

1           BEFORE THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

2

3   IN RE:   PETITION OF

4   LIMESTONE WATER UTILITY

5   OPERATING COMPANY, LLC

6   TO INCREASE CHARGES, FEES

DOCKET NO. 24-00044

7   AND RATES AND FOR APPROVAL

8   OF A GENERAL RATE INCREASE

9   AND CONSOLIDATED RATES

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TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

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15

Thursday, March 26, 2026

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1 APPEARANCES:

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3 FOR TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION STAFF:

4

5 MONICA SMITH-ASHFORD, Administrative Judge

6 TIMOTHY SCHWARZ, Division Director

7 TIM DROWN, Senior Associate Counsel

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1                   JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Good afternoon. Today  
2 is March 26, 2026, and we're here for the public comment  
3 session in Docket No. 24-00044, In Re: Petition of  
4 Limestone Water Utility Operating Company, LLC, to  
5 increase charges, fees and rates and for approval of a  
6 general increase in consolidated rate -- phase 2, rate  
7 implementation.

8                   I'm Monica Smith-Ashford, the Administrative  
9 Judge in this matter. Public notice of this meeting  
10 was issued by the Commission on March 10th, 2026.  
11 Limestone also issued notice to its customer of this  
12 public comment session as well as the one to be held in  
13 Franklin, Tennessee, on April 8th. Limestone issued  
14 their notice in various newspapers. It's also available  
15 in its business office, it's on their website and they  
16 also issued notice by direct mail to their customers via  
17 email and US Mail.

18                   Thank you all for coming this afternoon. We  
19 have other members of our staff here. We have Tim  
20 Schwarz back in the back and Tim Drown here from the  
21 Public Utility Commission. The purpose of this public  
22 comment session is for us to hear from you-all regarding  
23 phase 2 of the rate increase implementation and any  
24 other issues of concerns.

25                   As mentioned in the Commission's notice, the

1 total rate increase for Limestone was approved by the  
2 Commission on April 14th, 2025, and to reduce the impact  
3 of the increase on the customers, the Commission ordered  
4 that the rate increase be implemented in two phases.  
5 The first phase began May 1st, 2025, and the second  
6 phase is set to begin May 1st, 2026, so currently, the  
7 Commission is considering the implementation of phase 2  
8 of the rate increase that has already been approved.

9 We cannot comment on this docket because it  
10 is ongoing, and it's not yet been considered by the  
11 Commission. The hearing on the phase 2 implementation  
12 is scheduled for April 28th, 2026, at 10 a.m. in  
13 Nashville at the Andrew Jackson State office building.

14 There will be an opportunity for public  
15 comment during the hearing and as I mentioned, we're  
16 also having another public comment session on April 8th  
17 in Franklin, Tennessee. You may also continue to file  
18 comments in the docket file.

19 Commission staff, as I mentioned, cannot  
20 comment on this matter or your remarks, but the Consumer  
21 Advocate will be here and there's also company  
22 representatives that are here that may be able to answer  
23 questions that you may have.

24 Now for a few housekeeping matters before we  
25 begin the public comment, as you all know, there is a

1 sign in sheet by the door so if you'll sign your name  
2 and your address if you wish to make comments.

3           And what we'll do is when I call your name,  
4 please come forward to the podium and I'll return this  
5 microphone to the podium and speak directly into the  
6 microphone because this session is being transcribed by  
7 a court reporter, and your comments will go into the  
8 docket file and be made a part of the official record.

9           This session lasts until 6:00 p.m. There's  
10 not a formal program, but this is an opportunity for us  
11 to hear from you-all and until 6 p.m., we'll probably --  
12 over the course of the session, we'll probably take  
13 about two breaks.

14           So with that, we will go ahead and get  
15 started and I will call the first name on the list.  
16 It's Elizabeth Pendley.

17           ELIZABETH PENDLEY: I don't have anything  
18 very significant to say other than it's just a  
19 tremendous rate increase. I know it was preapproved in  
20 the phase 1 as well, but it really -- I mean, it's in  
21 excess of a 50 percent rate increase for the Aqua Water  
22 and that's a lot. Thank you.

23           JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Next we have Larry  
24 Robertson.

25           MR. LARRY ROBERTSON: I'm here. I have no

1 comment. I'm just here to get updated.

2 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Thank you. Lenny  
3 Benton.

4 MR. LENNY BENTON: I'm here representing the  
5 North Shore Community which is across the lake. There's  
6 about 200 houses in North Shore. That's another 200  
7 approximately in the Aqua system. That used to be Aqua.

8 First we've gone through the first price  
9 increase which was, according to my calculations, 70  
10 percent and now they're asking for an additional 40,  
11 which is unheard of. I know that they've inherited a  
12 system that needed a lot of work and a lot of repairs  
13 and they've done a lot of that. But, you know, I hope  
14 that there is a limit to what you're going to approve  
15 that they can make in our utility. We don't expect them  
16 to be a monopoly.

17 And I looked at -- thanks to AI, I went  
18 around and looked at every community within about 50  
19 miles of here and if their rate increases goes through,  
20 it will be definitely the highest one within 50 to 60  
21 miles. They vary from Savannah at \$25 to Corinth city  
22 -- in the city limits of Corinth, 68 or in the county.  
23 I'm sorry.

