BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

Comprehensive review of the revenue requirements and IN RE: rate stabilization plan of SOUTHERN BELL TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

DOCKET NO. 920260-TL

BEFORE:

CHAIRMAN J. TERRY DEASON

COMMISSIONER THOMAS M. BEARD COMMISSIONER SUSAN F. CLARK COMMISSIONER LUIS J. LAUREDO COMMISSIONER JULIA L. JOHNSON

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PROCEEDING:

FEB 4 1993

AGENDA CONFERENCE

ITEM NUMBER:

14**

DATE:

Florida Public Service Commission Tuesday, January 19, 1993

PLACE:

106 Fletcher Building Tallahassee, Florida

REPORTED BY:

JANE FAUROT

Notary Public in and for the State of Florida at Large

ACCURATE STENOTYPE REPORTERS, INC. 100 SALEM COURT TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32301 (904) 878-2221

PARTICIPATING:

MICHAEL B. TWOMEY, on behalf of the Office of the Attorney General.

HARRIS ANTHONY, on behalf of Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company.

CHARLES J. BECK, on behalf of the Citizens of the State of Florida.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Issue 1: Recommendation that the Commission should consolidate Dockets Nos. 920260-TL, 900960-TL, 910163-TL and 910727-TL for purposes of coordinating the order in which issues are addressed. The record for the dockets will be treated as one, and the Commission will make the decisions on all issues in July 1993.

Issue 2: Recommendation that, if the Commission adopts Issue No. 1, then the Office of Public Counsel's motions for review of procedural Orders Nos. PSC-92-1195-PCO-TL and PSC-92-1320-PCO-TL should be denied on the basis of the rulings in Order No. PSC-92-1320-PCO-TL and the consolidation of the dockets. Order No. PSC-92-1320-PCO-TL should be clarified to explain the basis for excluding an issue on imputation of revenues and expenses of Inside Wire Maintenance.

If the Commission denies Staff's recommendation in Issue No. 1, it should deem Public Counsel's request for review of Order No. PSC-92-1195-PCO-TL moot, based on the rulings in Order No. PSC-92-1320-PCO-TL. Public Counsel's request for review of the subsequent Order No. PSC-92-1320-PCO-TL should be deemed moot in part, denied in part and granted in part as follows:

- 1) Where OPC's second motion reiterates its requests in its first motion, the requests should be deemed moot.
- 2) OPC's Motion to include an issue on the imputation of revenues and expenses of Inside Wire Maintenance should be denied.
- 3) OPC's requests to conduct a "plain, vanilla rate case" in the January/February hearings, and to move all issues involving quality of service and incentive regulation to the April hearings, should be granted.
- 4) OPC's proposal to include an issue on general mismanagement in this case should be denied.

Issue 3: Recommendation that this docket should remain open

pending hearings and a final determination of the issues in this and related cases.

PROCEEDINGS

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CHAIRMAN DEASON: Item 14?

MS. NORTON: Commissioners, Item 14 deals with certain matters in the Southern Bell rate case. first issue is Staff's recommendation to consolidate the rate case with the investigation dockets currently in process by this Commission. The purpose for this recommendation is to be able to better coordinate the order in which the issues are addressed. If you would like to take that up, there is a second issue that will follow from the vote on this issue.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Okay. Comments on Issue 1?

MR. ANTHONY: Just briefly, Commissioners. Pursuant to a recent order by the Prehearing Officer the hearing dates were postponed in the rate case portion of this matter until March. There are only two weeks that separate the two sets of hearings at this point, the middle of March, middle of April. And given that close proximity I think that that has resolved many of the issues that might have arisen from the temporal distance between the two sets of questions. So, I think a lot of what can be accomplished by consolidation has already been accomplished, and I just wanted to note that fact.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Mr. Beck?

MR. BECK: We are in favor of consolidating the

dockets.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Mr. Twomey?

MR. TWOMEY: Mr. Chairman, the Attorney General

supports the Staff's recommendation that the dockets be

consolidated.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Questions, Commissioners?

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Yes, this Staff
recommendation -- help me through this -- and you talk
about how you -- I can't find it now, but how,
basically, you came to this conclusion after further
study of something or the other?

MS. NORTON: As discovery progressed from the beginning to where we are now, it became more evident to us that issues evidence, discovery, responses, things would cross back and forth between the cases. We thought it would just allow it to go more smoothly if we consolidated those.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: In other words, subsequent
-- am I incorrect in saying that you're recommending
something contrary to the Prehearing Officer's order?

MS. NORTON: No, sir, I don't believe so. This issue comes from Staff --

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Okay.

MS. NORTON: -- the second issue. That's not to

say that some of the motions and a lot of the paper that was flowing in this docket didn't help us come to this, but this is not -- we are recommending, making this recommendation to you on our own. We do need to dispose today of Public Counsel's motions, and that is Issue 2.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: I guess they are interconnected.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Commissioner Lauredo, you're right from the standpoint that in October -- when was it, October?

MS. NORTON: The issue hearing?

