

- BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH -

Investigation, Re: Utah Universal Public
Telecommunications Support Fund
Disbursements

DOCKET NO. 24-999-10
NOTICE OF DOCKET AND TECHNICAL
CONFERENCE

ISSUED: March 4, 2024

In the Public Service Commission (PSC) orders establishing the 2024 Utah Universal Public Telecommunications Support Fund (UUSF) annual disbursements, Commissioner Harvey requested the PSC undertake a process that, in future cases, will allow the Division of Public Utilities DPU to provide the PSC with record evidence that, in Commissioner Harvey's opinion, is sufficient to show that the claimed incurred costs by the utility in question are reasonable. Specifically, Commissioner Harvey requested the following areas be addressed in that process.

1) The utility has applied for (using its best efforts) available federal programs that could be used to offset some, or all, of the costs associated with meeting the public policy objective of providing its customers with broadband services;

2) The utility demonstrates that any incremental level of service (above the federal minimum for broadband service) it has chosen to provision broadband throughout its service territory has been done without incurring additional costs above what would be required to provide the federal minimum level of broadband service, or that such extra costs are either insignificant (compared to the total costs of the project), or that the extra costs can be justified by other public policy considerations;

3) The utility has conducted a process that demonstrates the design of the network is the least cost design;

4) The utility has chosen the lessor cost option of self-construction versus contracted construction; and

5) The rate approved by the Federal Communications Commission for wholesale broadband Internet access service which is used for reference pricing is for a comparable level (e.g., speed) of service capability.

With this notice the PSC opens a separate docket to explore what information the state's rate-of-return regulated rural telecommunications utilities ("RILEC") and DPU can provide to be responsive to Commissioner Harvey's concerns, and what actions or policies might need to be adopted going forward. The PSC notices a technical conference to allow the RILECs, or their representatives, and the DPU to present information on the subject and to facilitate stakeholder discussion. After the technical conference, the PSC will evaluate whether any additional process is necessary or appropriate.

NOTICE OF TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

A technical conference will be held in this docket on **Friday, April 5, 2024, beginning at 10:00 a.m., Fourth Floor Room 401, Heber M. Wells Building, 160 East 300 South, Salt Lake City, Utah.**

The PSC asks the RILECs to offer a presentation at the beginning of the technical conference to inform attendees about the procedures and practices it employs when designing and constructing their wholesale broadband networks and that the RILECs be prepared to discuss what options exist to document their reasoning underlying specific decisions and practices. The PSC also asks the DPU to offer a presentation regarding the practices it follows in auditing the RILECs and forming its UUSF recommendations.

The PSC intends this technical conference to involve general discussion that should not require disclosing confidential information. However, if the RILECs or DPU believe it will be necessary to discuss confidential information to adequately discuss the subject, the PSC asks the RILECs or DPU to file a request with the PSC to close the technical conference to the public on or before Friday, March 29, 2024, explaining the reason that closing the technical conference is appropriate and in the public interest. Any person desiring to attend this event must show government-issued photo identification to be admitted past the building security station.

Individuals wishing to participate in the conference remotely should contact the PSC two days in advance by calling (801) 530-6716 or (toll-free) 1-866-PSC-UTAH (1-866-772-8824) to receive connection information and instructions.

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Individuals needing accommodations during this conference should notify the PSC at 160 East 300 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111, (801) 530-6716, at least three working days prior to the conference.

DATED at Salt Lake City, Utah, March 4, 2024.

/s/John E. Delaney
Presiding Officer

Attest:

/s/Gary L. Widerburg
PSC Secretary
DW#332710

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I CERTIFY that on March 4, 2024, a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served upon the following as indicated below:

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