

**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DT 18-175

DIXVILLE TELEPHONE COMPANY

Petition of Dixville Telephone Company for Approval to Discontinue Operations

ORDER OF NOTICE

On November 15, 2018, Dixville Telephone Company (Dixville) filed a Petition for Approval to Discontinue Operations (Petition). Dixville is an incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC) that has elected to be classified as an excepted local exchange carrier (ELEC) under RSA 362:7, I (c) (2). Dixville serves a single telephone exchange (603-555, Dixville) in New Hampshire. Dixville is also a "rural telephone company" as defined in 47 U.S.C. §153(44). Dixville is the only wireline company designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) in its rural study area. Dixville currently serves one active residential access line.

Dixville requests authority to discontinue operations because its declining customer base and deteriorating financial condition make its continued operation not viable. Dixville asserts that the public good would not be adversely affected by its discontinuance of operations because there exist acceptable third party alternatives to its local exchange service that are comparable to, or exceed, the quality of regulated communications service that it currently provides or can reasonably hope to provide in the future. In addition, Dixville maintains that the charitable nature of its present ownership should be taken into account when evaluating the public benefits of its proposed discontinuance of operations, because the operating losses it has incurred for several years have resulted in a depletion of its charitable resources and its continued operation would result in a further wasting of charitable resources that could be better directed to charitable causes.

The Petition and subsequent docket filings, other than any information for which confidential treatment is requested of or granted by the Commission, will be posted to the Commission's website at www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2018/18-175.html.

The filing raises, *inter alia*, issues related to the voluntary discontinuance of public utility service to members of the public and what restrictions should be placed on such voluntary discontinuance; whether the obligation for an ILEC to provide basic service under RSA 374:22-p can be terminated so long as there is a reasonable substitute for such service available to its existing and potential customers; how such a reasonable substitute should be defined and whether such a reasonable substitute exists; whether Dixville's proposed discontinuance of residential basic service in its franchise area will adversely affect the public good under RSA 374:22-p, VIII (a); and the termination of an ILEC's ETC status and how that termination affects the availability of Lifeline and other services to members of the public.

Each party has the right to have an attorney represent the party at the party's own expense.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that a Prehearing Conference, pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.15, be held before the Commission located at 21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire, on January 14, 2019 at 10:00 a.m., at which each party will provide a preliminary statement of its position with regard to the Petition and any of the issues set forth in N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.15; and it is

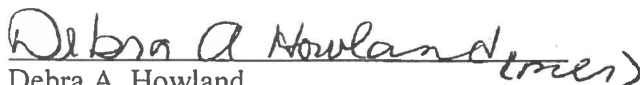
FURTHER ORDERED, that, immediately following the Prehearing Conference, Dixville, the Staff of the Commission, and any Intervenors hold a Technical Session to review the Petition; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.12, Dixville shall notify all persons desiring to be heard at this hearing by mailing a copy of this Order of Notice to each of its current and known prospective customers and by publishing a copy of this Order of Notice in a newspaper with general circulation in those portions of the state in which operations are conducted, in each case no later than December 21, 2018, with such notification and publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before January 11, 2019; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, consistent with N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.17 and Puc 203.02, any party seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall submit to the Commission seven copies of a petition to intervene with copies sent to Dixville on or before January 11, 2019, such petition stating the facts demonstrating how its rights, duties, privileges, immunities, or other substantial interest may be affected by the proceeding, consistent with N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.17 and RSA 541-A:32, I (b); and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a petition to intervene make said objection on or before January 14, 2019.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this twelfth day of December, 2018.


Debra A. Howland
Executive Director

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability should contact the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, NHPUC, 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire 03301-2429; 603-271-2431; TDD Access: Relay N.H. 1-800-735-2964. Notification of the need for assistance should be made one week prior to the scheduled event.

SERVICE LIST - EMAIL ADDRESSES - DOCKET RELATED

Pursuant to N.H. Admin Rule Puc 203.11 (a) (1): Serve an electronic copy on each person identified on the service list.

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Docket #: 18-175-1 Printed: December 17, 2018

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

- a) Pursuant to N.H. Admin Rule Puc 203.02 (a), with the exception of Discovery, file 7 copies, as well as an electronic copy, of all documents including cover letter with: DEBRA A HOWLAND
EXEC DIRECTOR
NHPUC
21 S. FRUIT ST, SUITE 10
CONCORD NH 03301-2429
- b) Serve an electronic copy with each person identified on the Commission's service list and with the Office of Consumer Advocate.
- c) Serve a written copy on each person on the service list not able to receive electronic mail.

INTERESTED PARTIES

RECEIVE ORDERS, NOTICES OF HEARINGS ONLY