

ORIGINAL

Decision No. _____

Decision No. 1899

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Miles P. Lane, et al.,

Complainants,

Vs.

Case No. 1139.

Santa Barbara Telephone Company,

Defendant.

Francis Price, for Complainants.

G. B. Bush, for Defendant.

GORDON, Commissioner.

O P I N I O N

On October 2, 1916, the Railroad Commission made and filed its order, Decision No. 3747, in Application No. 2265, authorizing Santa Barbara Telephone Company, defendant in this proceeding, to acquire and operate, under certain conditions, the telephone systems theretofore owned and operated in the city of Santa Barbara and in other portions of Santa Barbara County by The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, Home Telephone and Telegraph Company of Santa Barbara, and Home Telephone and Telegraph Company of Santa Barbara County, Opinions and Orders of the Railroad Commission of California, Volume 11, Page 470, et seq. On November 6, 1916, its supplemental order, Decision No. 3856, was rendered declaring that all matters specified as conditions precedent in the order in Decision No. 3747, have been performed to the satisfaction of the Railroad Commission, and permitting Santa Barbara Telephone Company, among other things,

to make effective the rates, rules and regulations heretofore filed by said company with the Railroad Commission. Opinions and Orders of the Railroad Commission, Volume 11, Page 947, et seq.

The complaint herein calls into question the reasonableness of defendant's rates in the Hope School District, a section which is situated between Santa Barbara and the town of Goleta, and which receives its telephone service from defendant's Santa Barbara exchange. It alleges that the rates charged complainants are in excess of the rates charged in other localities for like service and cost of maintenance. At the hearing which was held on October 25th, ¹⁹¹⁷ the complaint was amended to include the matter of unsatisfactory service. Complainants ask that the rates be reduced to those formerly charged by Home Telephone and Telegraph Company.

Complainants urge that the location of Hope School District is such that rates as favorable as those now in effect at Goleta and Montecito, localities which are also contiguous to Santa Barbara, should be allowed in said district. Defendant has filed its answer to the complaint denying that its rates are unreasonable.

As stated above, telephone service in Hope School District is provided from defendant's Santa Barbara exchange. Accordingly, the rates which defendant has been authorized by the Railroad Commission to make effective for this exchange are applicable within the district in which complainants reside, and, since this district is outside of what is defined as the Santa Barbara primary rate area, mileage rates based upon the patron's location are exacted in addition to base rates for one, two and four party service. The rates charged patrons receiving service from Goleta and Montecito exchanges are identically the same as those charged patrons of the Santa Barbara exchange, except that the primary rate area of each exchange is not the same in extent. The amount of mileage charges which are applicable for the same classes of service at each exchange, however,

are the same for similar distances beyond the primary rate area. Complainants presented no evidence showing that the rates in question are excessive.

As to the matter of unsatisfactory service, this issue was not presented prior to the date of the hearing of this complaint and the Commission has made no investigation to satisfy itself as to conditions. It is apparent, however, according to the testimony, that service within Hope School District is inferior, due largely to operating methods and to operating delays and errors, and should be improved. Mr. G. B. Bush, President of Santa Barbara Telephone Company, testified that since defendant has acquired and consolidated the telephone systems of its predecessors constant attention has been given to improving the service and assured prompt correction of conditions which have given rise to complaints as to unsatisfactory service by complainants.

The following order is submitted:

O R D E R

Complaint having been filed with the Railroad Commission by Miles P. Lane et al., complainants, vs. Santa Barbara Telephone Company, defendant, calling into question the reasonableness of defendant's rates within Hope School District, and alleging that the service in certain respects is unsatisfactory, and a public hearing

having been held, and it appearing to the Railroad Commission, as set forth in the foregoing opinion, that the rates in question herein are not unreasonable and excessive; and it further appearing to the Railroad Commission that defendant, Santa Barbara Telephone Company, should apply such remedy as may be necessary to satisfactorily improve complainants' service,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that defendant herein, Santa Barbara Telephone Company, shall immediately make such change or changes in its present methods of operating as may be necessary to correct delays and errors in receiving and completing local calls for complainants, and shall within thirty days from the effective date of this order file with the Railroad Commission a statement setting forth in detail such changes as may have been made in its present operating methods for the purpose of correcting the operating difficulties hereinabove specified.

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 27th day of November, 1917.

Max Thelen
W. H. L. L. L. L.
W. H. L. L. L.
Edwin C. Edgerton

Commissioners