24 And then ours currently for Aqua or for  
25 Limestone is \$66 plus usage, and then they're wanting to

1 go to 93.56 which is another 40 percent.

2           The point is, we think it's outrageous.  
3 That gives them a license to take our money and do as  
4 they please and, you know, it appears more like a  
5 monopoly than it is a utility service and so that's all  
6 I have to say.

7           JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Larry Webb.

8           LARRY WEBB: Good afternoon. I'm Larry Webb  
9 from Saulsbury, Tennessee, Candlewood Lake Subdivision.  
10 I'm kind of appalled at the State of Tennessee for  
11 allowing this meeting to even happen to entertain this  
12 price increase that you're putting in.

13           These people bought this well for a little  
14 of nothing. I think we gave it to them for \$60,000. In  
15 the incoming years, close to \$50,000 so there's been a  
16 rate increase of 27 percent.

17           The rate increase, that's a big increase.  
18 It went from -- and what they had -- when they bought  
19 the well, it was 48,000 a year they brought in. In  
20 three years, there's been \$144,000.

21           This second increase that came in last year  
22 brings in \$63,480, in three years, it will be \$190,000  
23 so it's already paid for itself in the first time, plus  
24 this one here.

25           This here we're talking about now, the

1 increase here, it will be bringing in \$102,000 a year  
2 and \$307,000 in three years. There's no way that needs  
3 to be done for a little community like we have. To me,  
4 it's outrageous.

5           The rate last year was 27 percent. If this  
6 here goes up, that's nearly -- it's right at 62 percent.  
7 If it goes up -- no. I'm sorry. Yeah. It will come up  
8 from what it was in the beginning and it will be --  
9 wasn't it brought in for \$40, it goes up to \$85, it will  
10 be 113 percent increase. That is not justifiable  
11 anywhere in the State of Tennessee I've ever heard of.

12           I've dealt with T-X (phonetics) and the  
13 State of Tennessee and the Attorney General before and  
14 Candlewood Lakes and he stated for us, they work for the  
15 people, not for these organizations.

16           They've put in -- the Riveria Utility owned  
17 our water company for years and went to Tennessee to get  
18 an increase, a good size increase. Tennessee came back  
19 and said you can have a 4.3 percent increase.

20           The State of Tennessee said we're looking  
21 out for the people, not the businesses and that was a  
22 4.3 increase, and that was through Tennessee General of  
23 Nashville, and that's what we got back then.

24           Like I said, I just don't see this fair in  
25 any way, shape, or form to go up this kind on anything.

1 Like I say, the payback any way it goes, even this  
2 increase we had last year and in three years, they're  
3 bringing in \$200,000. So far, they haven't done a lot  
4 of anything. There's no sewage, it's just straight  
5 water right out of the well to the tank to the people.  
6 That's it.

7 As far as what they've done since they've  
8 been there, as far as I can see, little to none, but a  
9 few taps that's been broken or whatever, that's general  
10 maintenance. That's a lot of work and all, not a whole  
11 lot I've ever seen being done, plus I'll add this too.  
12 I know a whole lot of people in this little community I  
13 live in, but I do not know one person that drinks the  
14 water. Thank you for your time.

15 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Thank you.

16 Jerry Jenkins.

17 JERRY JENKINS: I'm Jerry Jenkins from  
18 Points of Pickwick regarding the rate increases. My  
19 understanding of why you're doing it and from my  
20 understanding last year, you said they could be every  
21 year or something. If you didn't get your counter cuts  
22 last year so it's debt by a thousand cuts. Is this  
23 going into every single year now? Do we have any idea  
24 how long or how many cuts you can make or increases in  
25 the rates? I mean, it's insane. Everybody feels that

1 way. My water hasn't gotten any better. I know that.  
2 I filter everything I drink so y'all come up with  
3 something better than what you're doing because it's  
4 unacceptable.

5 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Glen and Sue Turner.

6 SUE TURNER: Thank you. I'm at Points of  
7 Pickwick and last go around, our water and sewer bill  
8 more than doubled, and we've not had any kind of  
9 services increase in that with that additional fee.

10 There's a great number of residents that  
11 live as a lake house in the Points of Pickwick. They're  
12 not permanent residents there, and we're not using the  
13 services that we're being billed for. We're paying many  
14 times over what we should be paying other than the  
15 suburb of Collierville outside of Memphis, my water bill  
16 there was \$35 and I live there 24/7, and this water bill  
17 in comparison with my sewer, \$73. That makes no sense  
18 when I'm not using the services that Limestone is saying  
19 that they're providing. And I know I'm calling it  
20 Limestone because that's what my bill says. I know that  
21 there's a different ownership on that.

22 The explanation that Limestone has is  
23 because they have to replace old equipment. Well, I for  
24 one and my neighbor for one, our lift station was  
25 working just fine. There was nothing wrong with it and

1 they came out and they replaced both of them and, in  
2 fact, cut wires to our land post while they were there  
3 and never came back to repair it or to fix it. So we  
4 didn't need a new lift station that they claim that they  
5 had to put in in all of our neighbors' home.

6           It only makes business sense that if you're  
7 going to purchase a water department like they have  
8 done, Central States has done in many, many areas, that  
9 you take into consideration what kind of maintenance is  
10 going to have to be done, what kind of replacements are  
11 going to have to be done, how long over time would that  
12 be and that due diligence period should be part of the  
13 first and initial offer when you're purchasing something  
14 like that. There's no doubt they have a right to make  
15 money off of this. That's why they bought it so that  
16 eventually they can have some kind of return on their  
17 investment.