COMMISSIONER CLARK: The issue reads, and based on Staff's recommendation, I concluded that they could go forward as two separate hearings. But I made it very clear at that point, and in the order, that it was my view that we should not set rates until we could have had the hearing on the investigation. And the order is clear, at least from my perspective, I always intended to take into account the results of the hearing in the investigation docket in determining the rates. That hasn't changed. But what Staff is saying, I believe, is based on getting further into discovery and the motions that have been filed in both dockets, indicates that at least with respect to the quality of service,

it's very intertwined and their recommendation at this point, which I don't quarrel with, is that they be combined. And I think Southern Bell in the last prehearing conference we had did indicate no objection to combining quality of service issues into the latter part of the hearing. The real problem is going to be how we divide up, I guess, depending on if you consolidate it or not. If you consolidate it, then, how will the flow of witnesses go? That is another hurdle we need to take when it comes along. But it had never been my intention that, you know, we would decide the rates before we had completed the hearing on the investigation. And I appreciate the opportunity to make that clear to you all.

approved the schedule. At the time, the thought was to take it sequentially, but literally back to back with a rate case, an investigation, an investigation and a relationship with the two. And we kept searching for the days, and, in fact, provided a month full of days to go through all of that process. So, we are now, quite frankly, at the form in which that ought to occur, and maybe this is the time to deal with form versus substance. And I don't have a problem with that. And I don't know when we discussed the third

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item in Issue No. 2, but somebody has got to explain to me how you're going to do a "plain vanilla rate case" and then do something different, because I think, the last time I checked, I think the companies file a rate case, basically, of their choosing. Now, are we saying at the outset that we are denying a part of that rate case? I don't think we are in a position to do that. And I am just -- maybe you all can help me with that piece of it. Putting it all into one big basket is I don't think we are going to be able to avoid it. And, in fact, in hindsight it may be easier to hear it once, than to hear the same testimony four times, which I think is what is about to occur if we don't. We will probably only hear it three times this way. But I don't understand how you dictate to the Company what kind of rate case they file. So, if you all can help me with that then I can take a lunch break.

MR. HATCH: I believe, Commissioner Beard, that with respect to the "plain vanilla rate case" it was thought at the time, because there are a lot of other issues than just a "plain vanilla" type of rate case for Southern Bell pending, for example, incentive regulation. In addition to that, the spillover into determinations of quality of service that are going to

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arise in the course of the investigation dockets
themselves. It was thought -- the reference to "plain
vanilla" means, essentially, that you deal with the
essential rate case elements, that you deal with the
add-ons in a different order in terms of when you would
hear it, not whether you would hear it at all. It's
not whether it would be included or excluded. The
company files the case as they want. For example, they
have filed testimony regarding incentive regulation.
The question of when you hear that testimony and in
what context is what was meant by the "plain vanilla."
The theory behind that was that you split that out into
a separate piece.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: Who bears the burden -- and I am trying, just bear with me for a minute -- on the rate case? Let's put aside, if we can, just briefly the two investigations and the relationships of investigations to the rate case. Who bears the burden in the rate case?

MR. HATCH: The Company would bear the burden of justifying its request, whatever that may be.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: But we are going to tell them how they can go about dealing with that burden up front?

MR. HATCH: We can, as a matter of orderly

disposition of the case, control how that burden is presented to you.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: Well, give me an example of the issues that are "plain vanilla," return on equity --

MR. HATCH: Cost of capital, revenue requirements, O&M, that sort of thing are "plain vanilla." They will be dealt with in any context of a rate case. Other issues related to quality of service, whether incentive regulation is appropriate or not, those issues are included as part of the company's request, but are not part of the "plain vanilla" case. So, you could literally separate those out and deal with them in a more logical context and in a more logical order. That's the only issue.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: Okay. Now, I want to put this in perspective, because I'm not sure what I am gaining in this particular "plain vanilla." If I have a witness on the stand for Public Counsel or for the company says, "I think return on equity ought to be X," okay, in isolation. Then, I guess, a week and a half later we are going to come back and hear from that witness again, and say, "However, his return on equity is it ought to be relating to price caps or incentive regulation, as we have had it in Florida today." So,

do I get to hear that testimony twice?

MR. HATCH: Perhaps, depending on how the flow of the evidence and witnesses go. That's one of the reasons we are here seeking consolidation is because we believe it will make for more logical and orderly flow, rather than separate proceedings, rather than having multiple witnesses multiple times.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: I'm not arguing consolidation. I'm arguing that I have a concern in dictating how a party that bears the burden approaches that burden. If you all are in agreement, you know, I will shut up, but I suspect you're not in agreement.

the things we did look at in the prehearing conference was the schedule, the order of the witnesses. And the company did point out that they felt that they should be allowed to put on their case in the order that they felt was appropriate. My concern there is that for ease of us understanding it, we have, in other cases, such as the GTE case and other rate cases, we sort of segregated cost of capital and dealt with all of those witnesses. We have segregated operating and maintenance expenses and done that. And we've got maybe seven people down in the witness list. And I think you can separate cost of capital, and I think you

can separate O&M that way.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: There are only two problems that I see with that. One, that was a "plain vanilla rate case" by any standard from start to finish. Okay? And, number two, there are some other relationships associated with this case that make it just a tad different. And, also, in that case and others, if I'm not mistaken, the parties generally agreed to how that case should be presented. And if I'm wrong about that, tell me, because you all can work that out before I ever get here. My question is, number one, is there disagreement among the parties about how this case comes forward; and if there is disagreement, is it Staff's position that we will dictate to a party how they bear their burden?

