

**LEDBETTER WATER DISTRICT  
1483 U. S. 60 West  
P. O. Box 123  
Ledbetter, Kentucky 42058**

**Phone: 270-898-3236  
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**March 14, 2006**

**Beth O'Donnell  
Executive Director  
Public Service Commission  
211 Sower Blvd.  
P. O. Box 615  
Frankfort, KY 40602-0615**

**RECEIVED**

**MAR 23 2006**

**PUBLIC SERVICE  
COMMISSION**

**RE: Case 2005-00384**

**Dear Ms O'Donnell,**

**In reviewing the documents before the PSC in this case I noted that the reasons given by Judge Lasher for not reappointing Arnie Puckett to the board of Ledbetter Water District were based not on facts but on the judge executive's personal characterization of Mr. Puckett. These documents are public records, easily accessible to anyone with internet service. Furthermore these documents will help form the basis of an important decision by the PSC in this case. Therefore it seems important that the documents be factual and accurate.**

**Mr. Puckett had stated that he had missed 6 out of 12 meetings in 2004, and had given an account of the circumstances that required his absences. In response, Judge Lasher said that he believed the number of missed meetings was greater than that number. Mr. Puckett's statement about his attendance record was factual and accurate, and was based on records on file at the water district office. This information would have been provided to the judge executive upon request. Instead he made a statement to you based on a belief that was false.**

**Judge Lasher went on to characterize Arnie Puckett as unprofessional, basing his characterization not on facts or experience but on his personal feelings. I have served as water district manager for five and a half years and, based on my experience, I would characterize Mr. Puckett as highly professional. He has devoted himself to conducting water district business in a conscientious manner, with diligent attention to the public good. To this end he has consistently displayed a willingness to step up and take a firm stand for making the right decision. And he has shown a skill for standing his ground without sacrificing courtesy or civility.**

**During the period when Mr. Puckett had to miss several meetings he was very diligent in staying apprised of developments regarding the sanitation district. He made numerous phone calls and visits with water district staff in order to stay on top of the situation. He stood firmly against political pressure to accept a quick resolution of the sanitation district's situation, and helped take the lead in holding out for a better deal for the community. In the midst of crisis in his family business, Arnie Puckett never failed to fulfill his duty to Ledbetter Water District.**

**On a personal note, I have spent nineteen years working under a number of different boards. Many of the boards have been hindered, to differing degrees, by personal agendas, personality conflicts, personal differences, petty politics, spitefulness or other disruptive influences. I periodically go to continuing education sessions and seminars with operators from other water and sewer systems, and the most common subject of conversation among those operators is the difficulty they experience in dealing with their boards. They invariably describe situations in which they feel they are not allowed to adequately do their jobs because of board actions and attitudes. A neighboring municipal water and sewer system is currently under criminal investigation for actions by some of the operators, and the situation has been aggravated by personal conflicts between some of their commissioners and some of the operators.**

**Ledbetter Water District is blessed by having an exceptional board of commissioners. They all still work, so they remain exposed to the realities of the business world. They make business-like decisions instead of letting petty personal conflicts influence them. These qualities have allowed this board to successfully see Ledbetter Water District through some very trying times. A good professional board of such exceptional quality is a valuable asset to the community and the county.**

**It is disturbing to see the judge executive taking disruptive action toward the board because of a personal difference with the wife of a commissioner. I have hoped that he would act professionally and reconsider reappointing Arnie Puckett to the board. If he does not, then I urge the Public Service Commission to act in the best interest of Ledbetter and make the reappointment.**

**Please make this letter a part of the case file. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.**

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Downs". The signature is written in black ink and includes a long horizontal flourish at the end.

**Bill Downs  
District Manager**