18           But to put all of those expenses onto the  
19 homeowners in order to get your return on your  
20 investment much faster than what you should is  
21 ridiculous. You know what you're buying when you buy it  
22 and you make sure that the numbers work for you instead  
23 of putting it back onto the homeowners.

24           Again, in my household, everything was  
25 working fine and yet now we have a new lift station with

1 other problems that they created. The other thing I'd  
2 like to mention is the number of times that all of us  
3 have had a boil water issue in our neighborhood that  
4 goes on for weeks.

5 And so again, are you providing the services  
6 to the community that you're being paid for. My opinion  
7 is that they're not and they should not be allowed to  
8 raise this any further than it already has been. Thank  
9 you.

10 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Woody Reed.

11 WOODY REID: My name is Woody Reid. I'm Sue  
12 and Glen Turner's next-door neighbor in the Points of  
13 Pickwick, and I've got a comparison sheet that I would  
14 like to hand you, but first off, let me back up.

15 Limestone purchased in our opinion Aqua  
16 Utilities, and they went in and made numerous repairs.  
17 Sue mentioned lift stations that probably did not need  
18 repair and certainly ours didn't need it, and they  
19 showed you a loss last year, an operating loss in order  
20 to justify a rate increase.

21 If you go online and look up comments of  
22 people from the 11 states that they cover, some 400,000  
23 plus customers, they have a rating of 1.3 stars out of 5  
24 and in the comments, it's over and over and over again  
25 poor service, how they justified rate increases and that

1 their costs have gone through the roof.

2 I want you to compare and I'm giving y'all  
3 the sheets. Just the irrigation system that I have was  
4 not running in January, it's been turned off.

5 My bill from Collierville, zero usage  
6 irrigation system is \$9.39. My irrigation system bill  
7 from Limestone is \$34.64, the same number of days and 29  
8 days. That's 269 percent more than what Collierville,  
9 Tennessee, is billing for an irrigation system.

10 Collierville's water cost is .01 per gallon  
11 -- cents per gallon compared to Limestone which is 43  
12 gallons. That's 3,400 percent more than what  
13 Collierville, Tennessee, bills. Collierville,  
14 Tennessee, only has 50,000 people and this Limestone  
15 covers about 400,000 as I stated earlier. Limestone's  
16 base rate is \$35. It was 78 percent increase over  
17 Aqua's old rate.

18 Now, I don't know what they told you, but  
19 when you take the bill and this is actually bills, it  
20 was 78 percent increase. So our primary residence where  
21 I live in Collierville, I use 4,800 gallons of water. I  
22 paid \$58.47 for water and sewage because you have to pay  
23 them both. The residents up here was 170 gallons  
24 compared to 4,800. I was billed \$72.97 here, \$58 in  
25 Collierville.

1           So you can see these rates that we're  
2 already paying are exorbitant rates, and we feel like a  
3 second rate increase is certainly not warranted. I  
4 appreciate y'all's time, appreciate your consideration  
5 in looking at these numbers and we appreciate you  
6 letting me talk. Thank you.

7           JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Thank you.

8           Barbara and Doug Cowan.

9           DOUG COWAN: My name is Doug Cowan and  
10 that's Barbara Cowan. And I'd like to thank all the  
11 people that showed up today, but we have to get to  
12 everybody else that lives around here. This is a  
13 pitiful showing, not for the people that are here, but  
14 we should have 2- or 300 people that we get our point  
15 across, not 30 or 40. And yes, the rates have gone up  
16 and I agree with -- I don't drink the water either. I  
17 get bottled water, but Limestone has nothing to do with  
18 that.

19           What we're interested in is the rates and  
20 actually receiving good information about reasonable  
21 rate increases because they're going to go up. They're  
22 not going to stay the same.

23           But how -- what is a reasonable rate? We  
24 really need to form our own committee and sit down and  
25 have a bunch of brains in the neighborhood go over it

1 and figure out what we should be pushing for. That's  
2 all I have to say.

3 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Thank you.

4 Mark Woodruff.

5 MARK WOODRUFF: Mark Woodruff, I live on  
6 this side of the lake to where all we have is -- from  
7 Limestone is a shallow body utility which is our sewer  
8 system. It's -- they bought it knowing that it had  
9 problems and it's probably had problems all along.  
10 We've not seen them do one thing since they bought it to  
11 improve it. If they go through with the total raises  
12 that they say they're going to do for us, my bill would  
13 go from \$27 a month to 85 so in about a 36-month period,  
14 I could put my own septic tank in and pay for it with  
15 what I've saved and not have to bother with Limestone  
16 anymore and I'm considering doing that because I've got  
17 enough property to do it.

18 But like I said, they bought something they  
19 knew that was in bad shape and have done nothing but  
20 want more money from us. My sewer pump went out. That  
21 was a \$3,500 repair. We traced it back to the backflow  
22 valve which they are responsible for. It took them  
23 three weeks to even admit that the backflow valve was  
24 bad and finally sent somebody out to fix it, but I was  
25 out \$3,500 because of their stuff, their equipment.

1                   And did I get any response from them? No,  
2 none. So -- and it took -- like I said, it took them  
3 three weeks messing around to finally fix the problem.