MS. NORTON: Commissioner,, yes, there is some disagreement as to the order of witnesses in this case. Sometimes there is in rate cases generally not to this degree. When there is a dispute, typically, it is brought to the Prehearing Officer who then rules. I have wanted also just to ask a question, since you had gone to one of the parts of Issue 2.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: I know how to separate them.

MS. NORTON: Okay. Issue 2, that part of Public

Counsel's motion as to how to divide up which hearings,

sets of hearings would hear which issues would only come up if you denied our recommendation to consolidate the rate cases. And I am not sure that -- I wasn't clear whether that was clear to you.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: Well, no, that is not what I understand out of this. I understand out of this, as I read it, and perhaps inappropriately, that even if you consolidate the cases, we will be, in essence, dictating that a portion of the rate case occurs here. And then at some point later in time we will say, "Now, you can talk about incentive regulation, you can talk about price caps and you can talk about quality of service."

MS. NORTON: There will need to be an order on -COMMISSIONER BEARD: There always is.

MS. NORTON: -- where we stand now based on the conferences that we have had. So, we have set out tentatively an overview, such an overview, typically, the company's president, or an overview witness, return on equity and cost of capital, then the revenue requirements, affiliate transactions and attrition witnesses. That is as far as we have gotten in the order thus far.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: Don't misunderstand, because if we consolidated the cases, my workload goes down.

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CHAIRMAN DEASON: Let me ask a question on the consolidation. If we were to grant consolidation, there naturally still would be issues as far as what order of witnesses will be appearing, and that is something that is routinely handled by the prehearing officer. But there would not be a question of whether Issue 3 is going to be heard during the first week and Issue 27 is going to be heard in the fourth week. we set the order of witnesses, we are going to start on the case, and we're going to proceed with Witness 1 until we go to Witness 50, or however many witnesses are going to be in this case. And the case will just proceed, and we'll use the days set aside until we finish. Is it my understanding that's what the effect of consolidating these cases would have?

MS. NORTON: That is my understanding. It still won't be easy. Part of it is that if you consolidate the cases, the testimony filing date for the investigation dockets has not -- I mean, that is scheduled for February. So, it will be somewhat tricky to try to design the complete order of witnesses until after that has been done, so we can get a better idea, based on the decision today.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: The testimony in the investigation docket is not yet in. It seems to me

logical to put off, at least the quality of service, until the second set of hearings. I mean, the second two weeks.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Couldn't we accomplish that by just setting those witnesses who address that to be the later in the list of witnesses, as opposed to being near the front of the witness list?

MS. NORTON: That would be the way we would plan on doing it.

MR. HATCH: The current witness --

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Is your recommendation in any way altered by the change in the scheduling that was earlier mentioned, and now the gap is so close in time that it may be a moot issue of the efficiency of scheduling, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera?

MR. HATCH: Actually, no, the movement of the hearing didn't affect our basic recommendation to consolidate. If the hearings were still on the original dates we would have requested that you consolidate anyway.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: But what I'm saying, isn't one of the reasons for your supporting consolidation to enhance the efficiency of the process and to try to diminish the impact of this lag as far as -- because nothing has changed in terms of the decision. It's

clear. The order says we are not going to make a decision until everything is heard, so I don't understand what's the big deal, particularly now that the time differences have become very close. You have the fact of consolidation.

MR. HATCH: Consolidation will make the management of the whole process more manageable.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: I understand. Well, my question is has the time changed; that is, the elimination of the substantial lag between the two dockets in any way changed your mind?

MR. HATCH: As far as consolidation?
CHAIRMAN LAUREDO: Yes.

MR. HATCH: No, sir.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: And why not?

MR. HATCH: Because the manageability of the witnesses and the evidence to be presented really is to us irrelevant of the time span. The more contemporaneous you make it, the more orderly the process will appear because you're going to have to decide the whole thing, which is why we are seeking consolidation. If you heard part of it further away in time, the first part from the second part, you would still have to decide the whole thing. So, consolidation to us is logical in either event.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: And this separation of the issues -- this investigation is our investigation, was initiated by us, correct?

MR. HATCH: Correct.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Because I know a lot of other people are investigating, but this is something that we initiated.

MS. NORTON: The rate case, yes. I mean, the rate case was initiated as well.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: The rate case is a result of the termination of five years of incentive regulation plan. That is what is driving that. The investigations are ones we opened eons ago and delayed at the request, if I'm not mistaken, of the Attorney General until they could complete their investigations. And it so happens that everything has coincided into an appropriate time frame that we can look at it all in one big ball of wax.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: No, I was just trying to get clear, because it's so difficult to follow this stuff. A lot of people are doing the investigating on it. We are the ones who investigated it at our own initiative, and it was put on hold at the request of another agency, correct?

MR. HATCH: That's correct.

MR. TWOMEY: Mr. Chairman, if I might attempt to clarify something here.

There has been a lot of

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COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: things in the air about not doing our due diligence, et

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cetera, et cetera, in this case. I think that it is proper for me to at least get it on the record that we

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are the ones who initiated it. Staff initiated it.

