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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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March 9, 2017

Debra A. Howland
Executive Director
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301

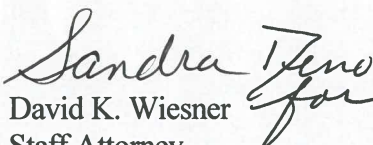
**Re: DT 16-872, Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc.
Joint Petition for Findings in Furtherance of the Acquisition of FairPoint
Communications, Inc. and its New Hampshire Operating Subsidiaries
Commission Staff's Letter of March 8, 2017 to Hearings Examiner**

Dear Ms. Howland:

Enclosed for filing please find an original and six copies of a copy of the Commission Staff's letter dated March 8, 2017 addressed to F. Anne Ross, Commission General Counsel, in her capacity as hearings examiner appointed in this docket pursuant to Order No. 25,997 (March 7, 2017) at 17-19.

If you should have any questions regarding this filing, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


David K. Wiesner
Staff Attorney

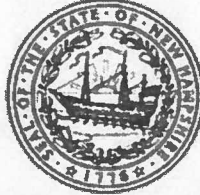
Enclosures
cc: Service List

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March 8, 2017

F. Anne Ross, Esq.
General Counsel
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301

**Re: DT 16-872, Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc.
Joint Petition for Findings in Furtherance of the Acquisition of FairPoint
Communications, Inc. and its New Hampshire Operating Subsidiaries
Request for Extension of Discovery-Related Deadlines**

Dear Attorney Ross:

Pursuant to Order No. 25,997 (March 7, 2017) at 17-19, you have been appointed to serve as hearings examiner and presiding officer to address with the parties and attempt to resolve discovery disputes that may arise in the above-captioned proceeding. In particular, the Commission granted you the authority as presiding officer "to extend deadlines otherwise applicable under the procedural schedule for the docket."

Under the currently approved procedural schedule for this proceeding, Staff would be required to file a motion to compel with respect to its first set of data requests served on the joint petitioners by the close of business on March 8, 2017. Staff believes that an extension of that deadline is warranted, because (1) the parties intend to make final efforts to resolve their outstanding differences before commencing the more formal dispute resolution process, and (2) the Order directs that the dispute resolution process conducted by the presiding officer must be completed prior to the filing of a motion to compel. We understand that none of the parties in the proceeding objects to this request.

Staff therefore requests that the deadline for filing the motion to compel be suspended indefinitely, and that Staff instead be required to submit to you as presiding officer its written

Page 2

statement regarding the disputed data requests and its arguments for production of the documents and information sought to be obtained, by Tuesday, March 14, 2017.

I certify that a copy of this letter will be served electronically on the parties on the service list at the same time it is filed with the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David K. Wiesner".

David K. Wiesner
Staff Attorney

cc: Executive Director
Service List

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 #: 16-872-1 Printed: March 09, 2017

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
EXECUTIVE 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.