4                   So I don't think we need the raise, we're  
5 not getting the service that we were told we were going  
6 to get because they said they were going to expand  
7 everything and they've not done one thing in the whole  
8 time they've had it. Thank you.

9                   JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Thank you.

10                  Blair Graber.

11                  BLAIR GRABER: I'm Blair Graber, I live at  
12 the Points of Pickwick. Everybody understands the  
13 expense of everything that's gone up, but these expenses  
14 are outrageous. They went up the first time, it was  
15 outrageous and now they're trying to do it again, and we  
16 have no ability to say anything except please don't do  
17 this. There shouldn't be a rate increase, there should  
18 be a rate decrease. Thank you.

19                  JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Jimmy Sain.

20                  JIMMY SAIN: I'll be brief with what I'm  
21 going to state. Is there anybody here from Limestone?

22                  JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Yes.

23                  JIMMY SAIN: You are. Okay. I need to see  
24 you because I can't get anybody to return my calls on a  
25 question, okay?

1 MR. SILAS: Absolutely.

2 JIMMY SAIN: I'm from Hardeman County,  
3 served two-term mayor over there, also city manager of  
4 Bolivar for nine years. And what I've dealt with with  
5 water outside of municipality is good folks that want to  
6 provide water for people outside the municipality not  
7 for making big profits but for providing good clean  
8 water.

9 Spring Creek Utility was set up in Hardeman  
10 County and they brought water from Bolivar, and they  
11 marked it up to cover their expenses. They weren't  
12 there to make a big profit. I don't feel like that's  
13 what Limestone is doing. I think Limestone is in the  
14 water business to make a profit and if we keep letting  
15 these companies come in and buy these subdivisions --  
16 and I'm from Hardeman, but my wife and I are  
17 semi-retired. We just bought a lot on the lake and we  
18 just happen to have Limestone water. We haven't even  
19 hooked up yet and already had two increases, I guess, or  
20 this will be the second increase.

21 I don't know how much Limestone cares about  
22 their customers. I called them, told them I was  
23 planning on building a home and I wanted to go ahead and  
24 get on the list for water. They had a gentleman call me  
25 and wanted to meet me at my lot to look where I wanted

1 the meter and didn't tell me how much of anything. I  
2 met the gentleman. I said, well, I need to know where  
3 -- on the property line. A week later when I came back  
4 to my lot, the meter had been set and it was about 20  
5 feet from the -- out towards the middle of my lot. I  
6 was a little hacked off about that, but what really  
7 hacked me off is when a neighbor walked down the street  
8 and said why did you have them do a water tap. I said  
9 because I need water. They said, well, all these lots  
10 have been tapped years ago when they put the streets in  
11 so Limestone is charging me \$1,500 for a tap I didn't  
12 need.

13                   And so my neighbor said, well, it should be  
14 right here by the other utilities and scratched around  
15 in the grass a little bit and my box was there and all  
16 my hookups for sewer and water and electricity.

17                   And so I've tried to call Limestone. I did  
18 get somebody emailed and I told them the situation.  
19 They said, well, you've got to pay the \$1,500 or we're  
20 going to disconnect your service. So then I get a  
21 letter this month saying they disconnected my service,  
22 which I've never hooked onto yet anyway, we haven't  
23 started our home, but I guess you're disconnecting a  
24 ghost service or whatever.

25                   But now I need to see this gentleman and see

1 if I can get water without paying for two taps when I  
2 didn't need one. But I do know -- I would think the  
3 Public Service Commission would require y'all to know  
4 what lines are tapped when you buy into a subdivision.  
5 I would think so. You would need to for safety and  
6 other purchases, but being a new property owner here and  
7 now we're looking at two increases and I haven't even  
8 hooked my water up yet, it's not a good welcome to  
9 Pickwick for me, but anyway, I love the area.

10 And for the gentleman that said he thought  
11 we should have 200 people here, sir, I've been holding  
12 meetings like this, but when people don't believe that  
13 anything is going to come of it, they're not going to  
14 show.

15 And so I'm here because I believe that y'all  
16 will go through something because I've been involved in  
17 government all my life. So I appreciate your time and I  
18 appreciate y'all holding people accountable and trying  
19 to serve the community instead of make money off these  
20 meetings. Thank you.

21 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Thank you.

22 Jay Patel.

23 JAY PATEL: My name is Jay Patel, I belong  
24 to the business community.

25 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: You need to speak up.



1 me -- messages in there, I have a Subway business, I  
2 have a grocery business and that is certainly -- because  
3 we cannot afford, we cannot manage, we cannot break  
4 even. That's all I have to say.

5 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Thank you. Is there  
6 anyone else who wants to speak, maybe didn't get a  
7 chance to sign the sign-in sheet? Ms. Webb.

8 BEVERLY WEBB: I can't get down to it. I'm  
9 with him. Our lives is not only we don't drink it --

10 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: I'll come to you.  
11 Just wait a second.

12 MR. DROWN: I'll bring you the microphone.

13 BEVERLY WEBB: I'm Beverly Webb. Limestone,  
14 our water is not only we don't drink it because it has  
15 too much calcium in it and it causes cancer in my bones,  
16 we can't even wash with it because it's brown. Our  
17 water we say looks like tea.

18 After they flushed the system on Monday and  
19 it ruins everything -- I don't dare buy white because  
20 you don't have white one time after you wash it and to  
21 me it's got a fine shin of oil in it and it's been that  
22 way for a while. Okay. I'm Beverly Webb. Thank you.