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CHAIRMAN DEASON: Mr. Twomey, briefly, then I think we are going to go to and try to dispose of Issue

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24 25 1. MR. TWOMEY: With respect to the Office of the Attorney General requesting that you stop the investigation or put it aside for the moment, I believe the request was made that the Commission and Public Counsel not take sworn statements, oral statements or depositions of witnesses, and that that was the limit

the interim, directed a great deal of discovery with respect to that investigation. There was no request

of the request. Public Counsel did that, but during

that interrogatories or other written discovery not be had.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Okay. Any more questions on Issue 1?

MR. BECK: Mr. Chairman, before we do, may I address one specific item under Issue 1, and that is on Page 3 of the Staff recommendation. There are five items listed at the bottom, and I would like to address Number 2 about filing testimony. In order to do that, I have copies of two motions I'd like to hand out that have already been filed.

Commissioners, I have handed out two motions. The first one is in the investigation into the repair activities. It is not before you today. It's a motion for full Commission review of the order establishing procedure in the repair investigation. The second motion is the one that is before you today, that is the item -- that is our motion that you're considering.

The reason I am bringing out one motion that is not before you and one that is, is that Item Number 2 on Page 3 of the recommendation disposes of items in both of our motions. We have asked in both the motions that we be given 30 days after the production of discovery materials in order to file testimony. The order of the Prehearing Officer in the repair investigation docket requires us to file testimony 13 days from today, that is February 1st. We have asked for a review of that. The reason that we are asking for 30 days after the production of documents is that there are a lot of motions in the repair docket with respect to discovery that have not been ruled on. A

number of those motions go back six or seven months.

We think it is very unfair to require us to file

testimony when discovery motions haven't even been

dealt with.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Mr. Beck, let me interrupt just a minute. I thought on Friday -- let me ask a question. We discussed this point, I believe. And one of the things I had indicated to you was I realized that there were some motions pending in the rate docket that were likewise pending in the investigation dockets. And I think I stated at that point that my order allowing for discovery or not allowing for discovery would set a time certain for filing that testimony.

MR. BECK: Right. Some of the motions in the repair docket are the same as in the rate case; some are not. As a matter of fact, more of the motions deal with items that are not before you in the rate case. Commissioner Beard is the Prehearing Officer in the repair docket.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: You're making me want to reconsider voting for this.

MR. BECK: Well, I think you need to be aware of it. Because if we consolidate these dockets, you need to be aware that there is a real dispute about the

dates for filing testimony. And there are two problems 1 One is we have numerous motions, many that are 2 six or seven months old that haven't been ruled on in 3 the repair docket. The other item is there is an order 4 presently under appeal at the Florida Supreme Court 5 that dealt with discovery. We had orders out of this 6 Commission. Southern Bell appealed that order to the 7 Florida Supreme Court. We filed briefs. No party has 8 asked for oral argument, so we are at the point now 9 where we are awaiting an order from the Florida Supreme 10 Court. But you ordered Southern Bell to produce the 11 information we had asked for. Southern Bell, within 12 their rights, has appealed it. But the fact of the 13 matter is we still don't have the information, and we 14 don't see how we can go forward at the hearing in there 15 without the information that you have ordered Southern 16 Bell to produce. So, there will be problems 17 consolidating them because the repair docket simply 18 isn't ready to go to hearing by a long shot at this 19 20 point in time.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: I guess I'm really confused. Do you support consolidation, or do you --

MR. BECK: Yes, I do.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: You do support consolidation?

MR. BECK: It makes enormous sense.

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CHAIRMAN DEASON: Well, how are we going to accommodate your concerns with the discovery and still consolidate and have the hearing set as it is? You're recommending we change the hearing dates?

MR. BECK: Whether you will be able to hear them on those hearing dates is questionable, and that is why I'm bringing it to your attention. I think consolidation is a very logical way to go, but for the items that are pending, because that way you can deal with quality of service as a whole instead of trying to bifurcate it.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Charlie, are you speaking in terms of the April dates? You are uncertain that we would be able to meet those?

MR. BECK: Yes. If the Prehearing Officer in the repair docket were to rule on all pending matters, and there are about 12 pending discovery motions, about that, pending; even at that, we don't know whether Southern Bell will comply, because they certainly have a right to ask for reconsideration by the full Commission. I just don't know how long those procedures would take.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Of those 12, how many are the same as what is in the revenue requirements case?

MR. BECK: I'm guessing, three or four. I'm not

positive, but about that, more separate from the rate case than are the same.

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COMMISSIONER BEARD: How about Staff responding to the motion?

MR. HATCH: With respect to Mr. Beck's discovery arguments, as we discussed at the prehearing conference

COMMISSIONER BEARD: I haven't had a prehearing conference.

