

1 BEFORE THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION LS-498

2 IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION) DOCKET NO.
 OF TUCSON ELECTRIC POWER, IN) L-00000C-26-0125-00261
 3 CONFORMANCE WITH THE)
 REQUIREMENTS OF A.R.S. § 40-360,) Case No. 261
 4 ET SEQ., FOR A CERTIFICATE OF)
 ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY)
 5 AUTHORIZING THE SANTA RITA)
 CONNECTION 138 KILOVOLT (KV))
 6 TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT, WHICH)
 INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF A)
 7 NEW 138 KV TRANSMISSION LINE)
 ORIGINATING AT THE EXISTING)
 8 SONORAN SUBSTATION (SECTION 2,)
 TOWNSHIP 16 S, RANGE 14 E), AND)
 9 TERMINATING AT THE PLANNED SANTA)
 RITA SUBSTATION (SECTION 29,)
 10 TOWNSHIP 17 S, RANGE 14 E), EACH)
 LOCATED WITHIN PIMA COUNTY,)
 11 ARIZONA.) PREHEARING
) CONFERENCE

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14 At: Phoenix, Arizona

15 Date: May 19, 2026

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18 REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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21 GLENNIE REPORTING SERVICES, LLC
 Court Reporting, Video & Videoconferencing
 22 1555 East Oranewood Avenue
 Phoenix, AZ 85020
 23 602.266.6535
 admin@glennie-reporting.com

24

25 Reported By: MICHELE E. BALMER, RPR
 Arizona CR No. 50489

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1 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Let's go on the record.

2 Now is the time set for the prehearing
3 conference in the application of Tucson Electric Power
4 for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility, Docket
5 Number L-00000C-26-0125-00261.

6 I'll start with appearances on behalf of the
7 Applicant.

8 MR. ANCHARSKI: Good afternoon, Chairman.
9 Elias Ancharski with the law firm Osborn Maledon on
10 behalf of the Applicant, Tucson Electric Power Company.

11 We also have Ms. Meghan Grabel from my firm,
12 and then inside counsel for TEP is Ms. Megan Hill and
13 Ms. Sam Egan. Also from the company we have Mr. Chris
14 Ortiz y Pino, Mr. Clark Bryner, and Ms. Deb Vining.

15 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: All right. I'll just
16 confirm with you, Mr. Ancharski, that you have the
17 lodging arranged for the committee members?

18 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes, sir. The Desert Diamond
19 Casino Conference Center, yes.

20 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And members will be able to
21 check in on Monday, as well, will they not?

22 MR. ANCHARSKI: I believe that's correct. I
23 think that it was opened up on Monday.

24 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And I'll be able to check
25 in around noon when I get there?

1 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes. I can confirm, but, yes,
2 you should be able to check in on Monday.

3 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: All right. And, now, I
4 haven't seen any notices of intent to become a party or
5 application to intervene.

6 MR. ANCHARSKI: That's correct. We did receive
7 a comment in the project webpage that someone intended
8 to potentially intervene.

9 Upon receiving that comment, we did file -- or
10 we did provide the public notice, the notice of hearing,
11 as well as the procedural order as required by your
12 procedural order. We haven't heard anything since from
13 that entity.

14 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. All right. And you
15 have six prehearing exhibits?

16 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes, that's correct.

17 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Can you talk us through
18 those, please.

19 MR. ANCHARSKI: So Prehearing Exhibit 1 is the
20 map of the proposed project. Fairly self-explanatory on
21 that.

22 Exhibit No. 2 is the notice to the affected
23 jurisdictions. That is the letters that were provided
24 to the affected jurisdictions. In this case, that's
25 Arizona State Land Department, City of Tucson, Pima

1 County, and Town of Sahuarita.

2 Exhibit No. 3 is the example of the signage
3 that was posted in the project area.

4 Exhibit No. 4 is the map of the sign locations,
5 so the locations where those signs were posted.

6 Exhibit 5 is the proposed tour itinerary. So
7 if we do take a tour for this project, that's kind of
8 the script that has been standard in these proceedings.

9 And then Exhibit 6 is the proposed CEC with
10 citations to the most recent CEC that was granted by the
11 Arizona Corporation Commission.

12 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Excellent.

13 Those are admitted.

14 All right. Does the Applicant agree that
15 October 14, 2026, is the time limit for the committee to
16 act in compliance with the statute?

