BEFORE THE
ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION

PUBLIC UTILITY REGULAR OPEN MEETING

Chicago, Illinois
January 12, 2010

Met, pursuant to notice, at 10:30 a.m.

BEFORE:

MR. CHARLES E. BOX, Chairman

MS. LULA M. FORD, Commissioner

MS. ERIN M. O'CONNELL-DIAZ, Commissioner

MR. SHERMAN J. ELLIOTT, Commissioner

MR. JOHN T. COLGAN, Commissioner

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEX</th>
<th>DOCKET NUMBER:</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public speakers:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1. MR. David SCHWEICKART.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2. MS. ELAINE PHILLIPS.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3. MS RUTH BELL-MEJIES.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4. MS. DELORES A. SMITH.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5. MS. SHEILA WEST.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6. MS. DOSCHIA HAWKINS PARKER.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7. MS. BAMBI SOLZMAN.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8. MS. MARISSA BROOKS.</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>08-0312 Illinois Commerce Commission</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>on its on motion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>09-0057 Constellation NewEnergy, Inc.</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>through 09-0311 Central Illinois Light Company d/b/a AmerenCILCO.</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>09-0475 Power2Switch, LLC.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>09-0496 Save Wave Energy, LLC.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>09-0498 Prenova, Inc.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>09-0513 The Cornerstone Energy Group.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOCKET NUMBER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09-0516</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim Retail Energy Group Inc.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09-0524</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEV Corp.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09-0532</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Cost Certainty, LLC</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09-0533</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRDB Holdings LP</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09-0166 09-0167 consolidated</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shore Gas Company</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09-0588</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay County, Illinois</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09-0589</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion County, Illinois</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAIRMAN BOX: Is everything ready in Springfield?

JUDGE ALBERS: It is, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Pursuant to the provisions of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, I now convene a special open meeting of the Illinois Commerce Commission. With me in Chicago are Commissioners Ford, O'Connell-Diaz, Elliott and Colgan.

We have a forum.

Before moving into the agenda, this is the time we allow members of the public to address the Commission. Member of the public wishing to address the Commission must notify the Chief Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the bench session. According to the Chief Clerk's Office, there are nine requests to speak. Please forgive me if I don't do justice to some of these names.

The first is Mr. David Schweickart, you have 3 minutes to speak.

MR. DAVID SCHWEICKART: Where do I sit?

CHAIRMAN BOX: Up here at the microphone. Make sure the green light is on and you have 3 minutes.
MR. DAVID SCHWEICKART: Well, I'm David Schweickart. I'm a professor of law at Loyola University. I teach a course in ethics and economic justice, which is what brings me here. Let me thank you for the opportunity to speak, if only for 3 minutes; but I must express my dismay at the lack of information on the Web site about this very important issue.

Last night in preparation for my 3 minutes of glory, I went to the natural gas section of your Web site. I clicked on gas policy meetings, the latest notification was for March 2008. I clicked on the annual report on the development of natural gas markets in Illinois, the latest available report was 2007. I clicked on reports filed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, no reports were posted, zero. Finally I clicked on rate case history and got a long Excel spreadsheet for water and sewer rates dating from 1975 on the natural gas Web page.

As a taxpayer and concerned citizen, I find this lack of readily-accessible information deeply disturbing. This, after all, is a decision
that will affect millions of people especially our most vulnerable citizens. Equally disturbing is that Peoples Gas claims the rate hike is needed to pay for replacing aging infrastructure, this strikes me as bogus. Before paying out dividends to shareholders, companies are expected to set aside depreciation allowances, are they not? There's nothing mysterious or unforeseeable about equipment wearing out. Why are these set-asides inadequate? Integrys Energy Group has been paying substantial dividends annually so there is no shortage of funds. This sounds to me like a scam.

Finally, it's surely obvious in these times when unemployment is rising, hours of work are being cut back, raises for ordinary workers are virtually nonexistent, it's more than unseemly to raise the cost of so basic an item as home heating. Surely justice demands that the pain be shared, which means, as I see it, shareholders should do without dividends when the economy is in such a slump. To grant a rate hike now would not only be astonishingly insensitive, but fundamentally unjust, a clear case
of dereliction of duty.