MR. HATCH: At Commissioner Clark's prehearing conference, because these issues were raised there, as well, the discovery motions relate to privileged matters. There is an assertion about the attorney-client and work product privileges. received all of those motions beginning in the spring and through fall, we examined them. It appeared to us that we needed to develop a more complete factual basis in order to rule on the privileged claims. And so, we have been in the process of building that factual base, both attempted through depositions, which has been very difficult, as Commissioner Clark will attest through the motions to compel deposition question responses from Southern Bell for several of their witnesses. And we have sent out, basically, a very massive set of interrogatories to try and build the factual base that

must be had in order to address the claims of 1 privilege. Those should be due in shortly. Once we have those, then we will know whether we have an

appropriate factual base to rule.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Commissioners, what I have done in the revenue requirement case is to require Southern Bell to produce for me the documents that they maintain are privileged and/or attorney work product in their offices this Thursday. And I will conduct an in That will take care of camera review of those dockets. some of the items, and also the discovery Tracy has talked about is due on the 18th. I have set next Tuesday, the 26th, as the date that I'm going to attempt to get an order out on those discovery matters. But I think we can be assured that whoever is -- let me put it this way: If it grants discovery, I'm sure Southern Bell is going to appeal that order, and they have a right to have a resolution of that before they provide the discovery, which could put us in a dilemma. But I think the way to handle that is to request that the Supreme Court handle it expeditiously. would say to you today, is I think we should go ahead and deal with the consolidation and then we have to sort our way through the motions that are pending to see if we can meet the April deadline with respect to

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the items that relate more to the investigation. 1 CHAIRMAN DEASON: Mr. Beck, are you saying that 2 Item 2 on Page 3 of the recommendation is premature for 3 the Commission to determine today? 4 MR. BECK: Yes. 5 It's not essential to the CHAIRMAN DEASON: 6 question of consolidating these dockets? 7 MR. BECK: That's correct. 8 CHAIRMAN DEASON: And this is a matter that could 9 be handled by the Prehearing Officer at the appropriate 10 time? 11 MR. BECK: Well, in fact, it's a matter that we 12 have asked the full Commission to review. You just 13 simply don't have a recommendation in front of you. 14 That is the first motion for review I just handed out. 15 It's ripe. It has been ripe for some time to bring it 16 to the full Commission. 17 CHAIRMAN DEASON: But it's not before us today? 18 MR. BECK: That's correct. 19 20 COMMISSIONER CLARK: That is in the investigation docket? 21 MR. BECK: Yes. 22 COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Staff, let me ask you a 23 dumb question. Under either consolidation or the 24 current schedule, are we, as Commissioners, going to 25

hear the exact type and quantity of the information? 1 Is the information going to change materially because 2 of the procedural arguments we are having here?

> MR. BECK: No. I think we will try in the investigation dockets to put more detailed information before you. We have already filed testimony in the rate case itself trying to give you a broad overview of those matters.

In other words, I, as a COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Commissioner, am only concerned -- and I'm not a lawyer, thank God -- about being able to hear and be exposed to the widest spectrum of information. either procedure, consolidation or not, we will get that benefit, would we not?

MS. GREEN: The answer to your question is, yes And the reason it is is because of the artificial constraints that would be required by maintaining four separate records.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: The answer -- forgive me for arguing with you. The answer cannot be yes and no. It either has to be yes or no. Will the information be the same, notwithstanding the methodology by which we get it?

Well, because of the methodology MS. GREEN: required there is always a risk that the answer would

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be no. We believe the answer would be yes, but that 1 requires an extraordinary amount of effort on the part 2 of the Staff and both of the Prehearing Officers, 3 because you cannot automatically take something from 4 one record and put it into the other record. You have 5 to line out specific questions to deal with the matter 6 of should the information in docket so-and-so, related 7 to issue so-and-so, be considered and have an impact on 8 issue so-and-so back in the other docket. 9 lot of artificial constraint, and that is one point I 10 11 don't think that has been brought out this morning that is a benefit of consolidation. And that is you have 12 one massive record. You don't have to do anything in 13 order to move information from one docket into another. 14 It is all one record. 15

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: So, your concern that the physical transfer of the information may -- we may lose something in the translation, as we say? But the fact of the matter is, the same information will be forthcoming on either methodology?

MS. GREEN: But it's a due process concern that unless you specifically identify up front that you want to use findings from this docket in this other docket, you're at risk.

MR. HATCH: One correction, Commissioner Clark,

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with respect to the interrogatory responses. They were served on December the 18th. We inadvertently hand-served them, so there will be five days for mailing. So, they would technically be due on the 22nd. I was in error when I told you that earlier.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Mr. Shreve?

MR. SHREVE: I think Staff is exactly right. By consolidating the dockets, I don't think you're going to eliminate any of the information coming in. I think it's going to all be there available. I think our big problem was that by not consolidating and by splitting them up, having to change cross examination and presentation of witnesses, you would not have nearly as orderly a consideration of the evidence. If you put them together --

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: I'm going to hold you to that in the that, Mr. Shreve. I'm going to hold you to that in the remaining of my term here, your concern about the efficiency of the presentation to us, because I have problems with the way some of the other cases have been. I mean, the flip side of my question is, does it enhance any of the information? Do we get any more information by doing this consolidation?

MR. SHREVE: I think you could have more information in the consolidated docket, because you

don't have some of the arguments that counsel brought out about bringing information back and forth between the dockets. If you have it all there, I think it would be probably in a more logical manner.

Consolidating doesn't solve all of the problems. I

think it certainly solves some of the problems. You are still going to have problems in all of the areas here until we get to the point that those are taken care of. And it is probably going to have to be handled on a day-to-day basis. I don't think anyone can foresee exactly what is going happen after the rulings come out. But I don't think consolidating the dockets causes any more problems at all, and it certainly solves some.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Mr. Beck, could you tell me, what is currently on appeal at the Supreme Court? What is the --

MR. BECK: It was an order -- we sent interrogatories to Southern Bell asking them to give us the names of persons with knowledge about the various frauds. It went to the Prehearing Officer twice and the full Commission once. But you ordered them to give us that information. That is the order Southern Bell appealed.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Has anyone filed a request to

expedite the decision or anything like that?