23 LISA REID: My name is Lisa Reid.

24 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Excuse me. I'm sorry.  
25 Could you repeat your last name again?

1                   LISA REID: Reid, R-e-i-d. I'm married to  
2 him.

3                   I just want to say one thing and to her  
4 point. I have a picture of our toilet tank and it's  
5 brown so this verifies that what she's saying, and then  
6 we get a letter from Limestone with the audacity to tell  
7 us that they're going to give us a \$10 credit. I don't  
8 know if anybody else got that after the snow storm or  
9 whatever, all the ice and everything, but that's absurd.  
10 \$10 for two weeks with no water you can drink is  
11 ridiculous. Thank you.

12                  WOODY REID: If you want to look at her  
13 picture, it's not even tinted, it's brown/brown.

14                  LARRY WEBB: Larry Webb again with  
15 Candlewood. If all these prices are going up as they  
16 are where they get 100, 200, 300 percent or whatever it  
17 is, then I guess this is a lifetime thing, right? It's  
18 just something that will never come down or is this  
19 something we'll be doing -- keeping for the rest of our  
20 life? That's a critical question for the State of  
21 Tennessee. That is not right or what because this will  
22 always be this or more from now on, and it's just not  
23 right for the people, not right for Tennessee.  
24 Tennessee, please represent us. Thank you.

25                  CATHY HURST: I'm Cathy Hurst, my family has

1 a house at the Points of Pickwick. I know I'm not a  
2 numbers say like some of these guys with the  
3 percentages, but I do know that the water bills come out  
4 of my account and it was running 32 whatever before the  
5 rate increase, now it's 71 or 72 which is on a bank  
6 draft. It might be a minor thing, but after they roll  
7 that bank draft out, then they go back and charge me 94  
8 cents which is a good deal, 94 cents to do their book  
9 work or which -- you know, whatever.

10 But I will say this, my family is big coffee  
11 drinkers, I'm not, but they buy and bring in bottled  
12 water to make their coffee with. You know, if you  
13 paying that much, you should be able to drink because  
14 our water at home in Mississippi is \$24 a month and we  
15 use it in our coffee machines. That's all I have to  
16 say.

17 LARRY ROBERTSON: My name is Larry  
18 Robertson, I live at 130 Canyon Cove. I've been  
19 listening in and initially didn't have any comments, but  
20 the question is, is the phase 2 approved and this is  
21 just -- you're required by law to do it a public notice  
22 on it or can you not answer that question because the  
23 committee is not meeting?

24 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: The total amount of  
25 the rate increase was approved and the Commission

1 divided it into two phases to be implemented beginning  
2 -- the first phase was implemented in May 1st, 2025, and  
3 then the second phase goes in May 1st, 2026, and so  
4 there are a number of issues regarding rate design and  
5 other issues that are going to be considered by the  
6 Commission for the phase 2 of the implementation. But  
7 the total amount of the rate increase for Limestone was  
8 approved last year.

9 LARRY ROBERTSON: So half of that we got  
10 already in phase 1?

11 MR. DROWN: I want to make sure that she  
12 gets your comments so that we get it on record.

13 LARRY ROBERTSON: So half of that amount of  
14 money was what we got in the increase for phase 1 and  
15 now if I heard what you said, you've already approved --  
16 the Commission has already approved phase 2 so all these  
17 numbers we're presenting about cost and increase in cost  
18 and more than cost, maybe that's why the crowd is small  
19 like your comments. People don't show up.

20 I was here last year. We had the room full.  
21 They had extra space that they had to bring in, we had  
22 so many people and you got a lot of comments. I posted  
23 on the public notice board as well, two or three times,  
24 and those people talked to the Commission last year and  
25 apparently they didn't listen. And because of no action

1 -- if everybody interprets the way I think we are now  
2 that it's already approved, then that's why the crowd is  
3 so small that they interpret that way. It's just not --  
4 it's unbelievable.

5           And one other thing relative to maintenance  
6 items. Obviously, we've had the storms and we've had  
7 things that are going on, that's understandable and  
8 things happen, but over the last year, I've had four  
9 water leaks in my system and I believe it's because of  
10 the up and down stop, start, re-pressurization,  
11 overpressurization and surges going into my house, and  
12 so I had to fix four water leaks.

13           One of them, I think I was billed for 76,000  
14 gallons in a month because it fractured a major joint in  
15 the piping. And I made a presentation and all they  
16 would agree to do was just not have to pay the sewer,  
17 which was a multiple of the water usage.

18           So it just not -- it's just a crazy scheme  
19 they've got so those are some additional thoughts. I  
20 assume we're still -- this docket will be up for us to  
21 make additional comments on the docket site between now  
22 and the date in April?

23           JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Yes.

24           WOODY REID: Woody Reid, 54 Point Grange  
25 Ridge here. I don't know that any of us were notified

1 of the rate increase and the amount of it and to put  
2 this into two phases, we sure didn't know it was going  
3 to be two phases. We weren't notified of that. I think  
4 we should be entitled to hear what the percentage of  
5 increase the second phrase is going to be because if we  
6 had a 78, 79 percent increase on phase 1, then phase 2  
7 is going to send it way up well over a 100 percent  
8 increase without any notification, then I feel like  
9 everybody is due that unless he said -- maybe why  
10 there's nobody here. I don't even have a lot of faith  
11 that it's going to be throttled out, and it sounds like  
12 it's a done deal already. I'm sorry. Thank you.