Bankers get their bonuses even when they screw up massively inflicting the damage on millions, taxpayers foot the bill. Peoples Gas wants more money, ordinary citizens foot the bill, and those who can't get their utilities disconnected. I realize that you have no control over those bankers, but you do have the power to not only block this rate hike, but I think you have the power to halt the disconnections. I urge you to do the things within your power, halt and block.

Thank you for your attention. Please do the right thing.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Thank you very much.

Next we have Ms. Elaine Phillips.

Ms. Phillips, you have 3 minutes.

MS. ELAINE PHILLIPS: Good morning. My name is Elaine Phillips and I have lived in Chicago all my life. I am a butcher and a stock person in a grocery store. I'm speaking to you today on behalf of myself and my family. Right now I have no gas and I have done everything Peoples Gas has asked me to. I'm
paying Peoples Gas for property damage which I had nothing to do with. I have made a good faith payment that they asked for, but Peoples Gas still did not reconnect my gas. Now they want to raise the rates again? What do we have to give up? An arm and a leg, now we the people of Illinois, need you, the ICC to do your job. Reject the rate increase. Turn my gas -- no, everyone's gas back on. Roll back the rates and make gas affordable for everyone.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Thank you.

Next we have Ms. Ruth Bell Mejias.

Ms. Mejias, you have 3 minutes.

MS. RUTH BELL MEJIAS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER BOX: Just speak directly into the microphone because this is being carried over the Internet and the Springfield office.

MS. RUTH BELL MEJIAS: Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Ruth Bell Mejias. I am a social worker here in the City and I stand here -- or sit here today to tell you just one thing, reject any rate hike from Peoples
Gas.

Peoples Gas is a profitable, private business. They're accountable to their shareholders, but the Illinois Commerce Commission is a Government agency and you're accountable by law to the Illinois residents. You pledged to keep the utilities available, but the 56,000 families that started last year without heat would tell you that they are not, in fact, available. You pledged to keep the utilities affordable, but the 80,000 families that received disconnect notices last April would argue that it is not, in fact, affordable. Your actions have made heat a luxury.

Through abandoning your responsibilities, you've made it possible for Peoples Gas to pay out huge dividends to their stockholders while people resort to space heaters and other unsafe methods to heat their homes. Additionally, each year there are apartment and house fires where men, women, and children die. Peoples Gas puts forth that the rate increase will average out to about $12 a month, trying to minimize the effect it will have on the
current economic community. $161 million, $75 million or even $10 million will devastate the local economy. That's millions of dollars that will be stripped from people's wallets, millions of dollars that they're not going to spend at the local grocery store, bookstore, concerts, florists and other businesses. Chicago lost over 200,000 jobs last year, it can't afford to lose millions more in disposable income.

As a social worker, I have seen firsthand how low-income families struggle to pay rent, utilities and medical costs. I see how they flounder in the winter literally picking up cans out of the trash to help pay the gas bill. We don't know how many families this year will start the winter without heat; but with a rate hike another chunk, that chunk that's barely holding on sacrificing food, medical expenses and safety to keep their heat on so they don't fall through the cracks and they don't start next year as a potential household without heat with the number of children who die in house fires. All this because we put profits before people.
CEDA provides limited help to some families, but not all families. Those who are not documented, for example, are not eligible for CEDA; but they, too, pay gas bills. CEDA is funded by tax dollars, my tax dollars, your tax dollars, all of our tax dollars. Tax dollars that end up going to private not-for-profit business. If gas bills were lower we wouldn't need to put so much money into CEDA, and we can put that money into publicly funded institutions like hospitals, public schools, libraries. In Chicago heat is a necessity to live, not a luxury. Reject this rate hike and any rate hike until you can ensure that all Illinois residents have gas service.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Thank you.

Next we'll hear from Ms. Jacqui Abrams.

(No response.)

Next we have Ms. Dolores Smith.

MS. DELORES SMITH: Good morning. My name is Dolores Smith and I am here today to speak on behalf of the Cook County Workers Benefit Council, a
delegate body that represents the needs of services, workers and other low-paid workers in Cook County.

We demand that the ICC do your duty and deny any rate increase to Peoples Gas. This is simply a matter of fulfilling your responsibilities to the people of Illinois. The Illinois General Assembly and Public Utilities Act of 2001 states that the ICC is a state agency to regulate utilities and that -- and I quote, The goals and objectives of such regulation shall be to ensure the rates for utility services are affordable and therefore preserve the availability of such services to all citizens.