MR. BECK: No. Briefs were filed two or three months ago? Yes, it was about two or three months ago.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: I would like to request that either one of the parties send such a motion to the Supreme Court requesting expedited treatment of that appeal.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: Charlie, the order you're talking about that's on appeal I think was mine, was it not?

MR. BECK: Well, it was yours initially, and then they went to the full Commission to exhaust their administrative --

COMMISSIONER BEARD: And from the time that I issued the order until the time it was appealed to the Supreme Court, what kind of time frame are we talking about, roughly?

MR. BECK: About a year. It took about a year.

There were three orders. I'm sorry, it was about a

year from the date of interrogatory to the appeal. It

took three separate times before the Commission, either
as Prehearing Officer or as a whole, before it was

appealed, and that took about a year.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: Time flies when you're having fun.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Let me ask the Staff, can you turn to Page 8 of your recommendation, please, the paragraph immediately above number three. You're saying that one of the primary reasons for your recommendation is the possibility of not having enough time, and, quote, "Ideally would add to the number of days in the April hearing. Unfortunately, that does not seem possible." Is that still a valid statement? And I am just tickled to death by your concern about our scheduling. I think it's great.

MS. NORTON: Commissioner, when we were trying to figure out how to handle all of this, we realized that without regard to time constraints, the logical order would be to hear the rate case and move -- this was before we settled on consolidation -- we were thinking that we wanted to move the quality of service and the incentive regulation issues over into, to be heard in the April hearings. The April hearings are now scheduled for nine days. And we felt to add those two sets of issues in on top of the investigation issues, there simply would not be enough time. And so the only solution to that was to hear some of it back in the earlier set of hearings, which at the time the recommendation was filed was the January-February time frame. At least by consolidating the dockets there

could be at least a free flow of information, even though it wasn't an ideal set-up to hear part of that back in January and February and the rest of it in April. Now that the January and February hearings have been moved back to March, at least it's closer. But we were concerned that the nine days set side in April would not be sufficient to hear everything that we thought ought to get heard at that time.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: Maybe we can set aside '94.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Well, the effective dates
of whatever decision we make, I think, it is still
stipulated to be -- all parties to be effective January
1st, 1993. So, in essence, there is no materiality as
to the time, how long it takes us to decide this case
-- "cases," quote, unquote.

MR. ANTHONY: Commissioner, if I could address that. In a sense that it is retroactive to the 1st, that's correct. On the other hand, people have been talking a lot about the time delays in this proceeding. Right now, if the Staff recommendation were approved, and we don't have an objection to the schedule, but the decision in this case would be July of 1993. Southern Bell filed its direct testimony in this case in July of 1992, and I think Southern Bell is entitled to an ultimate resolution of this proceeding sometime,

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especially since it is going to be made retroactive, I think. And we have a lot of issues that are open, the type of regulation that we will have, what our earnings will be. And to push this out indefinitely would be doing a disservice to the company, I believe.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Wouldn't you agree that the parties do have some control over that pending, for example, with the number of motions that are filed, discovery disputes and things of that nature, that have to be resolved before any testimony can even be filed?

MR. ANTHONY: I don't disagree with that, but I would note -- and I don't want to argue the substantive issues here today. It's not the right time. These all go to privileged issues. All the motions to compel, I believe, are related at this point to privileged issues. I may be wrong, Mr. Beck. But certainly the vast majority, if not all of them, are. And I think that other than those privilege issues, Southern Bell has allowed full and fair discovery. And to keep pushing this out indefinitely puts the company in a very difficult position. And so I would hope that we could have some resolution of this fairly quickly, because, if nothing else, it's a cloud that hangs over the company's head. And I think the company is entitled to have a fair hearing. We are not trying to

prevent anybody else from having that same fair
hearing, but, by the same token, I think due process

would indicate that we can't drag this out forever.

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CHAIRMAN DEASON: Well, let me commit to you, and all the parties, that it is the desire of the Commission to handle this as quickly as possible, but realizing that all parties have to have due process, and the Commission has to have all the information we feel is relevant and necessary to make that decision. But within all of those parameters and constraints, we are going to try to move this along as quickly as possible, because I share your concerns that this is a matter which does need to be resolved so that all parties will know what the rules of the game are, so to speak, from this point forward. And it has a tremendous impact upon the company -- not only the company, but the customers of this company. And so we realize the need to expedite and move along as quickly as possible.

MR. SHREVE: Mr. Chairman, briefly, I understand what Mr. Anthony is saying. Of course, Southern Bell is the first one to request the delay in their filing initially. Plus, they have their rights legally, and I think everybody -- this Commission and everybody is going to see that they are entitled to those. Perhaps

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the way to do it is to tie the final date to either their production of the documents or -- a final order coming out, either protecting or not protecting those, because Southern Bell is in control of those. If they produce the documents, then we are ready to go.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Well, I think that's premature at this point. We are not here to argue that the today. I think the point has been made of the necessity to try to move this along and not continue a decision indefinitely. And that is not the intent of the Commission to delay a decision indefinitely. Do we have a motion on Issue 1?

COMMISSIONER BEARD: Move Staff.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Do I have a second?