13 MR. DROWN: Thank you.

14 JAY PATEL: That is why the Commission  
15 should be able to learn that what the person that your  
16 affiliation look like. If there's more person --  
17 increase, then probably either we can go the distance or  
18 we can switch over -- this would be allowed to switch  
19 over and migrate our water implementation system so that  
20 we do not want to pay a lot of money because we are not  
21 in your sewer system, and we are just paying money,  
22 money and money. That's it. It's better to have our  
23 own sewer system.

24 GLEN TURNER: I'll ask a stupid question.  
25 Glen Turner, 5455 Point Grand Ridge. You voted an

1 increase in phase 2. How much was it? Does anybody  
2 know?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I asked that and 356.

4 GLEN TURNER: Is it a percentage of the  
5 already increased like 40 percent of \$75 or was it 40  
6 percent of the \$30 or, you know, if it was already  
7 approved and then the minutes, why don't we know it?  
8 Can you answer that?

9 MR. DROWN: She's trying to wait for the  
10 microphone.

11 GLEN TURNER: Okay.

12 MR. DROWN: She's recording everything and  
13 we want to make sure you're on the record.

14 GLEN TURNER: Thank you.

15 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: I cannot discuss the  
16 total amount that the amount of the phase 2 in how the  
17 phase 2 rate increase is going to be implemented. It's  
18 what is ongoing and what is open now. The total amount  
19 of the rate increase that was the total revenue  
20 deficiency that was approved by the Commission on April  
21 14th, 2025, was \$1,362,364 for Limestone. That was the  
22 total revenue deficiency and then the Commission -- and  
23 this is in the Commission's order that was issued July  
24 -- I think it was July of 2025, and that talks a little  
25 bit more about the two phases and how that's going to

1 work. It is on the Commission's website and Limestone  
2 has posted it on their website as well.

3 SUE WEBB: I'd like to go on record to say  
4 that that is not the easiest website for you to  
5 maneuver. It's not consumer friendly by a long shot.  
6 It's not transparent in the first place.

7 Second place is it's kind of sad that you're  
8 saying Limestone had a deficient of 1.3 million dollars.  
9 Why didn't they negotiate that in their purchase.  
10 That's what due diligence is all about in the contract.  
11 I'll buy your property, but I want to find out what I  
12 need to do and then negotiate it properly. You don't  
13 go back and put it on the consumer's backs. No one does  
14 that's in a true contract position and I believe and  
15 maybe the others in here believe as well, when we got  
16 that first rate increase, we felt like, okay, we didn't  
17 win and they're going to have an increase, but we never  
18 knew that it was actually approved for them to have  
19 exactly what they wanted just in two phases. And maybe  
20 I'm the only one that didn't see that, but I don't think  
21 so. Thank you.

22 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: I just wanted to  
23 clarify. Are you saying that the Commission's website  
24 is difficult to navigate to the information of  
25 Limestone?

1           SUE WEBB: Limestone and Central State. How  
2 many people in here tried to get on there?

3           (Indicating.)

4           SUE WEBB: It's literally impossible to find  
5 what you're wanting. They can hear me.

6           MR. DROWN: They can.

7           LISA REID: Is there any recourse at this  
8 point?

9           MR. DROWN: Can you say your name, the  
10 information for the record?

11          LISA REID: I was asking is there any  
12 recourse at this point?

13          MR. DROWN: Say your name.

14          MS. REID: Oh, excuse me. Lisa Reid. Is  
15 there any recourse that this room can do in order to try  
16 to stop this.

17          JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: The phase 2  
18 implementation of the rate increase is the open docket  
19 now, the amount of the revenue deficiency has been  
20 established by the Commission and what's open now is the  
21 implementation of the rate increase and there's a number  
22 of issues that are going to be considered during this  
23 phase that is on going now.

24          UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is that a yes or a  
25 no? I think she asked a yes or a no question and you

1 didn't answer yes or no.

2 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: The amount of the  
3 revenue deficiency has already been established. That  
4 was established in --

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So that's a no?

6 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: The amount of the  
7 revenue deficiency has already been established. That  
8 was set -- that was approved by the Commission in --

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But that's a no?

10 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: -- April.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's a no?

12 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: And other factors that  
13 will be considered during the implementation of the part  
14 2 of the rate increase.

15 LARRY WEBB: Can you give us a few examples  
16 of that?

17 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: A few examples --

18 LARRY WEBB: Of whatever you're looking at  
19 before the implementation.

20 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: No, because that is  
21 open and ongoing, we cannot -- I cannot go into any  
22 detail of that. I can only -- I can provide the  
23 information regarding what was established, what was  
24 decided regarding the rate case that was decided in  
25 April. I think it was April.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And what's the  
2 purpose of this meeting?

3 LISA REID: After the fact.

4 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: To hear from you all.  
5 I've heard a lot of ongoing concerns, there's been a lot  
6 of other various concerns that have been mentioned and  
7 just to give you-all an opportunity to express any other  
8 concerns that you-all value.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: To do what good? We  
10 were here a year ago and expressed the same concerns and  
11 more.

