

**BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE  
RAILROAD COMMISSION OF  
WISCONSIN, FROM JULY  
1, 1918 TO JUNE 30, 1920**

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Biennial Report of the Railroad Commission of Wisconsin, from July 1, 1918 to June 30, 1920 by  
Various

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**VARIOUS**

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RAILROAD COMMISSION OF  
WISCONSIN, FROM JULY  
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1920

MADISON, Wisconsin, August 31, 1920.

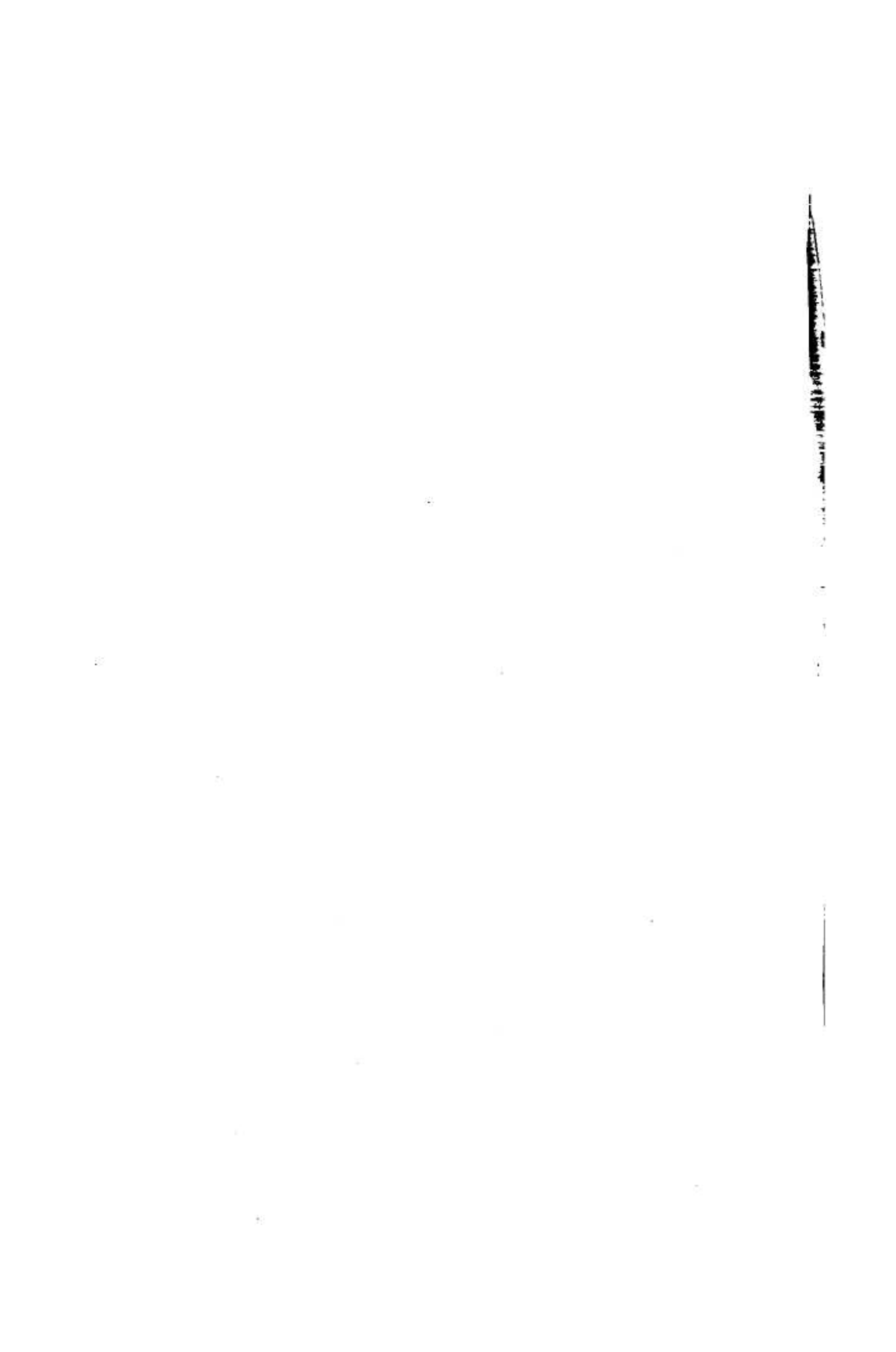
To His Excellency EMANUEL L. PHILIPP, *Governor:*

As required by law, we have the honor to submit our report of receipts and disbursements and other matters pertaining to this office for the biennium ended June 30, 1920.

