

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Gregory Scott	Chair
Edward A. Garvey	Commissioner
Marshall Johnson	Commissioner
LeRoy Koppendrayer	Commissioner
Phyllis A. Reha	Commissioner

In the Matter of a Petition for School District
Extended Area Service Between Preston,
Cherry Grove, Fountain, Granger and Harmony

ISSUE DATE: June 6, 2002

DOCKET NO. P-401, 551, 407, 532/CP-99-12

ORDER CERTIFYING POLLING RESULTS
AND DENYING PETITION

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On January 7, 1999, telephone subscribers in the Granger, Fountain, Cherry Grove, Harmony, and Preston exchanges filed a petition for School District Extended Area Service (EAS) between these five exchanges. These exchanges make up Independent School District No. 2198.

The Granger exchange is served by Ace Telephone Association (ACE). The Fountain and Cherry Grove exchanges are served by Citizens Telecommunications of Minnesota (Citizens). The Harmony exchange is served by Harmony Telephone Company (Harmony). The Preston exchange is served by CenturyTel of Minnesota, Inc. (CenturyTel).

On July 19, 1999, the Commission issued its ORDER REQUIRING TRAFFIC STUDIES, COST STUDIES, AND PROPOSED RATES. Among other things, that Order found that the petition met threshold requirements of adjacency and school district residency. The Order required the incumbent local exchange carriers serving the five exchanges to determine the costs of installing and operating the proposed EAS route and to file proposed rate additives that would recover these costs.

Between January 13, 2000 and August 21, 2000, the companies filed EAS cost studies and EAS rate additives for the proposed EAS petition. However, the Commission did not proceed directly to polling. Instead, in a series of Orders issued between November 1998 and May 2001, the Commission addressed a series of new issues posed by the need to adapt EAS to the competitive telecommunications market mandated by state and federal law.

On June 6, 2001, the Commission issued an Order requiring the companies to file new cost studies and proposed rates reflecting Commission determinations on these issues.

On September 17, 2001, the Commission issued its ORDER SETTING EAS RATE ADDITIVES AND REQUIRING POLLING and telephone subscribers in the affected exchanges were polled between February 6 and March 25, 2002.

On May 2, 2002, the Commission met to consider the polling results for the School District EAS route proposed between the Preston, Cherry Grove, Fountain, Granger and Harmony exchanges.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Commission has reviewed the results of the polling and will certify the following results.

Polling results for Preston, Cherry Grove, Fountain, Granger and Harmony School District EAS

Voting Exchange	Petitioned Exchange(s)	Res. EAS Rate	Bus. EAS Rate	% Voting	Yes		No	
					#	%	#	%
Preston	School District EAS	\$4.65	\$11.52	56.4	453	52.2	414	47.8
Cherry Grove	School District EAS	\$4.65	\$9.29	62.5	105	53.3	92	46.7
Granger	School District EAS	\$4.65	\$4.65	65.6	37	62.7	22	37.3
Fountain	School District EAS	\$4.65	\$9.29	58.4	54	31.2	119	68.8
Harmony	School District EAS	\$4.65	\$5.67	59.4	278	45.7	330	54.3
Totals					927	48.69	977	51.31

The final criterion for a School District EAS petition is whether there is adequate customer support for the proposed EAS route. If a majority of customers in each exchange vote in favor of installing the proposed EAS, the Commission is authorized and directed to order the relevant local telephone companies to install the service. If not, the petition must be denied.

Since less than a majority of the customers responding to the poll in the Harmony and Fountain exchanges voted in favor of installing the proposed School District EAS route, the Commission will deny the petition and direct the local telephone companies serving the exchanges in Independent School District No. 2198 (Granger, Fountain, Cherry Grove, Harmony, and Preston) to notify their customers, as set forth in more detail in the Ordering Paragraphs.

ORDER

1. The polling results for Independent School District No. 2198 (the Granger, Fountain, Cherry Grove, Harmony, and Preston exchanges) are hereby certified as set forth above.
2. In accord with the results of that polling, the Commission hereby denies the petition for EAS between the exchanges comprising Independent School District No. 2198, the Granger, Fountain, Cherry Grove, Harmony, and Preston exchanges.
3. Within 10 days of this Order, the telephone companies serving the affected exchanges (Granger, Fountain, Cherry Grove, Harmony, and Preston) shall file proposed customer notices for approval by Commission Staff. The notices should list the results of the polling. After approval, the Company shall serve notices in the first possible billing cycle in their respective exchanges.
4. When the notices referred to in Ordering Paragraph 3 have been served, the Companies shall file copies of the final notices with the Minnesota Department of Public Service and the Commission. Thereupon, this docket will be closed.
5. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary

(S E A L)

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