12 SUE WEBB: I have another question. Sorry,  
13 but that poses another question. Sue Turner of 55 Point  
14 Grand. So does the Commission have any authority at all  
15 to negotiate the change in phase 2?

16 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: I cannot discuss the  
17 issues that are going to be considered regarding the  
18 phase 2 of the implementation.

19 LISA REID: Do you have a gag order?

20 MARK WOODRUFF: Is this going to stop at the  
21 second phase? Is that all they approved or next year,  
22 are we going to be right back here again for another  
23 phase of a rate increase?

24 MR. DROWN: Can you identify yourself?

25 MARK WOODRUFF: Mark Woodruff. Did they

1 only approve two phases to where it ends after this year  
2 or next year, is there going to be another -- they're  
3 going to be saying there's a third phase and a fourth  
4 on the increases?

5 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: The Commission's order  
6 where the revenue deficiency, the amount of the increase  
7 where the Commission approved that on April 14th of 2025  
8 set forth two phases for the rate increase to take place  
9 in two phases. Now, this has to do with this docket and  
10 that petition from Limestone. I cannot speak with what  
11 the company may do in the future.

12 JACKIE MOSS: My name is Jackie Moss and I  
13 live at 79 Point. I was not identified last year when  
14 they had this meeting so I got on the website and  
15 started sending all my comments in. I even sent a  
16 request to Marsha Blackburn and she didn't even respond  
17 and I was just wondering did they ignore the comments  
18 that were made in the meeting and the people that went  
19 to Nashville or was it just a waste of time? I  
20 encouraged everyone that I knew to send in a comment as  
21 well as me.

22 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: The comments are made  
23 a part of the official record for the docket and so  
24 whether you came to the public meeting and we had the  
25 transcript of the comments or whether you emailed

1 comments, they're made and made a part of the docket  
2 file and the commissioners have the opportunity to read  
3 and review those and to listen -- you know, the ones  
4 that were present, listened to them and then they're  
5 also -- the transcript made a part of the docket file  
6 and also any comments that have come in via email are  
7 also in the docket file. They're part of the official  
8 record for the docket.

9                   LARRY ROBERTSON: Larry Robertson again. So  
10 if I'm interpreting what you're saying, the docket  
11 number that you introduced at this meeting for is the  
12 same docket number as the one last year?

13                   JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Yes.

14                   LARRY ROBERTSON: So everyone here can go  
15 back to and look up at that docket number on the  
16 Tennessee website and you'll see all the comments, all  
17 the things that went in. It was a tremendous amount of  
18 information.

19                   But my point is that, you know, it sounds  
20 like if you go back and -- the Commission will go back  
21 and read the docket from last year, you'll get some of  
22 the same -- exact information, you know, and it was not  
23 acted upon then so the next question is, there was a lot  
24 there. What else do we have to do to get the message  
25 across that this is totally unacceptable? And I don't

1 know what else to say. It's the same docket number.  
2 All the data is there so there was a lot of people,  
3 hundreds. Who was here last year? There was hundreds.  
4 I don't know. Hundreds of people came in here and stood  
5 up and gave their comments, and then I read religiously  
6 because I put some major comments on the website myself  
7 and I religiously looked at it and saw repeating,  
8 repeating, repeating, repeating stuff coming in. It  
9 sounds like none of that went to -- you just agree that  
10 they overspent and you gave them enough revenue  
11 generation to make it up for no respect for us  
12 customers.

13                   And if I receive anything from the  
14 Commission or from Limestone that said it was in two  
15 phases, you know, and a total number, I don't remember  
16 getting it. I'm going to go back and look at my files  
17 and check it out, but I don't think I got anything. Did  
18 the Commission send out something or publically post it  
19 on the website? Did we get from the Commission the  
20 output of the result of their voting for the rate  
21 increase?

22                   MR. DROWN: Thank you.

23                   JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: If you go to the  
24 Commission's website under this docket, 24-484, the  
25 Commission issued its order and that's how the

1 Commission speaks, through its order and that the order  
2 lays out in detail the rationale and the basis it used  
3 for making the decision that it made in the rate case  
4 and for coming up with a revenue deficiency. And so  
5 that order was filed on -- so if you go to the website  
6 and go to 24 -- under the active docket index, 24-44,  
7 the order -- you have to scroll down some. The order  
8 was filed on July 10th, 2025, and it's called order  
9 setting utility rates. And so if you go -- if you go to  
10 that, you can read the analysis that the Commission went  
11 through all the various parts that the utility -- that  
12 the Commission considered when making its decision in  
13 this docket. There's a table of contents and so July  
14 10th, 2025, is the Commission's order and also speaks to  
15 the rate increase being implemented in two phases. And  
16 so that will provide a lot of information as far as what  
17 went into the Commission's decision as far as the  
18 rationale and the rate making basis for how it came up  
19 with the decision that it did.

20 GLEN TURNER: Glen Turner, 55 Point Grand  
21 Ridge. You weren't here last year, were you not?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I was not.

23 GLEN TURNER: She was and we were turned the  
24 other way and had open doors and getting chairs and all  
25 of us.

1 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Yes, I do.

2 GLEN TURNER: Everybody was very adamant  
3 about not wanting a raise and giving a rational of why,  
4 and it fell on deaf ears. Exactly what was here. Is  
5 there a place where I can go look and said Limestone  
6 wanted 25 million dollars, but we only gave them 1.5.  
7 Do we have that information? I mean, you can tell me  
8 that they -- we awarded them 1. whatever, but what did  
9 they ask for? And besides that, one other thing. I'd  
10 like you to enter -- this lady sitting right here, is  
11 she my advocate?

