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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



TDD Access: Relay NH
1-800-735-2964

Tel. (603) 271-2431

FAX No. 271-3878

Website:
www.puc.nh.gov

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10
Concord, N.H. 03301-2429

July 19, 2017

Susan S. Geiger, Esq.
Orr & Reno
45 South Main Street
Concord, NH 03302-3550

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
Granting Motion for Protective Order and Confidential Treatment

Dear Ms. Geiger:

On July 5, 2017, Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc. (CCHI) filed a Motion for Protective Order and Confidential Treatment (Motion) with respect to the list of key Consolidated-FairPoint employees associated with FairPoint-NNE's Wholesale Services Group as of July 3, 2017, which was the closing date of CCHI's acquisition through merger of FairPoint. No objection to the Motion was filed within the ten-day period provided for under N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.07(e).

The key employee list was provided by CCHI to Commission Staff and the Labor Intervenors in accordance with Section II.4 of the Revised Settlement Agreement approved by the Commission in Order No. 26, 022 (May 31, 2017). Pursuant to that section of the approved Revised Settlement Agreement, CCHI was required to "identify those key employees for Staff and Labor Intervenors *under confidential protection* within 48 hours after the date the Merger Transaction closes." (emphasis added)

The Commission has reviewed the Motion and has determined that the key employee list represents "confidential, commercial, or financial information" exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:5, IV and Puc 203.08. Based on the applicable three-step balancing test, as described in Order No. 26,040 (July 11, 2017) at 9, the Commission determined that the key employee list meets the standards for exemption from public disclosure and should be afforded confidential treatment, as it is non-public, commercially-sensitive operational information of a company engaged in a competitive industry subject to limited state regulation.

Accordingly, CCHI's Motion for Protective Order and Confidential Treatment filed on July 5, 2017 has been granted.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra A. Howland".

Debra A. Howland
Executive Director

cc: Docket File/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.

Executive.Director@puc.nh.gov
amanda.noonan@puc.nh.gov
antonuk@libertyconsultinggroup.com
bmetge@fairpoint.com
david.wiesner@puc.nh.gov
f.anne.ross@puc.nh.gov
lisa.m.cleveland@puc.nh.gov
michael.ladam@puc.nh.gov
michael@libertyconsultinggroup.com
mike.shultz@consolidated.com
mreed@fairpoint.com
ocalitigation@oca.nh.gov
pmchugh@fairpoint.com
pphillips@primmer.com
robert.meehan@fairpoint.com
scott.j.rubin@gmail.com
sgeiger@orr-reno.com
william.c.black@me.com

Docket #: 16-872-1 Printed: July 19, 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
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.