17 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes.

18 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. Your exhibits show
19 that you have complied with the notice to affected
20 jurisdictions. You listed those four.

21 For the posting and publishing requirements for
22 the notice of hearing, you've got the signs been posted.

23 I believe you had two library locations to put
24 the application and the notices.

25 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes, that's correct. The

1 Joyner-Green Valley Library and the Sahuarita Library,
2 and those were hand-delivered.

3 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Excellent. And then you've
4 got the notice and the transcripts and the application
5 on your project website.

6 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes, that's correct.

7 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And tell me about what the
8 outreach through social media for the hearing has been.

9 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes. So as we discussed, the
10 primary outreach on social media was Facebook and
11 Instagram. That's currently running from May 18th to
12 the 26th.

13 Also, the project uses a project website, so
14 information about the project, about the hearing, things
15 like that, have been posted on the website and shared.

16 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Excellent.

17 And then the notice of hearing was published
18 twice in the Arizona Daily Star, on April 23rd and
19 April 24th.

20 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes, that's correct.

21 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And that is more than
22 30 days from the date of the hearing.

23 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: You've had a chance to
25 review the agenda?

1 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes, sir.

2 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Are there any objections or
3 additions?

4 MR. ANCHARSKI: No objections.

5 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: All right. Now, for the
6 hearing, we're starting on Tuesday because Monday is a
7 holiday. We'll start at 1:00, and it will be held at
8 the Desert Diamond Casino Conference Center in Tucson.

9 MR. ANCHARSKI: Correct.

10 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: So we're starting on
11 Tuesday at 1:00. How many days do you think this will
12 last, Mr. Ancharski?

13 MR. ANCHARSKI: I think that's the tricky
14 question. It probably depends on if the committee takes
15 a tour.

16 I think standard is typically that, you know,
17 we go that first day, the full second day, and then into
18 that third morning to do the CEC deliberation, but
19 that's assuming we take a tour.

20 So without a tour, I mean, there is potentially
21 a world where we kind of wrap things up on Wednesday
22 afternoon, but, I mean, I guess that's an optimistic
23 view. But, yeah, I think it really just depends on the
24 tour.

25 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Now, I looked at the tour

1 itinerary. I think you've only got two stops, and then
2 you have, like, a narration script as you drive through
3 the area.

4 What is the approximate duration of that tour,
5 do you think, assuming no more than five minutes at each
6 stop?

7 MR. ANCHARSKI: Chris, do you have an idea of
8 what the tour might take?

9 And I will say that we do have lunch plans on
10 the tour. There's kind of a stop after we wrap up the
11 tour to head to lunch kind of outside the hearing venue.

12 But, Chris, if you want to chime in.

13 MR. ORTIZ Y PINO: Yeah, thank you.

14 I think we were anticipating about two and a
15 half hours. And although we don't have -- we only have
16 two stops, we're anticipating about 15 minutes at each
17 stop and pauses around while we stay in the bus, so
18 yeah.

19 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Yeah. So if we do the
20 tour, it will be that Wednesday morning. All right.
21 We'll see what the will of the committee is.

22 I think with this one you've got two
23 alternative routes, and there are some residences in
24 proximity to either route. I think -- I didn't do the
25 tally, but looking at the comments that were provided,

1 there's a fair amount saying choose Route 1, and then a
2 different amount saying choose Route 3. So regardless
3 of where you go, someone is not going to be happy.

4 So in light of that, it's probably likely we
5 will do a tour to go out there and see it with our own
6 eyes.

7 MR. ANCHARSKI: That's a fair assumption,
8 Mr. Chairman.

9 I'll also note, as is standard, we do have the
10 virtual tour that, you know, we intend to provide to the
11 committee and, you know, photographs and key observation
12 points, and things like that, to help provide
13 illustration of the area.

14 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. And you'll have
15 sign-in sheets for the public comment, which we'll do at
16 5:30 on Tuesday evening.

17 MR. ANCHARSKI: That's correct.

18 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: We've done hearings there
19 before, so Wi-Fi is sufficient for our purposes.

20 MR. ANCHARSKI: And we do have Peaks as the AV
21 team, so I think that they bring their backup internet
22 as well.

23 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Yeah. I think it's a
24 Starlink connection if all else fails.