Heating gas is not affordable and available to all in our city right now. Over 56,000 households in Chicago began last winter without heat. This past April Peoples Gas sent out disconnection notices to over 80,000 families, that's nearly 1 out of 10 customers. Sky high gas rates hit low-income working families the hardest. We are forced to choose between food and heat, short our landlords on rent and cut back on medications. We suffer through subfreezing temperatures and get sick or turn to
other means of staying warm. There have been fires
almost daily this winter in poor areas of Chicago as
low-income families resort to using electric space
heaters because they cannot afford their gas bill.
I'm sure you remember the three children who died in
the house fire in December 2008 after Peoples Gas
shut off their heating gas.

    Each rate hike means we have less
money to spend in our communities and local
businesses have fewer customers. The Chicago economy
can ill afford another $161 million taken out of
workers' pockets. This rate increase request is
clearly a profit grab. The parent company of Peoples
Gas, Integrys, increased profit 61.3 percent in 2008
after you, the ICC, granted Peoples a $71 million
rate hike. And I quote from Crain's Chicago
Business, Integrys, currently has the highest
dividend yield in the utility industry, but that rich
payout is vulnerable unless Peoples can persuade
state utility regulators to give a hefty rate hike in
January.

    For you, the ICC, to grant this rate
increase would be a clear dereliction of duty. We call on you to fulfill your mandate to ensure utility service is available and affordable and available to all. Deny Peoples Gas a rate increase. Suspend disconnections and reconnect service for all. ICC, do your duty. Freeze the rates, not the rate payers, and reject any rate increase for Peoples Gas. And I also have some letters that were collected by other people who feel the same way.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Thank you.

Next will be Sheila West.

MS. SHEILA WEST: Good morning, everyone. My name is Sheila West and I'm here to oppose the proposed rate increase for Peoples Gas. It's not a good idea because the economy is in a recession. Many people, myself included, cannot afford it. We need lower rates and not higher rates. I live with my brother and he is the only one working. Our rent is going up, and I am struggling to find work. I know many families receive temporary assistance like CEDA, but it's just that, temporary. There's no kind of long-term solution. The ICC has
the power to put in more long-term solutions instead of letting Peoples Gas take more money out of our empty pockets to line their pockets with growing profits for shareholders and executives of Peoples Gas. Please tell them no. Peoples Gas has taken hundreds and millions of more dollars out of our community. Simply put, the State of Illinois and our city, Chicago, have probably never seen a worse economic hardship. There have been reported deaths and some unreported in the paper and from stories I've heard from space heater use. You can prevent those deaths. ICC Commissioners, please deny the rate increase for Peoples Gas and take away the means to approach the utilities so that we can afford.

One more thing, it's getting progressively expensive to live in Illinois. My brother David had to move out to Iowa to find work. My cousin lives in Minnesota. We can't afford it. We have no money. Please. Peoples Gas, we cannot afford it. I'm sorry.

Good-bye.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Next we have Ms. Doschia
Hawkins-Parker.

MS. DOSCHIA HAWKINS-PARKER: Good morning. My name is Doschia Hawkins-Parker. I am a resident in Chicago. I'm here to speak on behalf of the residents in Chicago who have medical needs. I have been a personal assistant with the Department of Rehabilitation of Illinois. I've experienced persons with disabilities such as burn victims, persons with sight problems, stroke victims who have had problems with their gas being turned off.

All low-income and fixed-income persons do not live in fixed low-income housing. People still are on a waiting list. Persons with medical problems are to have priority with their heating and cooking needs. People like these are paying on their bills; although they are not paying off their bills, they are paying what they can on the bills and they are living on fixed incomes and they are still being denied service.

In the past when Peoples Gas has been granted higher rates, there have been fires in apartments where there has been space heater use and
gas shutoffs, people have died in the cold. Peoples Gas shareholders and executives seem to be the only one benefiting from the rate increases. No new services are being provided to the public. Commissioners do not make our suffering worse for their gains. Reject the Peoples Gas rates, please. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BOX: Next we'll hear from Ms. Bambi Solzman.

MS. BAMI SOLZMAN: Good morning, Commissioners. While I'm here today with my husband, I speak for many of my neighbors and fellow retirees. I'm sure my feelings of outrage on the ICC's consideration of the rate increase for Peoples Gas is shared by many others in this room.

