

ORIGINAL

OPEN MEETING AGENDA ITEM



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Comments by Fred Botha to the recommendation(s) of the proposed order for Epcor's applications for an increase in rates for its water and wastewater rates (Docket Nos. ~~W-01303A-09-0343, SW-01303A-09-0343~~ and W-01303A-10-0448) to be discussed at the open meeting scheduled July 22, 2014, and July 23, 2014

Monday, July 14, 2014.

My name is Fred Botha and I have lived at 23024 N Giovota Drive, in Corte Bella, Sun City West, AZ 85375 for more than eight years since February, 2006.

I am a registered intervenor in these discussion and I represent only myself and no other person or group, even though our goals might coincide.

From the information provided by the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) in the invitation sent by Director Steven M. Olea on July 8, 2014, other groups represented here are only requesting ACC to review our Agua Fria District's current high water and wastewater rates. No specific goals of these groups in terms of reduction of rates or reimbursement have been given.

My questions have a different focus from the other groups.

ACC's current system of allocating water and wastewater rates is unfair and before reviewing current rates the system needs to be corrected. Otherwise, consumers are not protected from this occurring again.

ACC's current rates system needs to include the following:

(1) fair procedures to initially allocate communities to districts and fair procedures to transfer within these districts at short notice to minimize costs to all consumers.

The Anthem, Corte Bella, Russell Ranch and Verrado communities, each far apart and with separate facilities, were all grouped together in the same district. Is this fair and how does it reduce costs to each community?

Moving communities into different districts cannot be done easily. Is this fair, when accounting costs can easily and fairly be transferred at short notice?

(2) online, easily accessible, internet information from ACC, RUCO and Epcor, showing historical rates, income and expenses for all districts serviced, to show consumers different cost options are available to them.

If this information had been available on-line to consumers for the last 5 - 10 years, as it could have been from a computing perspective, would this open meeting and all the additional information now requested from Epcor be necessary?

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(3) alternative early warning cost estimate options for consumers from ACC, RUCO and utility providers, before any redistricting or upgrades in plant or other facilities are implemented, to ensure charges are acceptable.

For example, why are Corte Bella consumers paying over 30% of shared wastewater costs with Sun City West consumers, when Sun City West have 90% of the wastewater usage according to Epcor?

Why did ACC, RUCO and Epcor not take action to assist Agua Fria consumers until petitioned to do so?

Why did Epcor recently go ahead with drilling a backup borehole at Corte Bella - directly opposing their own recommendation to protect groundwater reserves?

Why did Epcor not present the estimated costs of this borehole for consumers' approval first?

(5) basic fair play in management, public relations and customer service

Why do Epcor and not Corte Bella own the water drilling rights in Corte Bella?

How did Epcor acquire these rights?

How much less would it cost Epcor to separate out Corte Bella costs on the basis of a combination of plant and consumption, instead of their estimate of \$350,000 and what margin of error is expected?

What reimbursement is due to consumers as a result of this failure to provide a fair system?

If adequate changes cannot be made by the ACC to protect consumers, does our Governor, the Honorable Jan Brewer, need to make them instead?

Only a few weeks ago when it was announced that over 6,000 cases of possible child abuse had not been investigated adequately by our social services, she responded immediately with a short-term investigation and the legislature then approved her plans within a few days to set up a completely new division of child protective services.

Is our Governor willing to support a fair system of utility costs for senior citizens and other consumers as well?