12 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Yes. She's with the  
13 Consumer -- this is --

14 MS. STACHOWSKI: I'm the Consumer Advocate.

15 GLEN TURNER: What did she say?

16 MS. STACHOWSKI: I'm with the Consumer  
17 Advocate's office of the Attorney General's office.

18 GLEN TURNER: You were here last year?

19 MS. CONSUMER ADVOCATE: Yes.

20 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: If you look at the  
21 order, the order is very detailed and it goes through  
22 the background and talks about what Limestone asks for  
23 in their petition. It recaps the Consumer Advocate's  
24 arguments, Limestone arguments and then also goes into  
25 the Commission's rational and their decision. So if you

1 look at the order, it will have all that information in  
2 it. It's lengthy, but that information --

3 LARRY WEBB: Well, you're so good at it, can  
4 you tell me what that number is real quick?

5 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: And there is a table  
6 of contents. In its petition, Limestone asks for  
7 1,673,836.

8 LARRY WEBB: 1.6?

9 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: Yes.

10 LARRY WEBB: And you awarded them 1 --

11 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: 1.3.

12 LARRY WEBB: What? Sorry.

13 JACKIE MOSS: Jackie Moss again. Did you  
14 say that there was a place that we could get a copy of  
15 the transcript so we will know what was said today?

16 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: You can order the  
17 transcript from the court reporter. I don't think we  
18 put it online.

19 LARRY WEBB: Didn't it last year go on the  
20 docket?

21 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: The actual transcript,  
22 I think it is.

23 LARRY WEBB: I believe it's on the docket.

24 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: It will eventually be  
25 placed in the docket file and there's -- let's see.

1 There is a separate tab. At the very top of the docket  
2 file, you'll see that there's a separate tab for the  
3 comments because there were so many comments that came  
4 in. There's a separate tab for the comments and so  
5 click on the comment tab and you can see all the  
6 comments that have been filed and I think the transcript  
7 of this comment session will be placed here as well.

8 JACKIE MOSS: Could you repeat the docket  
9 number?

10 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: It is 24-00044.

11 I think it is about time that we will take  
12 about a 15-minute break.

13 (Off the record.)

14 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: I think we'll go ahead  
15 and get started back. Okay. We're back on the record  
16 and we'll continue with their -- people's comments  
17 opportunity and we will be here and we'll remain here  
18 until 6 p.m. to give the opportunity for anyone else who  
19 wants to -- any other people who trickle in and to have  
20 an opportunity to speak.

21 LARRY ROBERTSON: I'll do that. I have one  
22 question. You said they asked for 1.6 million, you  
23 approved 1.3. Is the additional 300,000 that you didn't  
24 approve, not proved at all or is it to be part of phase  
25 2 and so then once that comes in, then it also impacts

1 the rate increases that we've already been told about?

2 COURT REPORTER: I need your name.

3 LARRY ROBERTSON: Larry Robertson, 130  
4 Canyon Cove.

5 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: The Commission  
6 determined that the total amount of the revenue  
7 deficiency for Limestone is this docket was \$1,362,364.

8 LARRY ROBERTSON: And no more in phase 2.  
9 Okay. Thank you. What a mess. What a mess.

10 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: It's complicated --

11 LARRY ROBERTSON: Well, it's not  
12 complicated, it's simple. You said it's approved. You  
13 said it's in public so why --

14 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: That's the total  
15 amount. That is the total --

16 LARRY ROBERTSON: Why can't you discuss the  
17 report that's already been public and issued?

18 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: There are also  
19 carrying charges that will be applied to the total  
20 amount from the amount of the revenue deficiency that  
21 was not already charged so that's a new order.

22 GLEN HODGE: Glen Hodge, H-o-d-g-e. I just  
23 want to know how do I assess this previous meeting  
24 minutes?

25 MR. DROWN: She will help you do it.

1 MR. HODGE: Okay.

2 MR. DROWN: She's just going to record  
3 everything.

4 (Off the record.)

5 JUDGE SMITH-ASHFORD: We're back on the  
6 record. It's now 6 p.m. and we're going to conclude our  
7 Pickwick Landing Public comments here. It is Docket No.  
8 24-00044. During the hearing of the merits that are  
9 scheduled to begin April 28th at 10 a.m. Central in  
10 Nashville, there will be additional opportunity for the  
11 public to comment. Comments can also be filed in the  
12 docket file by emailing [contact.tpuc@tn.gov](mailto:contact.tpuc@tn.gov) in  
13 referencing Docket No. 24-000.4.

14 I'd like to thank members of the Commission  
15 staff, Tim Schwarz and Tim Drown and members of and  
16 representatives from Limestone and from the Consumer  
17 Advocate also for being here this evening and we're  
18 adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF TENNESSEE )  
COUNTY OF MADISON )

I hereby certify that the above and foregoing deposition was taken down by me in stenotype, and the questions and answers thereto were reduced in computer print under my supervision, and that the foregoing represents a true and correct transcript of the deposition given by said witness.

I further certify that I am neither of counsel nor of kin to the parties to the action, nor am I otherwise interested in the result of said cause.

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TRACY C. HOLLIS

LCR-524