

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Gregory Scott  
Marshall Johnson  
LeRoy Koppendrayer  
Phyllis A. Reha

Chair  
Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner

In the Matter of a Petition by Sprint Minnesota,  
Inc. Requesting Adoption and Renewal of An  
Alternative Regulation Plan

ISSUE DATE: November 15, 2002

DOCKET NO. P-430/AR-02-290

ORDER APPROVING CUSTOMER  
NOTICES, APPROVING PUBLIC MEETING  
SCHEDULE, AND EXTENDING CURRENT  
ALTERNATIVE REGULATION PLAN

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

Since September 1, 1996, Sprint Minnesota, Inc. has been operating under an Alternative Form of Regulation (AFOR) plan approved by the Commission under Minn. Stat. §§ 237.76 through 237.772. Under its terms, the plan was scheduled to expire on September 1, 2002.

On March 1, 2002, Sprint filed a replacement AFOR plan, which is the subject of this docket. On April 23, 2002, the Commission issued an Order establishing the procedural framework for this case. Among other things, that Order required the Company to hold public meetings throughout its service area explaining the terms of the proposed AFOR plan. It also encouraged the parties to the case to explore settlement opportunities and to report to the Commission periodically on their progress.

The parties consistently reported that settlement negotiations were productive, and in July 2002 the Commission issued an Order at their request extending the current AFOR plan to January 1, 2003 to permit settlement negotiations to continue. On October 23, 2002 the parties informed the Commission that they had settled all issues in principle and hoped to submit a document incorporating all the terms of their settlement by November 23.

Also on October 23, the parties submitted a proposed schedule for the public meetings required under the April 23 Order. On October 29, the Company filed two proposed customer notices on the upcoming public meetings and on AFOR issues generally. One was a direct mail notice for individual customers and the other was a newspaper advertisement.

On October 29 the Company also filed a request, in which all parties concurred, to extend the current AFOR plan until the Commission has taken final action on the parties' settlement.

These three requests came before the Commission on November 7, 2002.

## **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The Commission has examined the proposed public meeting schedule and the proposed customer notices. The meeting schedule, which sets meetings in different parts of Sprint's service area on the evenings of December 2, 3, and 5, is reasonably designed to permit interested members of the public to attend. The customer notices are clear, accurate, and informative. The meeting schedule and proposed notices will be approved.

The Commission agrees with the parties that the current AFOR plan should remain in effect until the Commission has issued a final Order on their settlement proposal. The current plan was approved by the Commission after careful review. It is reasonable, efficient, and in the public interest to extend the life of that plan for the time period required for careful review of the new plan proposed by the parties.

The Commission will so order.

## **ORDER**

1. The public meeting schedule proposed by the parties and the customer notices proposed by Sprint Minnesota, Inc. are hereby approved.
2. The expiration date of the Alternative Form of Regulation Plan under which Sprint Minnesota, Inc. currently operates is hereby extended until the Commission has issued a final Order on the settlement proposal of the parties.
3. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Burl W. Haar  
Executive Secretary

(S E A L)

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