

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of  
SANTA ROSA, PETALUMA, SAUSALITO AUTO  
STAGE COMPANY, a corporation, for a  
certificate of public convenience and  
necessity to operate passenger auto  
stage service between Novato, Marin County,  
and Napa, Napa County, and intermediate  
points.

ORIGINAL  
Application  
No. 11563

- Devlin & Brookman, by Douglas Brookman, for Applicant.
- Henry C. Gesford and Chas. A. Beck, for San Francisco, Napa & Calistoga Railway, Protestant.
- Chas. A. Beck, for A. Hansen, and for A. Dunham, Proprietor, Dunham Stage Lines, Protestants.
- L. E. Johnson, for Southern Pacific Company, Protestant.
- A. Walter Allen, for San Rafael Stage Co., Protestant.
- Earl A. Bagby, for California Transit Company.
- C. W. Hatch, for Monticello Steamship Company, Protestant.
- C. E. Smith, for Northwestern Pacific Railroad Company, Protestant.

BY THE COMMISSION -

O P I N I O N

Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Sausalito Auto Stage Company, a corporation, has petitioned the Railroad Commission for an order declaring that public convenience and necessity require the operation by it of an automobile stage line as a common carrier of passengers between Novato, Marin County, and Napa, Napa County, and intermediate points, and to conduct and operate said passenger automobile stage service as an extension of applicant's presently authorized stage service between Sausalito and Calistoga and intermediate points.

Public hearings on this application were conducted by Examiner Handford at Napa and Petaluma, the matter was duly submitted and is now ready for decision.

Applicant proposes to charge rates in accordance with a schedule marked "Amended Exhibit A" as filed herein; to operate on a schedule of three round trips daily, serving as intermediate points the communities at Black Point, Schellville and Camerons;

and using as equipment modern auto stage coaches with seating capacity of twenty to twenty-four passengers.

Applicant relies as justification for the granting of the desired certificate upon the following alleged facts: (1) that there is no existing common carrier service between Novato, Marin County, and Napa, Napa County; that the population of Napa is approximately 6000 persons and that of Novato approximately 1000 persons; that the proposed service will, in connection with the present authorized lines of applicant, afford as expeditious service as is now given by any established service between Santa Rosa and Napa, thereby affording residents of Santa Rosa and vicinity more frequent service between Napa, Vallejo and Sacramento Valley points; that the time consumed in traveling between Cotati and Napa will be reduced at least one-half hour, between Petaluma and Napa at least one hour, between Novato and vicinity and Napa approximately one and one-half hours, between San Rafael, San Anselmo, Larkspur, Corte Madera, Sausalito and numerous small towns and communities in Marin County and Napa by at least two hours; that a substantial saving in fare will be available to the public traveling between Sonoma, Marin and Napa County points to Napa; and that there is no other common carrier operating a direct service between Novato and Napa County, excepting the service of the San Rafael-Sonoma Valley Auto Stage Line operating between Ignacio and Sonoma.

Mr. W. H. Curtis, Secretary and General Manager of applicant corporation, testified regarding the present service operated by his company between Sausalito and Calistoga and regarding the investigation made by his company of the proposed extension of line during a six months period.

Mr. S. G. Lisher, a furniture dealer of Napa; Mr. C.B. Butler of Napa; Mr. Antone Deborba, operating an ice cream parlor at Novato; Mr. D. J. Schwartz, a dry goods merchant at Napa;

Mr. F. L. Tainter, operating a taxi service at Novato; Mr. W.A. Vreeland, one of the proprietors of the Conner Hotel at Napa; Mr. Jas. Lewis, residing at Novato; Mr. C. Christensen, pastor of a church at Novato; Mr. E. R. Mc Donald, a builder at Novato; and by stipulation six other witnesses residing at Novato, testified in behalf of the application. These witnesses testified as to a necessity for service between Novato and Napa; that requests and inquiries had been made for such service; and that if the line were to be authorized they would patronize it, some preferring the stage service as against the use of their own automobiles.

Mr. F. E. Paddock, employed as ticket agent for applicant at Petaluma, testified he received from 6 to 8 inquiries daily for Napa and points beyond, to and including Sacramento; that he had heard complaints regarding existing service by reason of the circuitous route and rates; and that during the summer months the daily inquiries increased to 9 or 11. Mrs. F. E. Paddock, also employed as a ticket agent for applicant at Petaluma, testified regarding inquiries received for Napa as being from 6 to 8 daily during the winter months, and from 10 to 12 daily during the summer.

Mr. H. H. Mitchell, employed by applicant as agent and dispatcher at Sausalito, testified he received approximately 7 to 8 inquiries daily for stage service to Napa and Sacramento Valley points.

Mr. E. Coletti, a real estate agent at San Rafael, testified that his office received 5 or 6 inquiries daily during the winter months, and from 15 to 20 inquiries daily during the summer for stage transportation to Napa and points beyond, which inquiries he had referred to the San Rafael-Sonoma Stage line.

Mr. Shields, in the plumbing and sheet metal business at San Rafael; Mr. Arthur S. Newburgh, acting editor of the Petaluma Argus; Mr. H. R. Campbell, in the printing business at Petaluma, and Mr. A. W. Agnew, a merchant at Petaluma, testified in behalf of applicant and endorsed the proposed service.

Mr. Eugene E. Blowers, operating a taxi service at Petaluma, testified as to inquiries being received for transportation to Napa, averaging 4 or 5 per week, such inquiries having been referred to the Petaluma-Sonoma Stage Line, unless cared for by the witness at his regular rate of 25 cents per mile.

