

Decision No. 23320

## BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

MRS. MARTIN E. GREBE, on behalf of  
herself and other petitioners named in  
the body of this complaint,

Complainants,

vs.

PUBLIC UTILITIES CALIFORNIA CORPORATION,

Defendant.

Case No. 4172

In the matter of the application of  
PUBLIC UTILITIES CALIFORNIA CORPORATION  
for an order to adjust rates at the Elk  
Grove telephone exchange in connection  
with increasing the hours of service.

Application No. 20850

P. G. West for Complainants  
Orrick, Palmer and Dahlquist by Justin M. Jacobs  
for Public Utilities California Corporation  
P. B. Smith in propria persona  
California Farm Bureau Federation by J. J. Deuel,  
interested party

BY THE COMMISSION:

O P I N I O N

Mrs. Martin E. Grebe, on behalf of herself and one hundred other signers of a petition filed a complaint with the Railroad Commission on September 29, 1936 requesting that Public Utilities California Corporation be required to furnish continuous twenty-four hour service in its Elk Grove Exchange. Defendant, Public Utilities California Corporation, in answer to the complaint, agreed to furnish the service requested, provided the rates of the Elk Grove Exchange would be increased by an amount necessary to care for the cost of the

added service.

On November 2, 1936, Public Utilities California Corporation filed its application for authority to increase its Elk Grove exchange rates in accordance with its tender of satisfaction.

The issues thus joined were set down for hearing at Sacramento before Examiner Fry on November 18, 1936, on which date the matters were consolidated for the purpose of receiving testimony and for decision, and were taken under submission.

Mrs. Grebe testified that the present night emergency service at the Elk Grove Exchange from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. is unreliable and unsatisfactory and that she and others have been seriously inconvenienced on that account. She stated her willingness to pay twenty-five cents per month more than her present rate for adequate continuous telephone service and expressed the belief that others were equally willing to pay the increased rate for more service.

Mr. Ross Franks, Manager of the Elk Grove Exchange, presented a petition which he had circulated among the Elk Grove subscribers in which the signers approved the twenty-five cents per month increase in telephone rates if twenty-four hour service would be maintained. The petition purports to represent the views of at least three-fourths of the subscribers.

Mr. J. B. Purdum, as a witness for the utility, submitted an earning statement for the Elk Grove Exchange which showed a net income of \$993.43 and a fixed capital of \$42,271.83 for the year 1935. A similar statement for the twelve months ending September 30, 1936 showed a net income of \$1,416.79 and the same amount of fixed capital as for the year 1935. The witness also presented a tabulation based upon actual experience for the twelve months ending September 30, 1936, showing revenue of \$9,785.20 which the utility estimated would be received if its application is granted. This is an increase of \$1,122.00 in subscribers' station revenue. It is estimated that traffic expense

would be increased \$1,014.00 per year and maintenance expense \$120.00 per year and that a net income of \$1,404.79 would result with no change in fixed capital. Giving consideration to these estimates, which were not contested, it would appear that the proposed increased revenues will just about balance the increased expense required in providing the added or improved service. There was no criticism of the results of operation of the exchange for 1935 and for the twelve months ending September 30, 1936, which did not indicate an excessive return.

Mr. P. B. Smith, as a witness for himself and others, stated that he came to the hearing to voice an objection to the proposal. However, upon fully acquainting himself with the matters at issue, no objection was entered to the increase in rates becoming effective, if full and adequate service would be furnished. Mr. Smith testified that the present emergency service at the Elk Grove Exchange was slow, uncertain and entirely unsatisfactory.

Various telephone utilities operating in this State have emergency service in the smaller communities. It is not understood to be a full and complete service but one intended to allow the completion of fire and police calls, calls to physicians and the like, which are not of a social nature. As in other similarly operated exchanges, the emergency operator must be awakened by the ringing of a night alarm bell which functions when the drop signal operates at the unattended switchboard upon the initiation of the call by the calling person. Under the utility's proposal, a regular operator would be on duty at the switchboard at all hours of the night.

As the record in the proceeding now stands, there is no objection to the utility's increase of twenty-five cents per month for continuous twenty-four hour service.

#### O R D E R

Complaint having been entered by Mrs. Martin E. Grebe

against Public Utilities California Corporation; an answer with tender of satisfaction having been filed therein; Public Utilities California Corporation, in accordance with its answer, having made application for authority to increase telephone rates in the Elk Grove telephone exchange; a hearing having been held, the matters having been taken under submission; and careful consideration having been given to the matters at issue,

THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA hereby finds as a fact that Public Utilities California Corporation should:

- (1) Establish adequate continuous twenty-four hour service in its Elk Grove Exchange.
- (2) File and make effective for service in its Elk Grove Exchange rates for exchange service as proposed and shown in its Exhibit "A" filed with the application herein, provided that such twenty-five (25) cents per month increase shall apply to primary or main telephones only.

Basing its order on the foregoing findings of fact and such other findings or conclusions which appear in the Opinion ~~preceding~~ this Order,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Public Utilities California Corporation shall:

- (1) Establish adequate continuous twenty-four (24) hour telephone service in its Elk Grove Exchange as of January 1, 1937.
- (2) Make effective for service on and after January 1, 1937, in its Elk Grove Exchange the increased rates set forth in Exhibit "A" filed with its application herein provided the necessary rate sheets shall have been filed with the Railroad Commission of the State of California in accordance with General Order No. 68 not later than December 21, 1936.

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 30th day of  
November, 1936.

W B Lewis  
Leon O'Connell  
M A Carr  
Mattias Hansen  
Frank R. Levin  
Commissioners