My name is Bambi Solzman and I have been a Chicago Hyde Park resident for over 40 years. I'm a retired respiratory therapist from La Rabida Hospital in South Shore. My husband is retired as well and our retirement benefits are only 80 percent of our working incomes. Meanwhile the cost of living is skyrocketing and you plan yet another rate
increase to Peoples Gas? That would be a real burden to us.

As a professional respiratory therapist, I know that heat and hot water are essential for asthmatic children and adults and without it your life is severely threatened. To be cut off gas service means you have a cold home and no hot water or cooking gas, yet the ICC does nothing to guarantee the citizens, including asthmatics, are protected from shutoffs. Peoples Gas will delay service disconnect for one month if you have a medical condition where a medical professional determines that you need heat or hot water. After one month you can have your service disconnected and face a life-or-death situation. I can ensure you that asthma does not go away after one month.

Fulfill your responsibilities to the citizens of our state. Deny any rate increase for Peoples Gas and put a moratorium on all future shutoffs to protect the health and well-being of our residents.

Thank you.
CHAIRMAN BOX: Thank you.

Next we'll hear from Marissa Brookes.

MS. MARISSA BROOKES: Good morning. My name is Marissa Brookes. I am a Rogers Park resident and therefore a customer of Peoples Gas. I'm also a graduate student at Northwestern University. I'm here to voice my position and a belief of many of my peers that your plans to grant a multimillion-dollar rate increase to People Gas is unwarranted and unacceptable.

I have been a service worker, I have families members who are service workers, and I've studied the plight of service workers in my research. I know the majority of new jobs in Chicago are in the service sector. These jobs by and large are low pay with no benefits. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the lowest-income workers spend on average over 12 percent of their income on utilities. Worse still, households in Illinois of retired service workers and other seniors dependant on Social Security incomes spend an average of 25 percent of their income on utilities. If we
have to give another $12 or more a month to Peoples Gas, that means a significant additional percentage of our income it spent on utilities. That would mean that to keep the heat on in our homes, we have to take money that we spend on rent, food, transportation, prescriptions and sacrifice any of those needs in order to further grandiose the shareholders of Peoples Gas.

As the ICC, you have the role and the responsibility to regulate utilities to ensure they are affordable and available to all citizens. To grant another rate increase would clearly contradict your mandate, utilities will become even more unaffordable and therefore unavailable to more people. Your decision on this rate increase will affect the lives of hundreds of thousands of working families in Chicago, and I urge you to reject the rate increase and roll back the rates.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Thank you.

Once again, Ms. Jacqui Abrams.

(No response.)
Once again, thank you to all of you for your remarks.

Moving into today's agenda, first of all, we're holding Item 12, although we will be discussing it.

Item 1 is Docket 08-0312. This is an Original Cost Audit for Commonwealth Edison Company. Administrative Law Judges Hilliard and Haynes recommended the Order approving the Original Cost Audit.

Is there a motion to enter the order?

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: So moved.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Is there a second?

COMMISSIONER FORD: I second.

CHAIRMAN BOX: It's been moved and seconded.

All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

Opposed?

(No response.)

The vote is a 5-0. The Order is entered. We will use this 5-0 roll call vote for the remainder of the agenda unless otherwise noted.
Item 2 is Docket 09-0057.

Constellation NewEnergy, Inc., seeks confidential and proprietary treatment of portions of its ARES compliance report for 5 years. The order grants the request, but only for 2 years. Administrative Law Judge Hilliard recommends entering the Order.

Is there any discussion?

(No response.)

Any objections?

(No response.)

Hearing none, the Order is entered.

Item 3 is Docket 09-0306, et al., consolidated. These are petitions for interlocutory review arising from the Ameren Illinois Utility's rate case. The first petition is by Staff.

Administrative Law Judges Albers and Yoder, would you please explain the Staff's position.

JUDGE YODER: Yes, Chairman. On the 2nd Mr. Sackett's rebuttal testimony -- AIU moved to strike Staff witness' rebuttal testimony wherein he proposed a change in AIU's Rider T Storage Banking Program. AIU already argued that in
Mr. Sackett's direct testimony he proposed future workshops and changes to the Rider T Storage Banking Program in AIU's next rate case. AIU argued that this change in testimony prejudiced them in their ability to properly prepare surrebuttal testimony.