25 Are there any other issues regarding the

1 hearing itself?

2 MR. ANCHARSKI: No other issues on our plate.

3 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: All right. Attire for the
4 hearing will be business casual.

5 So I guess for the hearing you've got -- let's
6 see. You've got 16 exhibits. I've gotten my hard copy
7 delivered to me. You'll have another one for the court
8 reporter at the hearing.

9 It looks like Staff filed their response letter
10 today, this morning. So I assume that will make it to
11 be your Exhibit 17.

12 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes, Mr. Chairman. We can make
13 that an exhibit.

14 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. All right. There's
15 no one to exchange the exhibits with.

16 I guess at the hearing be prepared to talk
17 about for each segment who is opposed and who is in
18 favor and spend some time talking about which -- how
19 many residences and residents are impacted by either
20 route.

21 My recollection is that you want approval of
22 both to decide which one you'll build later; correct?

23 MR. ANCHARSKI: Correct, yes.

24 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. You've made the
25 financial arrangements with the Commission?

1 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes, sir. We e-mailed the
2 Arizona Corporation Commission business office on
3 April 20th.

4 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And there's no litigation
5 related to this application; correct?

6 MR. ANCHARSKI: Nothing at this time.

7 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay.

8 MR. ANCHARSKI: Hopefully never.

9 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: You've also got the
10 proposed CEC that was your Exhibit 6. You've also got
11 the Word version.

12 Is there anything else we needed to cover for
13 the draft CEC?

14 MR. ANCHARSKI: No, nothing at this time. It's
15 fairly standard.

16 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: You've made the
17 improvements like we did to Condition 2. That should
18 make it easier for complying in case you need to extend
19 the term of it.

20 Are there any other -- what is the status of
21 any other jurisdictional -- well, any permits. I guess
22 there's no jurisdictional permits because the line is a
23 permitted use. It's just for the substations; correct?

24 MR. ANCHARSKI: Yes, that's correct. And as we
25 mentioned at the prefiling conference, the Santa Rita

1 substation will require a power substation permit from
2 Pima County. That's the only outstanding permit.

3 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: What is the status of that?
4 Has it been applied for or will that come after the CEC?

5 MR. ANCHARSKI: Chris, do you have an update on
6 that?

7 MR. ORTIZ Y PINO: Yes. Our land resources
8 department is in conversations with Pima County
9 Development Services. It's not been applied for, but
10 they are in process.

11 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: So you're in the prefiling
12 period, then.

13 MR. ORTIZ Y PINO: That's correct.

14 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: There's no NEPA
15 implications for this project; correct?

16 MR. ANCHARSKI: Correct.

17 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: All right. Now, for the
18 members, I'm assuming you will do the standard thing
19 where you have all the exhibits for them on tablets
20 instead of notebooks.

21 MR. ANCHARSKI: That's correct, yes. We will
22 have additional notebooks in case anyone does want paper
23 versions, but, yes, we'll have the tablets.

24 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: All right. Anything else
25 we need to cover?

1 MR. ANCHARSKI: I don't believe so.

2 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And, Tod, you have the
3 virtual link, the Zoom link, for the meeting for any
4 members who want to attend remotely?

5 MR. BREWER: I do, Mr. Chairman. That went out
6 to the committee this morning.

7 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Excellent.

8 All right. I think that's all I have.

9 Nothing else, Mr. Ancharski?

10 MR. ANCHARSKI: Nothing else at this time.

11 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: All right. I will see you
12 all on Tuesday. With that, we are adjourned.

13 (The proceedings concluded at 2:12 p.m.)

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1 STATE OF ARIZONA)
) ss.
2 COUNTY OF YUMA.)

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4 BE IT KNOWN that the foregoing proceedings were
5 taken before me; that the foregoing pages are a full,
6 true, and accurate record of the proceedings, all done
7 to the best of my skill and ability; that the
8 proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and
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11 the parties hereto nor am I in any way interested in the
12 outcome hereof.

13 I CERTIFY that I have complied with the ethical
14 obligations set forth in ACJA 7-206(F)(3) and
15 ACJA 7-206(J)(1)(g)(1) and (2).

16 DATED this 21st day of May, 2026, at Yuma,
17 Arizona.

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21

22 MICHELE E. BALMER
23 Arizona Certified Reporter
24 No. 50489

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