

**ORIGINAL**Decision No. 63826

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CHARLES P. AVERY, JACK LONDON,  
L. E. RAMPTON, JACK C. MANSHEL,

Complainants

vs.

DEEP RIVER WATER CO., a corporation,  
S. JOSEPE HUNT,

Defendants.

Case No. 7274

Jack C. Manshel, Jack C. London, and  
Lauren E. Rampton, complainants.  
George V. Kartoizian and S. Joseph Hunt,  
for defendants.  
Donald B. Steger, for the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

The above-entitled complaint was filed on January 24, 1962, by four customers of Deep River Water Company, a public utility water corporation, of which the defendant S. Joseph Hunt<sup>1/</sup> is president, alleging that the company's water system has been inadequate to service properly the area it is serving because of the rapid rise of elevations in the area and the lack of properly sized pipes to carry the volume of water necessary to maintain satisfactory service, resulting in pressures so low that users frequently have been, and were at the time of the filing of the complaint, without adequate water and frequently without any water.

A public hearing was held before Examiner Stewart C. Warner on March 15, 1962, at Palmdale. The complaint was answered by the defendants on March 29, 1962, and an adjourned hearing was

1/ The principal issue complained of is the water service rendered by the defendant water company.

held before Examiner Warner on April 18, 1962, at Palmdale. Evidence was adduced by all parties and the matter was submitted on the last-named date. It is now ready for decision.

By Decision No. 50519, dated September 14, 1954, in Application No. 35473, the defendant water company was granted a certificate of public convenience and necessity to construct and operate a public utility water system in unincorporated territory of Los Angeles County west of Palmdale in the Juniper Hills area. As of February, 1962, water service was being furnished to 622 active service connections; there were about 40 or 50 inactive service connections, including vacant houses and apartment units; and the record shows that tentative plans have been drawn by subdividers and property owners to develop 22 lots west of the last houses on West Avenue Q, 27 acres just south of the Juniper School, and a shopping center, all outside of but contiguous to the presently certificated area.

The complainants showed that starting in 1959, the defendant water company mailed letters to its customers urging them to restrict water usage for sprinkling lawns during the hot summer months, and in July, 1960, and 1961, water pressures were so low at peak hours that some customers were without water.

The defendants showed that in July, 1960, a new well pump and booster pump had been added to the water system and that since July, 1961, there were few or no complaints regarding water service. In July, 1961, the defendant water company installed a pressure regulator and rerouted its distribution system for further improvement of water pressures in certain portions of its service area. Witnesses for the defendants testified that there had been no

complaints of low pressure since this installation had been completed.

A Commission staff engineer submitted as Exhibit No. 4 a File Memorandum on the matter in which he showed that in late June and early July, 1961, low pressures were recorded on the defendants' water system. Said Exhibit shows that due to the season of the year when the staff engineer's investigation was conducted (March, 1962), it was not possible for him to observe the system operations during periods of peak usage.

The staff engineer recommended that the defendant water company be ordered to present a plan for design and construction of facilities to increase capacity of the system during peak periods, to install elevated storage in a suitable location and with at least 200,000-gallon capacity to take care of the present number of customers, or to increase transmission line capacity and booster pump capacity from the existing plant, with adequate surface storage. He testified that elevated storage at the southerly portion of the system appeared to be most desirable because (a) storage could be accumulated during off-peak hours and supplied to the system at periods of heavy demand; (b) a suitable tank site is presently available to the company at a southerly location and appeared to have been graded for such construction; (c) the elevation of the aforementioned site is about 200 feet above the pumping plant, and thus, gravity flow from this tank should eliminate pressure difficulties in the elevated sections of the southerly and westerly portions of the system; and (d) the construction of such a tank would provide over-all balance to a system presently lacking in adequate storage facilities and would provide service during interruptions in operation of the pumping plants.

The record shows that when it was granted a certificate of public convenience and necessity in 1954, the defendant water company contemplated the installation of an elevated storage tank; that it bought land for a tank site and spent \$1,500 grading such site; that it employed an engineer who submitted a design of a storage tank installation on December 3, 1959; that it applied to a local bank for a loan of \$55,000 to construct a 400,000-gallon tank; that said loan was turned down by the bank; and that it made a preliminary investigation to secure a loan from the Small Business Administration, but no final steps were taken in that direction.

The record shows that some increasing of pressures by the resetting of the booster pumps to greater capacity could be effected.

Findings and Conclusions

After a careful review of the record, it is found as a fact and concluded that the pressures in said water system are not adequate and that the public interest requires that the defendant Deep River Water Company should be directed to improve its water service so that no substandard water pressures will occur in the future during periods of peak water usage or at any other time, and that, in order to effect such improvement, said defendant should be directed to install an elevated storage tank on its tank site with a capacity of no less than 200,000 gallons. The order which follows will provide that such installation be made within ninety days after the effective date hereof and that said defendant record complaints of low water pressure and periodically report such complaints to the Commission.

No substantive complaint against the water company's president, S. Joseph Hunt, a defendant, is supported by the record.

Therefore, the order which follows will dismiss the complaint as to said defendant. ✓  
✓

O R D E R

Complaint as above-entitled having been filed, public hearings having been held, the matter having been submitted and now being ready for decision,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

1. Defendant Deep River Water Company, within ninety days after the effective date hereof, shall install on its tank site an elevated storage tank with a capacity of not less than 200,000 gallons and connect such storage tank to its water system.

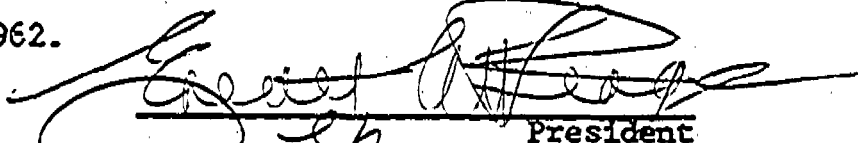
2. Defendant Deep River Water Company shall report, in writing, to the Commission within ten days after the installation ordered herein has been completed.

3. Defendant Deep River Water Company shall maintain a record of all complaints of low water pressure received by it showing the time, date, and location of any low water pressures complained of, together with the causes thereof and the steps taken to respond to any such complaints. Copies of such records shall be submitted to the Commission, in writing, monthly by the tenth day of each month commencing August 10, 1962, and until January 10, 1963.

4. The complaint is dismissed as to the defendant S. Joseph Hunt.

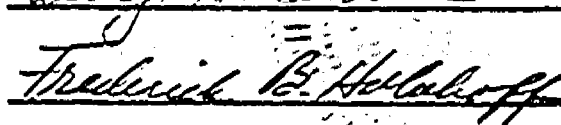
The effective date of this order shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 15<sup>th</sup> day of JUNE 1, 1962.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
George J. Trover

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Frederick B. Hellhoff

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioners

Commissioner C. Lyn Fox, being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.