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Department of Commerce Division of Public Utilities

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Action Request Response

To: Public Service Commission of Utah

From: Utah Division of Public Utilities

Chris Parker, Director

Artie Powell, Manager

Brenda Salter, Utility Technical Consultant Supervisor

Paul Hicken, Utility Technical Consultant

Date: November 29, 2021

Re: **Docket No. 21-053-T02**, UBTA-UBET Communications, Inc. - Proposed Tariff
Revisions to update and simplify service offerings.

Recommendation (Approve Tariff Sheets)

The Division of Public Utilities (DPU or Division) has reviewed the tariff filing and recommends the Public Service Commission (Commission) approve UBTA-UBET Communications, Inc.'s (Company or UBTA-UBET) request to update service offerings, clean up outdated tariff sheets, and modify and consolidate rates.

Issue

On November 16, 2021, UBTA-UBET submitted Advice Letter UBTA-UBET Communications Inc. Docket No. 21-053-T02 including revised tariff sheets with the purpose to clean up outdated tariff sheets, update service offerings, and consolidate rates. The Company requests an effective date of December 16, 2021.

Background

In this filing, the Company is proposing a general overhaul of UBTA-UBET Communications, Inc. PSC Utah No. 1 (Tariff), which provides a schedule of rates and charges together with rates and regulations applicable to basic telephone service and network access. The Commission issued an Action Request on November 16, 2021, for the Division to investigate the proposed changes and report its findings and recommendation to the Commission by November 30, 2021. This memorandum represents the Division's response to the Commission's Action Request.

Discussion

The current Tariff contains 136 Original Sheets, many of which have not been modified or updated since the issue date of December 1, 2004. Most of the proposed revisions are to clean up outdated references, unnecessary definitions, and obsolete services. For example, in the cover letter sent with the filing, the Company identifies and describes 88 revisions to the Tariff. The purpose for 15 of these revisions is to delete obsolete definitions. Another 16 revisions are proposed to remove unnecessary billing code references. Some services such as Touch Tone, and Pay Phone service are no longer available, so the references are being removed from the Tariff. No customers are affected by elimination of these services. Other services like Extended Area Calling and Custom Calling & Basic Exchange Features are being simplified or consolidated with package rates. Features may be packaged a little differently, but rates are intended to remain neutral. Some of the proposed revisions to Custom Calling Features are designed to update definitions, expand the service offerings and make the service bundles more competitive with wireless carriers and broadband only packages.

A few service rates have been updated to reflect inflation. For example, the proposed rates for premise service calls and engineering premise visits are \$50 and \$100 respectively. This is an increase from the rates of \$35 and \$70, which were effective since 2006. Also, a few network access rates have proposed increases. The B1 Business rate effective since 2006 is \$26. The proposed new rate is \$37.50, which includes B1 access, end user charge, and EAS calling. The PBX Trunk and Key System rates from 2006 were \$39 for access and the proposed new rates are \$50.50 for the same access.

In general, the proposed revisions do not impact the service offerings and availability to the customers and the Company's overall revenue is unchanged. The proposed rate increases, adjusted for inflation, are just and reasonable.

It is noted that UBTA-UBET Communications, Inc. operates as a telephone cooperative. The Board of Directors has approved the requested tariff modifications and changes. The customers and members were notified of the proposed tariff modifications by mailed notice on November 1, 2021 and a public comment meeting held on November 15, 2021. Lastly, the Company indicates in its cover letter that the tariff sheets, as proposed, do not constitute a violation of state law or Commission rule.

Conclusion

The Division has reviewed UBTA-UBET's filing and has no objections to the proposed revisions. Therefore, the Division recommends the Commission approve this filing as submitted on or before December 16, 2021, as requested.

Cc: Bruce Todd, President, UBTA-UBET Communications Inc.
Karl Searle, CFO, UBTA-UBET Communications Inc.
Justin Jetter, Assistant Attorney General, Utah Attorney General's Office