: Well, thank you for  
17 spending the time with us. We appreciate it.  
18 Deland, is there anybody else who would like  
19 to speak or give a comment? Should we go  
20 back to Ms. Maxwell-Reaves?

21 MR. BRYANT: We are. Let's try it  
22 one more time. I'm going to allow her to  
23 talk.

24 THE COURT: I see that you did send

1 her a message.

2 MR. BRYANT: Yes.

3 THE COURT: Hopefully she saw that.

4 MR. BRYANT: Ms. Maxwell-Reaves?

5 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: Yes.

6 THE COURT: Oh, great.

7 MR. BRYANT: Oh, yeah.

8 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: Are you

9 telling me you can now hear me?

10 MR. BRYANT: Yes.

11 THE COURT: Yes, we can.

12 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: Thank you very

13 much. I've been trying. Actually, two of

14 the earlier callers have already confronted

15 you with the, the questions, a couple of

16 questions that I had.

17 THE COURT: Oh wait. Before you

18 say anything, ma'am --

19 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: Yes.

20 THE COURT: -- why don't you give

21 and spell your name for the record, okay?

22 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: Sure. The

23 first name is Carol, C as in cat, A-R-O-L,

24 and the last name is a hyphenated name,

1 Maxwell, which is spelled exactly as the  
2 coffee, hyphen Reaves, the Reaves part is R,  
3 E as in Echo, A as in alpha, V, victor E-S.  
4 It resembles Rivez, but it is Reaves.

5 THE COURT: And your address,  
6 please?

7 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: 1115  
8 Bainbridge Street, Bainbridge is one word.  
9 And that's Philadelphia, PA 19147.

10 THE COURT: And are you a customer  
11 of the Water Department?

12 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: I am.

13 THE COURT: And are you appearing  
14 on behalf of a group?

15 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: No, I'm not.

16 THE COURT: Okay, then. Ms.  
17 Maxwell-Reaves, why don't you tell us your  
18 concerns?

19 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: Well, as I had  
20 just stated, a couple of the earlier  
21 attendees, they covered the questions that I  
22 wanted to ask also. So I, I have no other  
23 questions unfortunately, not at this time  
24 anyway. But at least I was able to, to find

1 out any of my concerns could be answered by  
2 either Mr. Dasent or the advocate, Ms.  
3 Edelstein. So that's the --

4 THE COURT: And I urge you to do  
5 that. That's what they're getting paid for.

6 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: Yeah.  
7 Understood, understood.

8 THE COURT: So hopefully, if you  
9 have questions or have comments or  
10 suggestions, please reach out to them.

11 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: Thank you. I  
12 will do. And thank you all.

13 THE COURT: And thank you for  
14 taking the time and the effort. I'm sorry it  
15 was --

16 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: That's okay.

17 THE COURT: -- complicated but --

18 MS. MAXWELL-REAVES: My end.  
19 Nothing would go through that I was trying to  
20 do until just now, so thank you again.

21 THE COURT: Okay. Is there anybody  
22 else who indicated they wanted to give a  
23 statement, Deland? I think we've come to the  
24 end of it.

1 MR. BRYANT: Well Carol Maxwell-  
2 Reaves just popped her hand up, so let's just  
3 make sure that she didn't have another  
4 question while she was here. She just popped  
5 up again.

6 THE COURT: No. She disappeared.  
7 Although I do see her --

8 MR. BRYANT: Okay. It's gone.  
9 Yes. We recognize No one. No one has a  
10 hand raised to be recognized at this time.

11 THE COURT: Okay. If anybody  
12 hasn't given a statement and want to, this is  
13 your last chance. We'll give a few seconds  
14 here. But otherwise I think we'll consider  
15 what everybody had to say and -- does anybody  
16 else -- Deland do you see anybody with a hand  
17 or? No? Because I don't. But we did have a  
18 lot of people who observed without actually  
19 participating, which is nice.

20 I appreciate that people took the  
21 time out of their own lives on such a  
22 beautiful day, especially, to take the time  
23 to come. And I can assure everybody that I  
24 and the Rate Board, and, hopefully, the

1 company and the public advocate also will  
2 take into account what you had to say  
3 tonight. And, again, if you have any  
4 questions, reach out to them.

5 If you want to see anything that's  
6 going on in the case, look at the water rate,  
7 the Philadelphia Water Rate Board's website  
8 under "Rate Proceedings 2025", "General Rate  
9 Proceeding." And, hopefully, that'll let you  
10 know what's going on.

11 MR. BRYANT: Madam Hearing Officer,  
12 also if I could just add, if anybody missed  
13 any emails for anybody, you can email the  
14 Water Rate Board at phila.gov and I will  
15 forward the email to Mr. Dasent or Ms.  
16 Edelstein. I can certainly do that as well.

17 THE COURT: Thanks for volunteering  
18 Deland . I guess you don't have enough to  
19 do.

20 MR. BRYANT: Well, people do email  
21 me, and do have emails to forward to them  
22 with questions, so just as another avenue.

23 THE COURT: Okay. Well, thank you  
24 very much. Then this hearing is adjourned,

1 and we will have another virtual public  
2 hearing tomorrow at 1 o'clock, an in-person  
3 hearing at the Zion Baptist Church at  
4 Broadway at 6 o'clock tomorrow, okay? Thank  
5 you very much then. And that'll do it  
6 tonight.

7 (Proceedings concluded at 7:37 p.m.)

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1 CERTIFICATE OF DIGITAL REPORTER

2

3 I, JILL PIPER, a Digital Reporter and Notary  
4 Public within and for the State of Pennsylvania,  
5 do hereby certify:

6

7 That the foregoing proceeding hereinbefore  
8 set forth was accurately captured with annotations  
9 by me during the proceeding.

10

11 I further certify that I am not related to  
12 any of the parties to this action by blood or  
13 marriage, and that I am in no way interested in  
14 the outcome of this matter.

15

16 IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
17 hand this 22nd day of April, 2025.

18

19

20

*Jill Piper*

21

Jill Piper, Notary  
Notary Commission WA/RON 20119135  
Commission Expires: November 16, 2028

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