

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Inverness Association for Fire
Protection and General Betterment,

Complainants,

vs.

Inverness Water Works,
Mrs. Julia Shafter Hamilton, Owner,
Defendant.

Case No. 1537

ORIGINAL

Beverly L. Hodghead for complainants,

Chickering & Gregory, by W.C. Fox,
for defendants.

BY THE COMMISSION:

O P I N I O N

The above entitled proceeding was brought by the Inverness Association for Fire Protection and General Betterment, an unincorporated association of property owners and water users of the summer resort at Inverness, California, against Inverness Water Works, a public utility water company, engaged in the business of supplying water for domestic purposes to consumers in that community.

The complaint alleges in effect that defendant's water supply is inadequate for the needs of its consumers and that the service rendered has been irregular, with insufficient pressures; that an additional water supply is available from what is known as the Second Valley, which defendant agreed to develop when it became necessary, but that it had not done so; further, that certain intake basins on defendant's system are uncovered and maintained in an unsanitary condition.

Complainant asks that defendant be required to make such improvements to its system as will enable it to render adequate service to its consumers.

Defendant's answer generally denies all the allegations in the complaint, particularly as to the alleged inadequate supply, asserting that the present water supply is sufficient to meet the normal demands on the system.

A public hearing was held in this proceeding at Inverness before Examiner Geary.

The testimony of the consumers shows that in the late summer seasons of 1918, 1919 and 1920 a water shortage existed on the system, resulting in irregular deliveries of water and inadequate pressure during periods of daily peak draft, when the supply in the storage tanks became exhausted. While a general water shortage was not experienced during previous seasons, complaints have been made of inadequate supply and pressure by some consumers residing in the vicinity of the Colby tanks, and receiving service through the 4 inch mains.

It is noted that the late summer flow of the springs and creeks from which defendant obtains its water supply had greatly diminished during the dry season by reason of unusual and abnormally low rainfall conditions, which were not merely local but were general throughout the state.

In order to relieve the situation defendant in 1919 and 1920 erected two additional storage tanks of 10,000 gallon capacity each; reconstructed with concrete two diversion dams, which were in a leaky and unserviceable condition; and replaced some 3000 lineal feet of 3" transmission main. The total tank capacity was thus increased to 42,000 gallons, which is estimated should provide for approximately 3 days' consumption under normal summer use. The record shows a total of 127 active services, of which only 4 are metered; also that some 35 consumers are permanent residents and the remainder occupy their residences on the average about two months in the summer, with occasional week-end visits during the remainder of the year. No large growth

of the community is predicted for the future.

Evidence was submitted showing excessive and wasteful use of water, mainly for irrigation of gardens, and that during the 1920 water shortage it became necessary to restrict irrigation to certain hours in order that service be maintained.

It is a well-known fact that the unrestricted use obtaining under the flat rate method of delivery invariably leads to extravagant use of water. In this case the metering of wasteful users will effect a conservation of the supply by reducing excessive irrigation and waste from leaky faucets and house fixtures.

The complaints of unsanitary conditions on the system were disposed of at the hearing by a stipulation that defendant will within four weeks install wire mesh over all intake basins not at present so covered and that the temporary earthen dam will be replaced with a concrete structure.

The investigation and report of the hydraulic division of the Commission indicates that the present creek supply, with 3 days' storage provided and proper conservation of water at the sources and the distribution end, should be sufficient for present needs and requirements of the community; that no general shortage was experienced during years of normal rainfall; also that the inadequate service and pressures complained of appear to be caused mainly by insufficient pipe capacity and poor circulation of water in the distribution mains. The report suggests that the two separate pipe distribution systems now leading from the Colby tanks be connected up to form a single system, which together with certain other changes and improvements will, it is believed, improve the service conditions and afford the desired relief.

After a careful consideration of all the evidence submitted, and in particular, the facts set out herein, it is ordered as follows:

C O R D E R

Complaint having been made by Inverness Association for Fire Protection and general Betterment against Inverness Water Works, as outlined in the opinion preceding this order, a public hearing having been held thereon and the matter having been submitted,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Inverness Water Works install within four (4) months of the date of this order the following improvements to its distribution system:

1. Install on Fones Way at Douglas Street a four inch connection between the two four inch mains leading from Colby Tanks and also similar connection at Fones Way and Bruce Street. In lieu of said four inch connections there may be installed two-inch connections aggregating an equal capacity. ? X
2. Install a two inch pipe to connect the two inch main on Perth Way leading from Colby Tanks with the four inch main at Perth Way and Douglas Street.
3. Install a two inch connecting main between the lower portions of the two distributing systems leading from Colby Tanks, preferably by extending the two inch main on Summit Way to connect with the two inch main on Argyle Street.
4. Install a 3/4" connection between the dead end of the two inch main on Park Avenue and the four inch main at Bruce and Elgin Way.
5. Install wire mesh screens over all intake basins at present uncovered and also install a concrete structure to replace the south intake dam.

IT IS HEREBY FURTHER ORDERED that Inverness Water Works shall, upon completion of the improvements herein ordered, report in writing to this Commission, stating in detail the work done.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 14th day of

November, 1921.

H. P. ...
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Commissioners.