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Second.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Second.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Let me ask a question. We have a motion and a second. The motion, then, does also -- when you say move Staff, that includes Item 2, which Mr. Beck had a problem with on Page 3 of the recommendation concerning the February filing of testimony in the investigation docket?

COMMISSIONER BEARD: My motion says consolidate the dockets, period. I've not gone any further than that. If we are going any further than that, then I

1 need to back up. 2 MS. NORTON: The Staff recommendation is simply to 3 consolidate the dockets. The discussion later on sets 4 forth ways in which it could be handled. Some of those 5 dates have changed anyway, so to move Staff would be to 6 7 Simply to consolidate? CHAIRMAN DEASON: 8 MS. NORTON: That's correct. 9 CHAIRMAN DEASON: We have a motion and a second. 10 All in favor say "aye." 11 COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Mr. Chairman, let me make 12 sure I understand, because I'm not embarrassed to admit 13 my confusion, and there is a lot here that I have not 14 seen from all of these wonderful lawyers. But the Prehearing Officer on both cases have moved and 15 16 seconded on this thing, in both dockets, is that --17 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Well, I seconded.

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I'm sorry.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: We both did I suspect

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Oh, I thought it was you.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: We both did. I suspect Chairman Beard had a selfish motive.

COMMISSIONER BEARD: Well, I can't deny having thought about that.

COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Well, the only reason -- I mean, all fun apart, this is a very serious matter. I

just look to you all as Prehearing Officers,
particularly when it's something that is inherently
confusing and legalistic and all of that stuff. And
Susan gave me mixed signals on what she feels. And I
thought that we were -- by voting this, we were
overruling her earlier prehearing order that we are so
familiar with.

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COMMISSIONER BEARD: Let me put it in perspective. In the best of all worlds, the way it was designed, certainly at the time we did it was the best and, quite frankly, in the best of all worlds, it still is in my I think one of the key overriding factors is the mix and match of the record. And Angela mentioned, if you try to move a piece from this record into this record, it becomes cumbersome and it becomes a problem administratively for us to deal with. Conversely, I have a concern that we go in and listen to a rate case that has some -- the best term, I guess, would be interesting twists; that's something we have never looked at. And I have a concern that multiple parties will be there trying to cloud that issue. And for me it's cleaner to deal with one bite at a time, especially in the design, which was not to ultimately deal with any rates or revenues until all the parts and pieces of the puzzle were put together. But the

reality of it at this stage of the game is they are going to be consolidated, and when I get down to practical application, is that we can hear this testimony four times, or we can hear it one time. And if you have four dockets, the parties will make sure that we hear it, at least, four times. I have all confidence of that. If nothing else to protect themselves legally and to provide a record for us. So, when you just weigh out the practical applications, let's have one. Now, beyond that, I express no opinions as to who shares the burden and how we dictate to somebody how they shoulder that burden. That's a different animal for a different day.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: For Issue 1 we have a motion and second. All in favor say "aye." (Response.) All opposed, "nay." Issue 1 of Staff recommendation is approved.

Issue 2.

MS. NORTON: Commissioner, based on your approval of Issue 1, Staff's recommendation is that Public Counsel's motions for -- you know, the points contained therein, their motions for full review should be denied. Based on this decision and the second procedural order, we would recommend that a second procedural order be clarified to explain the basis for

excluding an issue on the imputation of revenues and expenses for Inside Wire Maintenance. That was in the first point on that. By consolidating the dockets, Staff believes that you have effectively addressed the other points in their motion.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: So, Points 1, 3 and 4, you think are addressed by the decision to consolidate, is that correct?

MS. NORTON: Let me count the points.

MS. GREEN: Yes, your decision to consolidate has the effect of denying those.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: And then the only other matter which the question of consolidation does not address is the motion to include an issue concerning imputation of Inside Wire Maintenance, revenues and expenses. Is that where we find ourselves?

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes, we have to deal with the issue, their request on Inside Wire Maintenance.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Okay.

MS. NORTON: Public Counsel has, in their motion for a full Commission review, the bottom line is they would like to have an issue on the imputation of revenue and expenses for Inside Wire Maintenance as an issue in the rate case.

Staff's recommendation to the Prehearing Officer

was that given that the decisions in both the GTE and the United rate cases, that the issue of Inside Wire Maintenance needed to go to rulemaking, prior to making any policy changes. It was on that basis that we recommended it not be an issue in the rate case. The Prehearing Officer took it under advisement, and the issue list that was subsequently issued did not have that issue in it. And that is what Public Counsel wishes the full Commission to address. Our recommendation now is there should be an explanation, a clarification of the order as to why Inside Wire Maintenance was not included as an issue.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Mr. Beck, briefly.

MR. BECK: Yes. Commissioners, the actual motion that the Staff recommendation addresses, I've handed out to you. You will see that the very first item in the motion that's actually before you is the same in this case as it was in the other case. And that is our exception to being required to file testimony before getting rulings on motions or on discovery. Now, Commissioner Clark has addressed that. She is addressing the motions in the rate case, and said she would in her order address the filing of testimony. We are willing to go along with that, but we would not want to be precluded from bringing this item up to you

again if you don't address it today, because we still have issue with being required to file testimony. We filed what we could on the date it was required, but we don't think we should have been ordered to file testimony without rulings on discovery motions.