Staff in a response maintains that Mr. Sackett discussed in his testimony the issue of storage cost allocation and pointed out discrepancies between AIU's exhibits and the work papers. Staff indicates and Mr. Sackett requested in this direct testimony that AIU clarify their rationale and indicate that Mr. Sackett's previously submitted data requests to AIU to obtain information and clarification only to receive some data the day before Staff filed its direct case.

Staff indicates that the information provided ended up being erroneous and subsequently corrected it in AIU's rebuttal testimony. Therefore staff maintains that Mr. Sackett's attempted to elicit the correct information and once he received the correct information, he then used that delayed information to modify the original proposal therefore
asked or argues that Mr. Sackett's change in his testimony was proper based on the information he had received. The ALJs granted Ameren's motion to strike the portion of Mr. Sackett testimony regarding change in the Rider T Storage Banking Program.

COMMISSIONER O'CONNELL-DIAZ: Tell me what was the basis of that determination.

JUDGE YODER: Our basis was that was a new determination. He had made a change from his direct testimony. He indicated -- they were proposing a change in this docket. He proposed in his direct that there be teacher workshops held on this issue and proposed, I think, three possible changes to be considered in the next rate case.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Judge, it's your motion. Your recommendation is to deny the petition?

JUDGE YODER: Correct.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Is there a motion to deny the Staff's petition for interlocutory review?

COMMISSIONER O'CONNELL-DIAZ: Move.

COMMISSIONER BOX: Is there a second?

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: I second.
COMMISSIONER BOX: It's been moved and seconded.

Further discussion?

(No response.)

All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

Opposed?

(No response.)

The vote is 5-0. The Staff's petition is denied.

Next there is a petition for interlocutory review from Ameren Illinois Utilities.

Judges Albers and Yoder, please explain that one.

JUDGE ALBERS: This is Judge Albers, I will be handling that one.

When we prepared the schedule in this matter, we had set December 2nd as the date for Ameren's surrebuttal testimony out at least 7 business days before the hearing began on December 14th. In Ameren's surrebuttal that was received on December 2nd, there was some discussion of other
postemployment benefit costs or OPEB costs and
certain defendant compensation expenses.

Staff argued on a motion to strike
that on those particular issues that that testimony
received on Ameren's surrebuttal was actually
responsive to Staff and Intervenor in the direct
testimony which was offered on September 28th. And
because of that response to the direct testimony of
Staff and Intervenors, Staff argued that OPEB and
defendant comp testimony should have been received in
Ameren's rebuttal in October. So instead of offering
it in October, it would have been responsive to
either Staff on direct, Ameren waited a month and a
half and offered it on December 2nd. And because
they waited, Staff and Intervenor had no opportunity
to respond.

With regard to the OPEB testimony,
that's probably the easiest one to address. Ameren
argued that our framing of the OPEB testimony should
be flipped because they claim they're responding to
Staff's recommended adjustment in Staff's rebuttal
testimony. If you look at the record, while the CUB
and the AG, before we proposed that OPEB adjustment in their direct testimony in September -- in Ameren's rebuttal they acknowledged the Fed and the CUB-AG proposed adjustment, but did not speak very much about it. Only when Staff adopted and supported that adjustment and, again, the same adjustment that CUB-AG proposed, only when Staff and CUB supported that adjustment in Staff's rebuttal did Ameren take that seriously and offer much more discussion of it in their surrebuttal testimony.

So it appeared to us that given that it was the exact same adjustment made or proposed by CUB-AG in their direct testimony, it appears to us that Staff was correct that that surrebuttal testimony really should have been offered in Ameren's rebuttal in October. And so that's why we struck the OPEB testimony, and I'll adjust note that CUB-AG supports Staff's motion.

Concerning the defendant compensation testimony, in Staff witness Ebrey's direct testimony, she laid out what she would like to see from Ameren to resolve her concerns about those expenses.
Specifically she wanted to see some indication that the net benefit to ratepayers -- I'm sorry. Let me rephrase that. She wanted to see that ratepayers receive a net benefit in light of the costs associated with the defendant compensation expenses at issue and, again, it's just the subset of Ameren's compensation package of expenses.

