

Decision No. 21035

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of)

PICKWICK STAGES SYSTEM,)

a corporation, for permission to)
abandon the operation of its auto-)
mobile stage service as a common)
carrier of passengers, baggage and)
express, between Fernbridge and)
Ferndale, California.)

Application No. 15403

G. F. Wasson, for Applicant.

G. M. Brice, in Propria persona,
Interested Party.

BY THE COMMISSION:

O P I N I O N

In the above-numbered application Pickwick Stages System seeks authority to abandon its passenger and express service between Fernbridge and Ferndale in Humboldt County.

A public hearing herein was conducted by Examiner Williams at Ferndale.

Applicant urges, as justification for abandonment of service, that the operation is not patronized by the public and is unprofitable; that it is a diversion from local operation between Eureka and Scotia and intermediate points on the State Highway; that it is not required by public convenience and necessity, as there is another service between termini maintained by G. M. Brice which is adequate for all

public needs, and that two services can not be made profitable with the small volume of traffic.

The service sought to be discontinued is a part of the local service lines acquired by applicant from West Coast Transit Company under Decisions Nos. 17,078 and 20,627 on Application No. 12,927.

The diversion from Fernbridge to Ferndale is 5.25 miles westwardly from the State Highway and two schedules each way daily are maintained, except on Sundays. This service does not connect with trains of the Northwestern Pacific Railway at Fernbridge. Exhibit No. 1 filed by applicant shows an average daily passenger movement of 5.08 into Ferndale from all points between Eureka and Scotia, or 1.27 per trip. The actual movement between Fernbridge and Ferndale was 1.002 daily on the four schedules. The period covered was from October, 1928, to March, 1929, inclusive. During the same period the revenue per mile (including express) was .089 cents, while the expense was 49.88 cents per mile, including allocation of the drivers' wages for the trips, or 22.5 cents without such allocation. No claim is made that the local service between Eureka and Scotia otherwise is unprofitable. Applicant asserts that relief from the diversion to Ferndale will enable it to give better service on its local line, by eliminating 11 miles travel on its several schedules.

Applicant now operates two standard busses, one of 19 passenger, and the other of 26 passenger capacity.

G. M. Brice operates under authority of this Commission an automotive service for passengers and freight between Fernbridge and Ferndale. He also transports United States mails. He uses a 12-passenger combination bus for passengers, express and mail, and two trucks for freight. Mr. Brice testified

he receives only a passenger or two daily and that no passenger service, without the addition of mail and express can be profitable. He has been in the transportation business at Ferndale for 40 years and regards the existence of two services as unnecessary to meet public need. He also testified that the population of Ferndale is 900 and that in the district, largely given to dairying and fruit, there are 2,000 persons and 1,200 automobiles. Similar testimony as to necessity was given by D. A. Francis of Ferndale. No one appeared in opposition.

The rates charged by applicant Pickwick Stages System are 25 cents one way between Fernbridge and Ferndale, and 45 cents round trip. Brice's rate is 40 cents one way, and 50 cents round trip. Brice stipulated that he would reduce his passenger rates to the Pickwick amounts if the Pickwick service is authorized to be abandoned. His schedule calls for four trips daily, making reasonably close connections with all trains and stages of applicant. He has joint passenger rates with Northwestern Pacific Railway. He expects to give similar co-operation to Pickwick Stages System.

Applicant's express rates are the standard division and interdivision rates authorized over the entire system with a weight maximum of 100 pounds and minimum charge of 25 cents. Brice's rate applicable to express and packages is \$1.50 per ton, or 7.5 per 100 pounds, with a minimum of 50 cents. Comparison of rates available for express and packages shows Brice's to be lower than that of applicant.

It appears clear from the record that applicant has justified its purpose to abandon this service. The only portion of the public that might be inconvenienced is that

seeking transportation from points on applicant's local line other than Fernbridge and who now have through service. The bulk of this movement is between Ferndale to and from Scotia and Fortuna and amounts to (Exhibit No. 1) 2.1 passengers daily. Such a small movement will not be seriously inconvenienced by direct transfer to another stage.

The application will be granted with the provision that the discontinuance may not be made until G. M. Brice has filed with this Commission proper tariffs reducing his passenger rates as stipulated, and which rates shall be the same as Pickwick Stages System now charges. Brice's new passenger rates should also be corrected as to joint service with other carriers.

ORDER

Pickwick Stages System, having made application to abandon that portion of its local service between Eureka and Scotia between Fernbridge and Ferndale, a public hearing having been held, the matter having been duly submitted and now being ready for decision,--

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that applicant Pickwick Stages System be, and it is, hereby authorized to abandon its passenger and express business between Fernbridge and Ferndale as a part of its local operation between Eureka and Scotia as authorized by Decisions Nos. 17,078 and 20,627 on Application No. 12,927, or otherwise; and such rights are hereby cancelled and annulled.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the authority so granted shall not become effective until G. M. Brice, operating passenger, freight and express service between Fernbridge and Ferndale, shall have filed with this Commission amended tariff showing a one-way rate of 25 cents between termini and 45 cents round-

trip, including amendment of joint rates in the same proportions; nor until applicant subsequently shall have posted notices of such abandonment for ten (10) days in its stages serving Ferndale and at its stations and terminals at Eureka and Scotia and intermediates.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that applicant Pickwick Stages System cancel its existing rates and time-tables for passenger and express between Fernbridge and Ferndale and between all other points and Ferndale, as shown by its Exhibit "C" attached to its application herein.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the abandonment herein authorized applies to the service between and to the points named herein, and does not alter or amend the local operation between Eureka and Scotia in any other way; provided, applicant may correct its timetable for such operation to eliminate the service abandoned, subject to the approval of this Commission.

For all other purposes the effective date of this order shall be twenty (20) days from date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 2nd day of May, 1929.

Thor S. Lunt

C. C. May

Ernest C. Edwards

M. J. Carr
Commissioners.