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With respect to the inside wire issue, Commissioners, it has been almost a year since we have been told that this will be addressed in another docket, and yet the docket hasn't even been opened yet. In the meantime, the companies are walking away with millions and millions of dollars because the Commission is deferring this to a rule docket. These items were items, or were issues in the United rate case, the GTE rate case and the Centel rate case. In those cases in which it was disputed, the Prehearing Officer allowed us to present testimony on the topic, notwithstanding the company's objection. We think it would be highly incongruous for the Commission to hear testimony for the second, third and fourth largest telephone companies in the state with respect to inside wire, but then deny us the right to present testimony in this In fact, the testimony that we did file on November 16th addresses this issue for Southern Bell. In that testimony, we said that in light of Southern Bell's track record, which is worse for Southern Bell

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than it is for any other company, that the Commission out to immediately assert its regulatory jurisdiction to the full extent it can. There is a lot of money at stake in this issue. We think you should allow us to present testimony, because if you strike the issue, that is, in essence, ruling against us without ever even allowing us to present evidence in the first place. As recently as last week, an order came out of the Supreme Court on Commission rulings that denied it. In that case it was United, a hearing on a refund amount. We think you should give us the hearing on the inside wire, as well.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Mr. Anthony.

MR. ANTHONY: A couple of matters, Commissioners. First of all, I think you have to recall what the standard is. The standard is whether the Prehearing Officer made a mistake of fact or law. That is the standard that you have applied to other considerations from -- excuse me, a review of that prehearing officer's order. There is no such mistake here. Clearly, inside wire in Florida for the local exchange companies is governed by a rule that says it's unregulated. It would take rulemaking to change that. It can't be changed in the context of Southern Bell's rate case.

Beyond that you have already expressed your intent in the cases that Mr. Beck has cited to. It says that you might consider this in a rulemaking. Given the complexities of Southern Bell's case, which includes a review of its current incentive plan, its proposed incentive plan, the consolidation that you have now undertaken and the other rate case issues, to add this on top of all of those, when you already have said that you're going to open a separate docket to consider the very same issues, it seems to me it would be a waste of everybody's resources.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Mr. Twomey, do you wish to comment?

MR. TWOMEY: We support Public Counsel.

CHAIRMAN DEASON: Questions, Commissioners? Do I have a motion?

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Maybe I need to put it in perspective in terms of my concern. While we did allow the testimony in the other cases, the Commission took no action as a result of that testimony, recognizing the fact that we did have a rule on the books that says it's unregulated. My concern would be that I believe there is a new statute under 120 that would, even if we wanted to do it in this hearing, we could not do it because we have a rule that is directly contrary to

what we would be doing.

MR. BECK: I disagree, Commissioner. Your rule says that inside wire is unregulated. What we have asked you to do as a first step is not to regulate inside wire, but impute the revenues and expenses for the purpose of setting regulated rates. We believe that is not inconsistent with a rule that allows inside wire itself to be unregulated.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Let me ask you this: Was that the basis of your recommendation and testimony in the other three cases?

MR. BECK: Yes, it was.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: And the Commission took no action, deferring it to a generic proceeding?

MR. BECK: Yes.

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay.

and with all due respect, this would not be denying you the opportunity to hear this for the first time, but more appropriately, maybe second, third or fourth time, because the issues, generally speaking, are the same for each of the companies and your position, as I understand it. And I just -- this docket is pretty clouded, and I don't see clouding it further at this stage of the game. And that is coming from someone who

1 doesn't necessarily support the change in the rule, 2 but, nonetheless, we have committed to do that 3 notwithstanding the schedule that we have got to find And I would move Staff's recommendation to dates. 5 support the Hearing Officer's decision. CHAIRMAN DEASON: I have a motion. Do I have a 6 7 second? COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I will second it. 8 CHAIRMAN DEASON: I have a motion and a second. 9 All in favor say "aye." 10 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Aye. 11 COMMISSIONER LAUREDO: Aye. 12 COMMISSIONER BEARD: Aye. 13 COMMISSIONER CLARK: Aye. 14 CHAIRMAN DEASON: All opposed say "nay." 15 The Staff recommendation is approved. 16 Issue 3. I assume Issue 3 will be approved 17 without objection. No objection, Issue 3 is approved. 18 Any other matters? While we have got us here today, is 19 there -- I quess we can't bring anything else up except 20 what is on here. Fine. 21 22 (End of item) 23 24

1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER 2 STATE OF FLORIDA) 3 COUNTY OF LEON I, JANE FAUROT, Court Reporter, Notary Public in 4 5 and for the State of Florida at Large: 6 DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing proceedings 7 was taken before me at the time and place therein 8 designated; that before testimony was taken the 9 witness/witnesses were duly sworn; that my shorthand notes were thereafter reduced to typewriting; and the foregoing 10 pages numbered 1 through 45 are a true and correct record of 11 12 the proceedings. 13 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor 14 relative or employee of such attorney or counsel, or 15 financially interested in the foregoing action. 16 WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL this 2 day of 17 January, 1993, in the City of Tallahassee, County of Leon, 18 19 State of Florida. 20 21 JANE FAUROTA Court Reporter Notary Public in and for the 22 State of Florida at Large 23 24 My Commission Expires: July 16, 1993