RAILROAD COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN,

CARL D. JACKSON,

*Chairman.*



## INTRODUCTORY

The work of the Commission for the period covered by this report is marked by two general characteristics, first, the relatively small number of cases involving the railroads, because of their being under Federal control; second, the excessively large number of utility cases handled, most of them involving increases in rates due to the abnormal economic conditions created by the war. These conditions, and their effect on the utilities, are discussed at length in the report. The affairs of the Commission have been subjected to the same influence which is reflected in the cost of conducting its business. The number of formal cases handled by the Commission has shown a progressive increase, as indicated by the table of cases filed for each six-months' period covered by this report:

For the six months ended	December 31, 1918.....	216
" " " " "	June 30, 1919.....	293
" " " " "	December 31, 1919.....	405
" " " " "	June 30, 1920.....	506

In spite of being handicapped by the lack of adequate staff personnel, decisions rendered have kept pace with new cases filed. There were 278 open cases on the docket July 1, 1918, and 285 open on June 30, 1920, an increase of only 7 for the two-year period. Of the pending cases, 154, or more than half, were filed since May 1.

During the month of June, 1920, there were 93 cases set for hearing, which compares with only 406 set for the entire year 1916. There has been no suspension of hearings during the months of July and August, as was formerly the practice. While no prediction can be made for the future, it is hoped that the peak has been reached. However, any present decrease in the number of utility cases arising will be more than offset by the increase in railroad cases that will follow the resumption on September 1 of full private control and operation. Moreover,

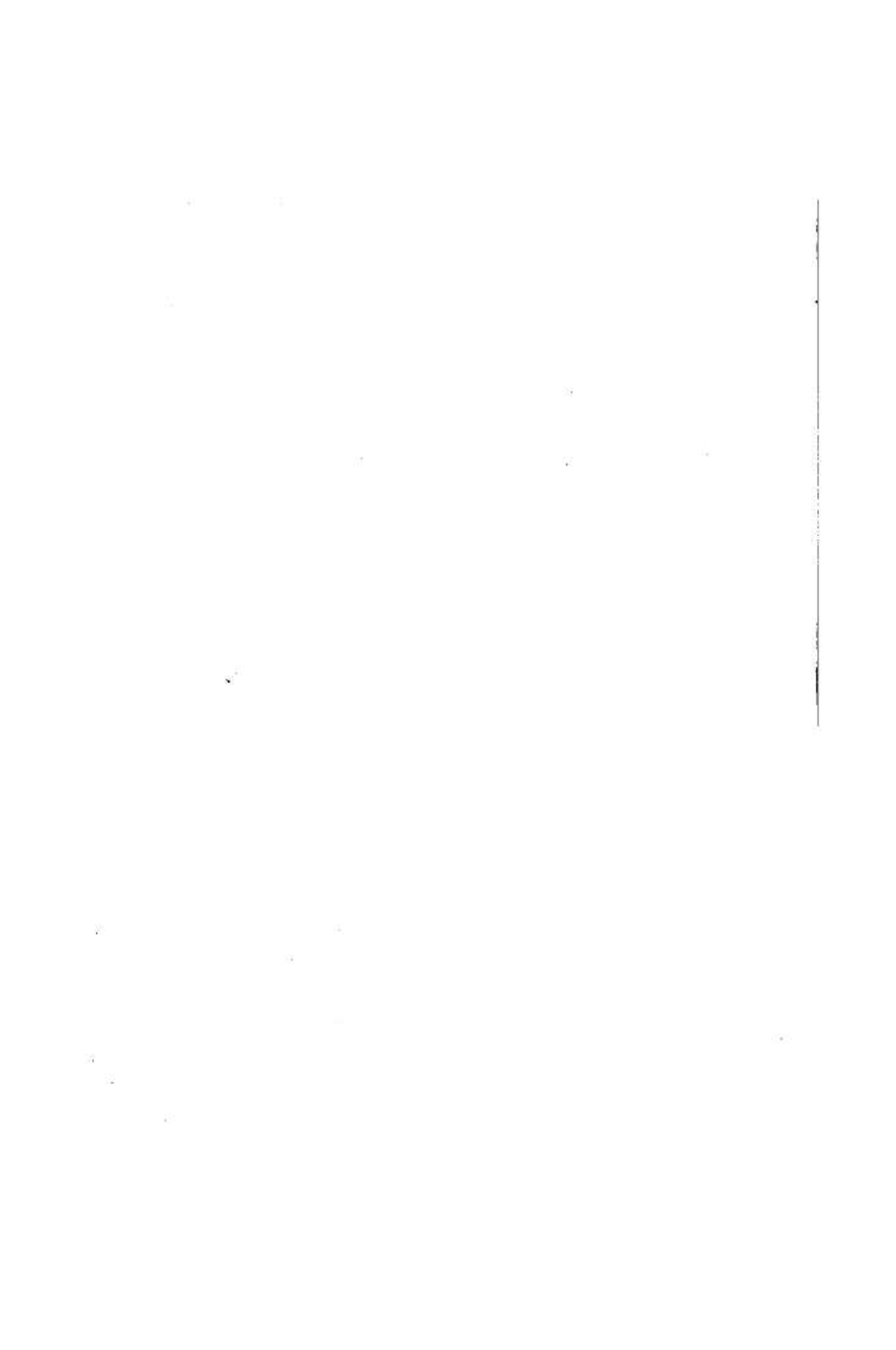
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as soon as market conditions begin to show a downward tendency there will be an increase in utility cases involving decreases in rates.

