

Decision No. 13674.

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

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In the Matter of the Application)
of Pacific Electric Railway Com-)
pany to abandon passenger service)
on Santa Monica Air Line from)
Colorado Street, Santa Monica to)
end of line.)

ORIGINAL

Application No. 9742.

Frank Karr and C. W. Cornell, by C. W. Cornell for
applicant.
Chester L. Coffin, for the City of Santa Monica.
J. Challen Smith, for the Chamber of Commerce of
the City of Sawtelle.
Chas. H. Scott, for the Pacific Palisades Association.

SHORE, COMMISSIONER:

O P I N I O N.

This is an application by Pacific Electric Railway Company asking authority to abandon passenger service on the Santa Monica Air Line from Colorado Street in the City of Santa Monica northwesterly to the end of said line.

A public hearing was held in this application at Los Angeles on March 24, 1924.

The line of railroad which it is herein sought to abandon service is a portion of the so-called "Santa Monica Air Line" originally constructed by the Southern Pacific Railroad from Los Angeles through Santa Monica to a wharf known as Port Los Angeles. This line of railroad is now leased to Pacific Electric Railway and on the portion thereof extending from Colorado Street in the City of Santa Monica northwesterly along the beach to the present terminus of the line, a distance of approximately two miles, service is given by means of a one man street car operated between the hours of

7:45 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. on a forty-five minute headway.

Applicant states that some time ago the State Highway Commission was awarded, in a condemnation proceeding, a certain portion of the right of way of this line along the beach under a judgment whereby the Highway Commission is required to pay for the reconstruction of the railroad track in a position a few feet inland from its former location. Incident to this relocation both the Highway Commission and the railroad contemplated the construction of certain grade crossings. Application for permission to construct these grade crossings has been denied and there has been a rehearing on that matter (application No. 9074). The grade crossing proceeding is now before the Commission under submission on that rehearing.

It is contended by the applicant that at the present time this line is operated at a substantial loss and that abandonment of service on this line was desired for the double purpose of eliminating this loss and at the same time removing the hazard at the proposed grade crossing. It is the desire of the company to construct the track as contemplated in its Application No. 9074 and operate thereover one car in each direction daily for the purpose of retaining its franchise and right of way rights. Considerable testimony was introduced to show that the territory immediately beyond the northwesterly terminus of the Santa Monica Air Line had the possibility of developing to such an extent that important transportation service might in the future be needed.

The City of Santa Monica opposes the granting of the application for the abandonment of service contending that the territory is at this time developing and requires a reasonable transportation service. The City further contends that if this service is not to be given on the railroad, it is the city's desire to have the entire railroad abandoned and the right of way therefor made available for condemnation for highway purposes in order that more adequate highway transportation may be provided. The applicant introduced statements

showing that the total operating revenue from February 1923 to December 1923, inclusive, amounted to \$866.94, while the cost of power alone for the operation of the line amounted to \$836.45 and the wages of crews amounted to \$2,060.89. It thus appears that these two items alone without taking into consideration any maintenance or miscellaneous expense amounts to more than three times the earnings of the line. It is estimated that total net saving that would result to the company by reducing the service from the present schedule to one car each way a day would amount to approximately \$2,400.

Testimony indicates that there has recently been a substantial growth and development along the territory adjacent to this line. This development, for the most part, has taken place along the beach between Colorado Street and the mouth of Santa Monica Canyon, or in the immediate vicinity of Santa Monica Canyon. In fact, it is reasonable to believe that the territory served by this line is just now on the verge of reaching that stage of development that will justify electric railway service.

Subsequent to the hearing the company filed a statement indicating its willingness to continue hourly service as far as the mouth of the Santa Monica Canyon for a six month period as a further trial. It appears that is a proper course for the company to pursue. Authority therefore should be given to abandon regular service on that portion of the line from the mouth of the Santa Monica Canyon to its northerly terminus, but permission to abandon service on the remainder of the line at this time should be denied.

The following form of order is recommended.

O R D E R

Pacific Electric Railway Company having filed an application for permission to abandon service on that portion of the Santa Monica Air Line from Colorado Street, Santa Monica, to the northerly end of its line, a public hearing having been held, the Commission being apprised of the facts, the matter being under submission and

ready for decision,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that Pacific Electric Railway Company be and it is hereby authorized to abandon regular service on that portion only of the Santa Monica Air line between Center Street and the northwesterly terminus of said line.

IT IS HEREBY FURTHER ORDERED, that that portion of the application requesting authority to abandon service between Colorado Street, in the City of Santa Monica, and Center Street, (at Santa Monica Canyon) in the County of Los Angeles, be and it is hereby denied.

The foregoing Opinion and Order are hereby approved and ordered filed as the Opinion and Order of the Railroad Commission of the State of California.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 11th day of June, 1924.

C. S. Shaw

H. R. Brundage

Irving Martin

Ederton Shore

J. T. Whitney
Commissioners.