The proposed service is endorsed by the Board of Supervisors of Marin County, by its duly adopted resolution under date March 2, 1926; by the Novato Chamber of Commerce; by the Chamber of Commerce of Napa; and by a petition signed by 727 residents of Napa, Yountville, Napa Junction, Petaluma, San Rafael, San Anselmo, Larkspur, Sausalito, Kentfield, Fairfax and Novato.

The granting of the application is protested by San Francisco, Napa & Calistoga Railway, Southern Pacific Company, A. Hansen, A. Dunham, San Rafael-Sonoma Valley Auto Stage Line, Monticello Steamship Company and Northwestern Pacific Railroad Company.

Mr. C. E. Brown, Vice President and General Manager of protestant San Francisco, Napa & Calistoga Railway, testified that the establishment of the service proposed would divert passenger revenue from his company now received on through business between Napa and San Francisco and now moving via his railroad line to Vallejo and thence via the steamers of the Monticello Steamship Company to San Francisco. Exhibits were introduced by this witness showing the financial condition of his company, the rates and schedules available for its patrons, the seating capacity and accommodations available, and the rapidly decreasing passenger revenue during representative periods. Witness is of the opinion that the authorization of service as herein proposed will have a tendency to further decrease the revenue of his company.

Mr. R. Roy Leveria, proprietor of Myrtle Dale Hot Springs, a resort near Calistoga, testified that his resort had accommodations for 180 guests; and that during the season of 1925 more than 6000 people were cared for. Guests formerly reached his resort by

train, 85 percent so arriving, but at the present time approximately an equivalent percentage came to his resort in privately owned automobiles. Witness was of the opinion that an adequate train service was available in the Napa Valley and for such reason the proposed service of applicant was unnecessary.

Mr. Walter Metzner, a druggist of St. Helena, testified regarding the service of the San Francisco, Napa & Calistoga Railway, he having noticed trains passing his store in St. Helena with light patronage. The testimony of Mr. Paul Alexander, Cashier of First National Bank of St. Helena, was practically the same as that of the previous witness.

Mr. J. E. Beard, residing at Napa and appearing as a witness for protestant San Francisco, Napa & Calistoga Railway, testified as to his belief that the existing transportation facilities afforded Napa were adequate.

Mr. E. D. Williamson, residing at Napa, and a promotion official of the Napa County Farm Bureau, testified as to his observance of the transportation facilities afforded Napa, and his conclusion that any competition which would impair the revenues of the San Francisco, Napa & Calistoga Railway would be detrimental to the best interests of the Napa Valley.

Mr. A. H. Smith, in the insurance business at Napa, testified that he knew of no need for any additional transportation facilities from Napa to any point, and had heard no substantial complaint against existing transportation facilities. By stipulation it was agreed that the testimony of this witness would be that of W. G. Thompson, in the real estate and insurance business; Mr. Lee Boggs, real estate; Mr. Henry Brown, bank official; Mr. Elmer Bickford, bank president; and Mr. Fred W. Williams, President of California Glove Company; all residents of Napa.

Mr. E. K. Springer, traveling freight and passenger agent of protestant Southern Pacific Company, presented exhibits showing passenger fares and schedules available between San Francisco,

Schellville and Napa, also the service that had been available during the period from 1906 to 1925, inclusive.

Mr. C. A. Johnson, employed as accountant for the Dunham Stage Lines, stated that service was operated by such lines between Napa and Santa Rosa on a basis of four round trips daily; that the equipment was not used to capacity, being patronized to about 25 to 30 percent of its seating capacity; that the applicant now used the same station facilities in Santa Rosa as those of protestant; and that the rates proposed by applicant were the same as those of the Dunham lines.

Mr. A. Dunham, proprietor of Dunham's Stage Lines, testified as to his operations between Santa Rosa and Napa for approximately twelve years; that in his opinion there was no need for the establishment of a stage line between Napa and Novato; that the establishment of the proposed service would curtail the revenue of witness by dividing the existing traffic. Witness receives 5 or 6 passengers per week from the Sonoma Stage Line who are destined to Napa, but delivers a lesser number to such line who have originated at Napa.

Mr. Volente, residing at Sonoma, and operating stages between Sonoma, Caliente and San Rafael, testified his line handled about 8 passengers per month who were destined to Napa; that his line was well advertised in San Rafael; that two round trips daily connected at Sonoma with the Dunham line, thereby enabling passengers to go to and from Napa.

Mr. A. Hansen, operating a stage line between Petaluma and Sonoma, under the authority of a certificate of the Railroad Commission, testified that he owned three cars with an aggregate seating capacity of 27 passengers; that one car was now sufficient to care for the demands of traffic; and that but 8 miles of his route is over paved roads although the remaining portion, which is a dirt road, is in good operative condition. This witness, who exchanges passengers with the Dunham lines at Sonoma, fears that

passengers for Napa would use the direct service if authorized.

Protestant Northwestern Pacific Railroad Company filed an exhibit showing its train service between Sausalito and Vinoburg and the connections available at Vinoburg with the Dunham Stage lines operating between Vinoburg and Napa.

From the record herein we are of the opinion and hereby find as a fact that no showing has been made by applicant justifying the granting of the application and it will, therefore, be denied.

ORDER

Public hearings having been held on the above entitled application, the matter having been duly submitted for decision, the Commission being now fully advised and basing its order on the finding of fact as appearing in the opinion which precedes this order,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the application in the above entitled proceeding be and the same hereby is denied.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of June, 1927.

Emory

Chas. A. Smith

Leon A. Hill

Thos. J. Barrett

COMMISSIONERS.