

AEP-PSO rate case argued in OKC What constitutes fair share was argued Monday in the new AEP-PSO electricity rate request that is net-zero in overall revenue gain but will raise bills slightly for residential customers. Administrative Law Judge Maribeth Snapp will make a recommendation based on testimony offered at the Oklahoma Corporation Commission headquarters. The settlement requires approval by the three-member Corporation Commission, with a decision likely by early January at the latest. Industrial businesses would receive the most debated change under the proposed settlement - a 2.5 percent drop in base rates. Proponents contended that industrial ratepayers have subsidized the residential class too long by paying higher rates. Commercial customers, such as retailers, would be subject to an increase of almost 1 percent. The settlement would raise residential bills by about 35 cents per month for an average customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours. Opponents of the deal include AARP. In testimony Monday, AARP's assistant state director, Sean Voskuhl, urged the settlement parties to "tweak" the agreement so no one will see a rate increase. - ROD WALTON, World Staff Writer

Walk may locate near Tulsa Hills West Tulsa residents may soon get more shopping options, as a Dallas developer Tuesday announced plans for a large retail center near Tulsa Hills. The Walk in Tulsa Hills, under development by Garrett Moore Co., would be a \$35 million, 250,000-square-foot center with a 12-screen movie theater, fitness center, specialty grocery store, a 400-person amphitheater and more, said Terry Moore, managing partner. Although the name is similar, The Walk is completely unrelated to Tulsa Hills shopping center, which is owned by Inland American Real Estate Trust Inc. of Oak Brook, Ill. For the new center, Garrett Moore has an option to buy the 32 acres on the southeast corner of 81st Street and U.S. 75, just south of Tulsa Hills. The company would begin construction after purchasing the land, though it is waiting to get more tenants under contract before taking those steps, Moore said. - ROBERT EVATT, World staff writer

North Tulsa store turning a corner Gateway Market's owner says the struggling north Tulsa store "isn't going anywhere." Although the grocery is not profitable yet, it

is nearing a break-even point, Antonio Perez said. The store's progress has been closely watched since it opened 11 months ago at 1601 N. Peoria Ave., the site of a former Albertson's supermarket. City leaders had worked for two years to find a tenant for the building, and Perez received \$2.2 million in Community Block Development Grant funds to establish the store. The space had been empty since 2007, when Albertson's exited metropolitan Tulsa. Perez said that in March he had considered closing the store because it was losing so much money on a day-to-day basis. But in recent months it has been running more efficiently and has increased the number of daily shoppers from about 700 to around 900, he said. "It is getting much better," Perez said. "We learned what the community wants early on and fixed those problems." - KYLE ARNOLD, World staff writer

Unemployment rate rises in October in Tulsa
Tulsa-area unemployment edged up to 7.7 percent in October, remaining in a range that has persisted for several months, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission reported Tuesday. October's job figure was above September's revised rate of 7.5 percent. Metropolitan Tulsa's unemployment rate has hovered at 7 percent or higher since May 2009, peaking at 8.1 percent in January and February. October's report was satisfactory considering its individual components, said Bob Ball, economic research manager for the Tulsa Metro Chamber. The seven-county metro area's labor force - people working and looking for work - grew by 610 individuals for the month. That indicates people have come into the market to look for work and expect to find jobs, Ball said. The unemployment rate is calculated by dividing the number of unemployed people by the labor force. Based on a smaller household survey, the area's total employment, made up of self-employed people and agricultural jobs, dropped slightly by 300 jobs, the OESC reported. The number of unemployed also rose by 900 individuals. - LAURIE WINSLOW, World staff writer

Airports Trust approves funds for travel plaza
Despite a host of unresolved issues, the Tulsa Airports Improvement Trust on Thursday approved the sale of \$6 million in tax-exempt revenue bonds for the construction of an

\$8 million travel plaza at the southeast entrance to Tulsa International Airport. Among the issues, the most significant is time: The project must be approved, investors lined up and bonds sold by Dec. 31. On that date, the authority for issuing tax-exempt Recovery Zone Special Facility Revenue Bonds expires. The tax-exempt bonds were created when President Barack Obama signed into law the National Recovery Act of 2009. The proposed airport plaza must be approved by the City Council, which will consider it in a work session Tuesday before it reviews it at its regular meeting Thursday, officials said.

Proposed by New York private developer GAZ Realty, the travel plaza would be designed, constructed and operated by its sister company, Airport Plazas LLC. Another sister company, AVCAP TUL LLC, would be the leaseholder and would invest up to \$2.5 million in equity in the project, said Stefano Pascucci, executive vice president of Airport Plazas. The facilities would include a gasoline station, compressed natural gas fueling operation, convenience store, restaurants, light auto repair, car wash and off-site dry cleaning services, Pascucci said. The Tulsa airport plaza would be located on a 2.5-acre site at the intersection of North Cargo Road and the Gilcrease Expressway service road, just east of the Hilton Gardens Inn.

- D.R. STEWART, World staff writer

Ex-Homeland Security leader pushes natural gas Revolutions do not go backward. Former U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge offered up that Abraham Lincoln quote Thursday as proof that Americans need to develop a sustained, coherent and forward-looking national energy policy. There isn't one now, and time is running out to make it a reality, Ridge told his Chesapeake Energy Lecture audience at the University of Tulsa's Allen Chapman Activities Center. In fact, Ridge threw in everything from the 16th president's immortal words to "The Daily Show" host Jon Stewart while also interweaving his own "all in" conception of the American energy future. The George W. Bush Cabinet secretary and former governor of Pennsylvania put natural gas at the head of that vision but also stressed the need for deep research and development of alternatives such as wind and solar energy. "What we have is natural gas,"

Ridge said. "It's here; it's secure." Unconventional gas plays have pushed reserves into the 100-year range, proponents say. - D.R. STEWART, World staff writer Arrow employees finally getting paid Christmas will be a lot merrier this year than it was last year for 564 former employees of bankrupt Arrow Trucking Co. A federal bankruptcy judge has approved the distribution of \$1.97 million in Arrow Trucking bankruptcy estate assets to the 564 former employees who filed wage and employment law violation claims against the estate. Arrow bankruptcy trustee Patrick J. Malloy III sought the order to approve the interim distribution last month, and it was approved late Wednesday by Judge Dana L. Rasura of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma in Tulsa. "We are signing the checks (now)," Malloy said Thursday, and "we will mail out a bunch today. They should all be out of here Friday." If, as expected, most former Arrow employees receive their checks by early this week, it will be nearly 51 weeks to the day - Dec. 22 - since Arrow shut down its operations. - D.R. STEWART, World staff writer [Subscribe to Daily Headlines](#) [Sign up!](#) *

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