What Ameren sought in Theresa Ebrey's direct testimony -- what Staff was looking for -- they addressed to some extent defendant compensation in their rebuttal, but waited until their surrebuttal testimony in December to really provide what Ms. Ebrey was looking for. Ms. Ebrey laid out in her direct testimony what Staff was looking for resulted in what Ameren offered in their surrebuttal should have been provided much earlier, which would have given Staff and other parties an opportunity to respond.

COMMISSIONER O'CONNELL-DIAZ: Judge Albers, was there a data request with regard to this information propounded by Staff and the Company during the discovery of the case?
JUDGE ALBERS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER O'CONNELL-DIAZ: And...?

JUDGE ALBERS: We addressed that in her rebuttal testimony -- actually it was in her direct testimony that she indicated that she had gotten a response from Ameren, but didn't find it terribly helpful.

COMMISSIONER O'CONNELL-DIAZ: Did she do a follow-up data request, which would be normal if you needed further information?

JUDGE ALBERS: I want to say, yes, but I'm not a hundred percent certain. It wasn't put in the record. We wouldn't have seen it anyway.

COMMISSIONER O'CONNELL-DIAZ: Well, I understand that; but that's kind of what discovery is about.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Any other questions of the Judge?

(No response.)

Judge, what is your recommendation?

JUDGE ALBERS: We continue to believe that the decision to strike the testimony was appropriate.
CHAIRMAN BOX: Is there a motion to deny the Ameren Illinois Utility's interlocutory review?

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: So moved.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Is there a second?

COMMISSIONER COLGAN: Second.

CHAIRMEN BOX: It's been moved and seconded.

Any further discussion?

(No response.)

All in favor say aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

Opposed?

COMMISSIONER O'CONNELL-DIAZ: I vote no.

CHAIRMAN BOX: The vote is 4-1. Ameren Illinois Utility's petition is denied.

Items 4 through 11 will be taken together. These are applications for ABC licenses. ALJ Yoder recommends entering the Orders granting the certificates.

Is there any discussion?

(No response.)

Any objections?

(No response.)
Hearing none, the Orders are entered.

If I can skip down, Items 13 and 14 will be taken together. These are petitions by Marion County and Clay County to modify their 9-1-1 system. Administrative Law Judge Jones recommends entering the Orders approving the modifications on the condition that 9-1-1 callers will experience no interruption of 9-1-1 service.

Is there any discussion?

(No response.)

Any objections?

(No response.)

Hearing none, the Orders are entered.

Going back to Item 12, which is 09-0166 and 09-0167 consolidated. This is the North Shore Gas Company and Peoples Gas Light and Coke Company general rate case.

The Commission will be voting this out at its bench session January 21st. Administrative Law Judges Moran and Haynes are here to answer any further questions the Commissioners may have.

Any other questions of the Judges?
We acknowledge receipt of your responses. My one question was on the Accelerated Rider ICR, would it be from dollar one or would it be just the incremental amount of the replacement of mains that would be covered in the Rider? If I'm understanding, your memo indicated that it would be from the first dollar and not the incremental amount; is that correct?

JUDGE MORAN: Yes, that is correct; but there's an explanation for that.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Give us a short explanation.

JUDGE MORAN: The short explanation is that the Company proposed an incremental the last time this was being proposed in the rate case 07-0241/0242. Staff came out with a different proposal and therefore the Company went with Staff's proposal. That carried through to this proposal and there is no recommendation in this record for any other based on type provision.

CHAIRMAN BOX: So the Rider, once it's used, would include the entire amount of the main replacement rather than -- it includes that which was
scheduled anyway without the Rider and with the 
accelerated portion.

JUDGE MORAN: Well, it would start with 
whatever is spent in 2011. You don't count the test 
year and you don't count anything that they put into 
the test year. It would start with 2011, anything 
that goes into the ground or is estimated to go into 
the ground in 2011. And it's only billed from April 
to December and it's not the whole cost. You're just 
collecting revenues associated with those costs.

CHAIRMAN BOX: Okay. Any further questions? 
(No response.).

Once again this matter will be voted 
on the bench session on the 21st. The statutory 
deadline is January 25th.

Judges, thank you.

That concludes today's agenda.

Before we close I understand 
Commissioner Ford has a resolution she would like to 
offer.

Commissioner Ford.

COMMISSIONER FORD: Mr. Elliott would like to
make a recommendation.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Thank you. I think we have a resolution and I would be pleased if Commissioner Ford would read the resolution before I make a motion.

