

**THE STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF KANSAS**

Before Commissioners:                   Dwight D. Keen, Chair  
  Susan K. Duffy  
  Andrew J. French

In the matter of the application of Merit Energy Company, LLC for an exception to the 10-year time limitation of K.A.R. 82-3-111 for its Winter Morrow Unit #105W well in the South Half of the Southeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter Section 13, Township 33 South, Range 43 West, Morton County, Kansas.	)	Docket No: 23-CONS-3003-CEXC
	)	CONSERVATION DIVISION
	)	License No: 32446
	)	

**ORDER DESIGNATING PRESIDING OFFICER  
AND SETTING PREHEARING CONFERENCE**

The Commission rules as follows:

1. On July 8, 2022, Merit Energy Company, LLC (Operator) filed an application as described in the above caption; on December 21, 2022, Commission Staff motioned for the designation of a presiding officer and the scheduling of a prehearing conference, citing the lack of a satisfactory, Staff-witnessed casing integrity test for the well at issue.

2. Under K.S.A. 77-551(c), the Commission finds a Presiding Officer should be designated in this proceeding to determine procedural matters that may arise prior to a hearing on the merits, including but not limited to conducting prehearing conferences.<sup>1</sup>

3. The Commission finds a Prehearing Conference should be scheduled.

4. Under K.A.R. 82-1-228(d)(1), any party may either “appear before the Commission and be heard in person on that party’s own behalf,” or appear before the Commission through a licensed attorney. Because Operator is an artificial entity, it cannot appear in person.<sup>2</sup> Thus, Commission regulations require artificial entities such as Operator to appear before the Commission

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<sup>1</sup> See also K.S.A. 77-516 and K.S.A. 77-517.

<sup>2</sup> See *State ex rel. Stephan v. Williams*, 246 Kan. 681, 691 (1990).

via counsel.<sup>3</sup> Even if Commission regulations did not require counsel in this matter, the Commission finds it would be in the public interest to require counsel via order.<sup>4</sup>

**THEREFORE, THE COMMISSION ORDERS:**

A. The Presiding Officer for prehearing matters in this proceeding shall be Jonathan R. Myers, Assistant General Counsel, Kansas Corporation Commission, 266 N. Main Street, Suite 220, Wichita, Kansas, 67202-1513, telephone number (316) 337-6245, email address j.myers@kcc.ks.gov. The Commission may designate other Staff members to serve in this capacity.

B. A Prehearing Conference is scheduled for **Thursday, January 26, 2023, at 2:15 p.m.** by telephone. The conference call information is: telephone number (253) 205-0468, Meeting ID 5248125436.<sup>5</sup> **Operator must appear via a licensed attorney.**

C. At the Prehearing Conference, parties shall be prepared to discuss deadlines for filing testimony and briefs, discovery procedures, scheduling of a hearing with the Commission, and any other issues that will promote the orderly and prompt resolution of this proceeding. At the Prehearing Conference, without further notice, this proceeding may be converted into a conference hearing or a summary proceeding for disposition of this matter as provided by the Kansas Administrative Procedure Act (KAPA). Any party that fails to attend or participate in the Prehearing Conference, hearing, or other stage of this proceeding may be held in default under the KAPA.<sup>6</sup>

D. Although a Presiding Officer is designated, parties are still required to file pleadings with the Commission, and filings shall be made with the Commission's Docket Room. Any filing received after 5:00 p.m. shall be considered filed the next business day. In addition, any late filing

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<sup>3</sup> See also K.A.R. 82-1-228(d)(2) ("[A] corporation shall not be permitted to enter an appearance, except by its attorney."); Operator is a corporation.

<sup>4</sup> The administration of justice is efficiently furthered by requiring persons licensed to practice law and familiar with procedure to represent artificial entities. See *In re Arnold*, 274 Kan. 761, 770 (2002). See also K.S.A. 77-515(c) ("A state agency may require a corporation or other artificial person to participate by counsel.").

<sup>5</sup> If prompted, there is no Participant ID; just press pound to continue.

<sup>6</sup> K.S.A. 77-506; K.S.A. 77-516(c)(7)-(8).


shall be accompanied by a Motion to File Out-of-Time. **The Commission directs electronic service of all filings in the docket to include service on the Presiding Officer and mailed service of all filings to be directed to the Presiding Officer's attention.**

E. The attorney designated to appear on behalf of the agency in this proceeding is Kelcey Marsh, Litigation Counsel, telephone number (316) 337-6200, k.marsh@kcc.ks.gov.

**BY THE COMMISSION IT IS SO ORDERED.**

Keen, Chair; Duffy, Commissioner; French, Commissioner

Dated: 01/10/2023



Lynn M. Retz  
Executive Director

Mailed Date: 01/10/2023  
JRM

## **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

23-CONS-3003-CEXC

I, the undersigned, certify that a true copy of the attached Order has been served to the following by means of  
first class mail and electronic service on 01/10/2023.

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