COURTESY OF CITY OF CHANDLER

In was not uncommon for Freedom Riders to face violence in the South in the early 1960s.

Riders

Continued from Page 14

the Washington group had been fire-bombed in Alabama.

"I remember saying, 'Damn, I should've been on that bus,' " he said. "I wanted to participate to make a change."

In June, he went to New Orleans, where he participated in two weeks of non-violence training in preparation for a Freedom Riders trip. From there, he headed by train to Jackson, Miss., along with 17 other Freedom Riders —Black and White. Police were lined along the rail tracks and streets as they arrived.

"I didn't know if we'd be alive. They told us we could be killed," he said, referring to how he was prepared in the training sessions. "We were scared, but we were willing to make a sacrifice."

The fear was well-founded. Not only had the fire-bombing occurred, but there were numerous reports of Freedom Riders being beaten, in some cases by Ku Klux Klan members while police looked the other way.

Upon arriving in Jackson, the Black Freedom Riders intended to each sit in the train-station waiting areas that were reserved for Whites, while the White riders would sit in the designated areas for Blacks.

"We were arrested so fast we never had a chance to get in the waiting rooms," he said.

All 18 were given a quick trial, convicted of disturbing the peace, fined, which they refused to pay, and then were sentenced to six months in jail. Most were released sooner. Liggins served 43 days.

From Jackson, Liggins headed to Louisiana to continue. One incident found him in his home city, where he sat in a Whites-only waiting area at the Lake Charles bus station. He was asked to move by the station's manager, and then by police, but he refused. The police did nothing, even though a White person sitting nearby had complained.

Then, something happened that has stuck with Liggins ever since. A White woman came into the area and sat right next to him. She didn't speak to him, but never moved.

"The message I got from her was that she was with me," he said. "I think one of my biggest regrets is that I didn't thank her for that."

Liggins remained in the south, primarily Louisiana, continuing his efforts for about two years. He never encountered violence, but was turned away at many stops.

"In many places, they wouldn't let us off the bus," he said. "There still was fear. You just knew you could be cursed at, hit, beaten or even killed."

Liggins went on to work in the printing and graphics business. He contributed to Silver's book about her experience, "Freedom Rider Diary: Smuggled Notes from Parchman Prison."

Reach the reporter: Twitter: Chris_Coppola; e-mail: chris.coppola@arizonarepublic.com

Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED
FEB 10 2015
DOCKETED BY

DOCKET RR-03639A-14-0385
Arizona Republic, Jan 7, 2015

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF THE ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO UPGRADE AN EXISTING CROSSING OF THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY AT 15th AVENUE IN THE CITY OF PHOENIX, MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA, AAR/DOT NO. 741-459D)

(DOCKET NO. RR-03639A-14-0385)

On November 5, 2014, the Arizona Department of Transportation ("Applicant") filed with the Arizona Corporation Commission ("Commission") an application for approval for the Union Pacific Railroad Company to upgrade an existing crossing at 15th Avenue in the City of Phoenix, Maricopa County, Arizona, AAR/DOT NO.741-459D.

The application is available for inspection during regular business hours at the Commission's offices, 1200 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona, and on the internet via the Commission website (www.azcc.gov) using the e-docket function.

The Commission will hold a hearing on this matter commencing on February 24, 2015, at 10:00 a.m., at the Commission's offices, 1200 West Washington Street, Hearing Room No. 1, Phoenix, Arizona. Public comments will be taken on the first day of the hearing.

The law provides for an open public hearing at which, under appropriate circumstances, interested parties may intervene. Intervention shall be permitted to any person entitled by law to intervene and having a direct and substantial interest in the matter. Persons desiring to intervene must file a written motion to intervene with the Commission, which motion should be sent to Applicant or its counsel and to all parties of record, and which, at the minimum, shall contain the following:

1. The name, address, and telephone number of the proposed intervener and of any party upon whom service of documents is to be made if different than the intervener.

2. A short statement of the proposed intervener's interest in the proceeding (e.g., a customer of Railroad, a neighboring property owner, a crossing user, etc.).

3. A statement certifying that a copy of the motion to intervene has been mailed to the Applicant or its counsel and to all parties of record in the case.

The granting of motions to intervene shall be governed by A.A.C. R14-3-105, except that all motions to intervene must be filed on or before January 28, 2015. The granting of intervention, among other things, entitles a party to present sworn evidence at hearing and to cross-examine other witnesses. However, failure to intervene will not preclude any interested party from appearing at the hearing and making a statement on such person's own behalf.

If you have any questions about this application, you may contact the Applicant at 602-712-7149. If you wish to file written comments on the application or want further information on intervention, you may write the Consumer Services Section of the Commission at 1200 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, call 602-542-4251 or 1-800-222-7000, or appear at the hearing and make comment.

The Commission does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to its public meetings. Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation such as a sign language interpreter, as well as request this document in an alternative format, by contacting Shaylin Bernal, ADA Coordinator, voice phone number 602-542-3931, e-mail SABernal@azcc.gov. Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:
855.712.8530
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