COMMISSIONER FORD: The State of Illinois, Illinois Commerce Commission on its own motion acknowledging and express an appreciation for Chairman Charles E. Box, public servant, on the occasion of this separation of service with the Commission resolution.

Whereas Chairman Charles E. Box on January 10th, 2006, began a noteworthy tenure as the first African-American chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission. And whereas throughout Chairman Charles E. Box's years at the Commission, he remained on course, undeterred and truly subjective to strike an even balance between utilities and the ratepayers and to make that balance his top priority.

Whereas Chairman Charles E. Box served as treasurer of the executive committee of the National Association of Regulatory Utility
Commissioners. Whereas Charles E. Box on behalf of
the Illinois Commerce Commission and the United
States served as a regulatory expert to African and
European regulatory Commissions.

Whereas Charles E. Box, a dynamic
former Mayor of Rockford, Illinois, for 12 years has
diligently and thoughtfully served the people of the
State of Illinois in his capacity as Chairman.

Now therefore it be resolved that the
Illinois Commerce Commission here acknowledges
Charles E. Box's years of public service during his
employment with the Illinois Commerce Commission and
express a deep appreciation for his public service
and dedication on the occasion of his departure.

From your fellow Commissioners.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: I would move adoption of
the resolution honoring our chairman.

CHAIRMAN COLGAN: I second the motion.

CHAIRMAN BOX: I was going to say, Guys, we're
lacking a second.

COMMISSIONER ELLIOTT: Moved and seconded.

All those in favor?
(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN BOX: I would like to thank you for the resolution. As most of you know, this is my last meeting. My last day of work will be January 19th. First of all, I would like to thank Governor Blagojevich for giving me this opportunity in January -- Commissioner Ford indicated January of '06.

It's been an honor and a privilege to serve in this capacity. Not only because of the complex issues that are involved, but also at the time. It was a very interesting time here in the State of Illinois as far as regulation goes. And I appreciated a chance to use my skills that I've accumulated over the years in other avenues and other opportunities.

I really want to thank my fellow Commissioners who some of you have heard me say this before at various Chicago Bar Association functions that I really enjoy this work. I thought there was nothing better and probably -- I must be honest, there's nothing better than being mayor of your own
hometown, where you grew up and where you know people and people know you. That was an exciting thrill.

This has to be a very close second because of the Commissioners I've had an occasion to work with, the Staff that I think is superb in this day and age when your opponents are multimillion-dollar law firms and people with unlimited pockets for consultants and experts. You have done an enormous job, and I don't think the people of the State of Illinois realize the work that the Commissioners do and the Commission Staff.

I want to thank a lot of the parties that have appeared before us for really representing their clients well. I think at the end of the day almost everyone here really tries to do what they think is best. We have a very tough job here as a lot of the speakers today said. You have to balance the interest of the ratepayers and the ability to pay with that of the companies and the ability for them to earn a return on their moneys. And it's a tough balancing act. None of these decisions are made easily, and I really respect the Commissioners I work
with. They wrestle with these issues and they try to make the best decisions they could. I can't say enough about the Commissioners' assistants. I don't ever think we've ever had a full 10 that were allowed by statutes. There's never been an issue that has come before us where those 6, 7, 8, or 9 people that really didn't work long and hard. There's no such thing as how many hours in a day. The key for us as Commissioners is, if we want to get out a good product, it's those assistants that we work with day in and day out and I can't say enough about them.

Once again, this has been a journey that I have really enjoyed. I'm sure our paths will be crossing somewhere down the road, if not in an official function, somewhere on the streets of the City of Chicago or Washington D.C. or somewhere. It's been a pleasure serving for these 4 years and something I'll look back on and cherish. I want to thank all of you for all of your input and the Governor and Senator Jones who also had faith in me. I appreciate his efforts and this will not be forgotten. This is a journey that I have enjoyed and
I hope that I've done the job that people thought I could.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER FORD: I'm certainly glad that you thought that this was second to your being a mayor. I do understand you are accustomed to being in the hot seat because you have to hear complaints from your constituents. It is very difficult, and I do know that all of us do take it seriously and certainly have enjoyed working with you these last 4 years.

CHAIRMAN BOX: With that, the meeting is adjourned.

(And those were all the proceedings had.)