



Mississippi Public Service Commission

The Honorable Chris Brown, Northern District Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

JUDGE RELEASES ORDER APPOINTING MICHAEL WATSON AS RECEIVER OVER HSUD; MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION TO FILE MOTION TO RECONSIDER

New Albany, MS (August 18, 2026) – Late this afternoon, Mississippi’s 18th Chancery Court District Judge Lawrence “Larry” Little released his order appointing Michael F. Watson as Receiver over the Holly Springs Utility District (HSUD). Mr. Watson was recommended by the City of Holly Springs, and prior to his appointment as Receiver, has been working for approximately nine months as a contracted consultant for the City.

The Mississippi Public Service Commission (MPSC) is preparing to file a motion to reconsider the appointment. Within the order, Judge Little rightly finds that the current management of HSUD is “grossly inefficient, irresponsible, and unresponsive to the needs of its electric utility customers.” The MPSC fully supports these findings, and intends to show that the appointment of Michael Watson, who has been employed by the City, does not represent a change in the management of HSUD. Along with the motion to reconsider, the MPSC intends to request a comprehensive forensic audit of the utility.

The MPSC’s recommendation for the Receiver was Frank R. Simon, a professional court receiver whose record of success is exceptional. With nearly 30 years of experience as a practice leader and a team of forensic auditors, Mr. Simon gave the MPSC great confidence that he and his team would have provided the leadership and expertise necessary to rehabilitate, restore, and revitalize HSUD.

Of the ruling, MPSC Chairman Chris Brown stated, “For years, families served by HSUD have lost power for days at a time; food spoiling in refrigerators, medical equipment going dark, refrigerators and HVAC units burned out by a system that could not deliver steady service. Then the bill arrives, and it bears no relation to the last one. That is not an inconvenience. That is a household budget wrecked and a family put at risk, over and over, with no explanation and no accountability. While we respect the Court, this appointment does not change who has been running this utility, and I am committed to exhausting every avenue until the people of HSUD receive the reliable service and honest billing they have paid for and been denied.”

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