The questions brought before the Commission cover a wide range of subjects and arise from every part of the state. Their diversity is shown by the following partial list of the character of complaints handled. Complaints involving steam railways involve right-of-way fences, farm crossings, drainage, car shortage, depot facilities, condition of stock yards, stopping of trains, delayed shipments, demurrage charges, damage claims, freight overcharge claims, spur tracks, switching service, telephones in depots, crossing protection. Complaints against utilities include refusals of service, overcharge on bills, classification of consumers, street-car transfers, extension of mains, adequacy of water supply, interruption of service, physical connection between telephone exchanges, night service for telephones, discontinuance of service, and many others.

In this report the financial affairs of the Commission are set forth in detail, followed by a general statement of the activities of each department concerned with the regulation of railroads and utilities. The reports of the departments charged with the administration of the Investment Securities Act and the Rent Regulation Act will be separately published.



## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### RECEIPTS

For	1918-19	1919-20	Total
Stock and bond fees .....	\$4,123.50	\$12,689.60	\$16,804.10
Water power fees.....	3,316.35	506.05	3,823.50
Meter testing.....	28.00	11.00	39.00
Sale of publications.....	236.65	308.68	545.33
Total.....	\$7,904.50	\$13,507.23	\$21,211.73

The stock and bond fees are paid into the common-school fund of the state, the water-power fees are added to the appropriation for the administration of the water-power law, all other receipts are paid into, and become a part of, the general fund of the state.

### DISBURSEMENTS

For	1918-19	1919-20	Total
Salaries.....	\$128,098.25	\$151,695.74	\$284,793.99
Travelling expenses.....	15,544.85	19,348.57	34,893.42
Stationery and office supplies.....	2,247.26	2,374.84	4,622.10
Printing.....	7,919.27	3,824.48	11,743.75
Postage, telephone and miscellaneous.....	5,029.02	6,287.77	11,416.79
Total general administration.....	\$168,838.15	\$193,631.40	\$347,469.55
Water power.....	16,450.14	14,939.52	31,389.66
Total.....	\$180,288.29	\$198,570.92	\$378,859.21

The appropriation for water-power administration is \$15,000 per year, plus all fees received. The appropriation for general administration was \$170,000 for the year ended June 30, 1919, and \$185,000 for the year ended June 30, 1920. The appropriation for the year ended June 30, 1921, is \$185,000, and there was on hand July 1, 1920, unexpended from prior appropriations \$16,701.34, making a total of \$201,701.34 available for the current fiscal year. Expenses for the month of July indicate a probable monthly average in excess of \$17,000, which will just about exhaust the appropriation by the close of the fiscal year.