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DOCKET# 32235
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Docket No. 32235

In Re: Generic Proceeding to Implement House Bill 168

ORDER APPROVING DISBURSEMENTS FOR 29th UAF YEAR

Background

On December 15, 2023, 20 Tier II Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers ("ILECs") filed applications with the Georgia Public Service Commission for Universal Access Fund ("UAF") support. The cumulative requested funding for all applicants was $41,431,433.

On June 24, 2024, Commission Staff filed its Agreed Upon Procedures Applied to Universal Access Fund Application Reports for all UAF applicants. The Staff's cumulative recommended disbursement amount for all applicants was $40,427,163. Consistent with the Commission's December 18, 2018 Order on Generic Issues and Supplemental Scheduling Order in this docket, which adopted the parties' Settlement Agreement on Cost of Capital and Cap on Individual Applicant Distributions, the rate of return on rate base was limited to the lesser of 8.0% or the level computed based on a 9.25% return on equity, using the ILECs' actual cost of debt and the ILECs' actual debt/equity structure.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommended adoption of the proposed disbursements found in the Agreed Upon Procedures Reports for each of the UAF applicants. A summary of the recommended disbursements is shown in the table below:

29th UAF Year (7/1/2022-6/30/2023)		
Company	**As-Filed Request**	**Staff Recommendation**
Alma Telephone Company	$2,807,521.00	$2,793,243.00
Blue Ridge Telephone Company	$4,230,717.00	$4,230,717.00
Brantley Telephone Company, Inc.	$547,806.00	$547,423.00
Bulloch County Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc.	$722,153.00	$722,153.00
Camden Telephone & Telegraph Co., Inc.	$1,431,685.00	$1,431,685.00
Chickamauga Telephone Corporation	$1,053,784.00	$1,053,784.00
ComSouth Telecommunications, LLC d/b/a Hargray	$2,197,504.00	$2,197,504.00
Darien Telephone Co., Inc.	$2,379,620.00	$2,379,620.00
Glenwood Telephone Company	$363,493.00	$363,493.00
Hart Telephone Company	$1,075,070.00	$1,075,070.00
Nelson-Ball Ground Telephone Company	$1,594,750.00	$1,594,750.00
Pembroke Telephone Company, Inc.	$675,152.00	$675,152.00
Pineland Telephone Cooperative, Inc.	$1,130,476.00	$1,127,151.00
Plant Telephone Company d/b/a TruVista	$4,020,523[1]	$3,047,683.00
Planters Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc.	$1,773,946.00	$1,765,288.00
Progressive Rural Telephone Co-op., Inc.	$3,598,775.00	$3,598,657.00
Public Service Telephone Company	$4,183,214.00	$4,183,214.00
Ringgold Telephone Company	$2,874,795.00	$2,874,795.00
Trenton Telephone Company	$4,208,790.00	$4,206,279.00
Waverly Hall Telephone, LLC	$561,659.00	$559,502.00
	$41,431,433.00	**$40,427,163.00**

[1] Plant Telephone Company d/b/a TruVista was permitted to refile its application. The revised application requested a reduced disbursement of $3,047.683. See the May 31, 2024 *Order Amending Procedural and Scheduling Order for Ruling Upon Applications for Reimbursement from the Universal Access Fund for the 29th UAF Year* in Docket No. 32235.

Commission Decision

After considering Staff's recommendation and all other information provided, the Commission hereby approves Staff's recommended disbursements for the 20 applicants that requested disbursements for the 29th UAF year.

* * * * *

WHEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED for the Commission approves a cumulative annual disbursement amount of $40,427,163 for the 29th UAF Year, and that sum shall be disbursed to the Applicants in four quarterly installments;

ORDERED FURTHER that any application for rehearing, reconsideration or oral argument and any appeal with respect to this Order shall not serve as a supersedeas and shall not stay this Order unless expressly ordered by this Commission;

ORDERED FURTHER that jurisdiction over this matter is expressly retained for the purpose of entering such further Order(s) as the Commission may deem just and proper;

ORDERED FURTHER that all findings, conclusions and decisions contained within this Order are adopted as findings of fact and conclusions of law are decisions of regulatory policy of this Commission.

The above action by the Commission during its Administrative Session on September 17, 2024.

Sallie Tanner
Executive Secretary

9-25-24
DATE

Jason Shaw
Chairman

9-25-24
DATE