

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Nebraska     ) Application No. NUSF-92.34  
Public Service Commission, on     )  
its own motion, seeking to     )  
administer the Nebraska     )  
Universal Service Fund's     )  
Broadband Program; application     ) GRANTED  
to the Nebraska Broadband     )  
Program Received from     )  
Plainview Telephone Company     )  
and City of Plainview Library.     ) Entered: May 27, 2015

APPEARANCES:

**For Plainview Telephone Company:**

Andy S. Pollock  
Rembolt Ludtke LLP  
3 Landmark Centre  
1128 Lincoln Mall, Suite 300  
Lincoln, NE 68508

**For the Commission:**

Shana Knutson  
300 The Atrium Building  
1200 N Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508

BY THE COMMISSION:

On December 10, 2013, the Nebraska Public Service Commission (Commission) opened NUSF-92 to serve as the vehicle for the Nebraska Universal Service Fund Broadband Program (NEBP). The Commission allocated \$500,000 for broadband adoption projects in calendar year 2015. On September 3, 2014, the Commission solicited applications for broadband adoption projects. The deadline for filing an application was November 26, 2014.

On November 24, 2014, Plainview Telephone Company ("Plainview") filed a request for broadband adoption support.<sup>1</sup> Notice of the application appeared in the Daily

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<sup>1</sup> The Plainview application was offered and received into the record as Exhibit No. 9.

Record, Omaha, Nebraska on December 4, 2014. On December 29, 2014, N.E. Colorado Cellular, Inc. d/b/a Viaero Wireless ("Viaero") filed a Petition of Formal Intervention which was granted on January 9, 2015. Subsequently, Viaero withdrew its Intervention.

On March 13, 2015, a procedural order was entered determining the schedule for processing adoption applications. Pre-filed testimony was submitted on March 27, 2015. A hearing was held in Lincoln, Nebraska on April 27, 2015 with appearances as shown above.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Grant Dummer, General Manager for the Plainview Telephone Company, testified in support of the application.<sup>3</sup>

Plainview, the City of Plainview, and the Plainview Library request funding to help develop several areas to improve the education and use of broadband. The first component is the development of a technology center to provide classes as well as to provide one-on-one technical help with devices such as cellular phones and tablets. Another component of the grant funding would be used for Internet access service for Plainview residents who live on a fixed budget and currently do not have Internet service. The remainder of the grant funding will be used to provide a laptop loaner program for customers who are interested in learning how to use broadband but are not able to purchase a reliable machine. The total cost of the proposed project is \$68,950.00

Ms. Vanicek, Director of the Nebraska Telecommunications Infrastructure and Public Safety Department of the Commission, testified in support of the staff recommendation.<sup>4</sup> She stated the projects recommended for funding will represent a diverse test bed for the Commission to analyze which broadband adoption projects are most successful. Ms. Vanicek further testified all projects

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<sup>2</sup> The hearing was consolidated with other broadband adoption applications for administrative efficiency.

<sup>3</sup> The pre-filed Direct Testimony of Mr. Grant Dummer was offered and received into evidence as Confidential Exhibit No. 26.

<sup>4</sup> The pre-filed Direct and Reply Testimony of Ms. Sue Vanicek were offered and received into evidence as Exhibit Nos. 13 and 14 respectively.

recommended for funding by the staff benefit low-income consumers and are aimed at increasing broadband adoption.

O P I N I O N     A N D     F I N D I N G S

The Commission set aside \$500,000 for projects to increase broadband adoption and usage in Nebraska. Because it is a pilot program, the Commission found it would address these applications on an ad hoc basis rather than utilizing a specific methodology for choosing projects. Ten projects were proposed. In total, the amount of broadband adoption support initially sought was \$1,225,276; more than twice the amount of available funding.

The Commission staff filed a recommendation on February 12, 2015. In its filing, the Commission staff recommended Plainview's application be funded in the amount of \$68,950. No one opposed the Plainview application for broadband adoption support.

Based upon the application and the staff recommendation, the Commission finds the application should be granted. The Commission approves support for the proposed project up to an amount of **\$68,950 or the actual cost** of the project whichever amount is lower.

The Commission will hold a workshop to discuss reporting requirements for this grant on **July 22, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.** in the Commission Hearing Room, 300 The Atrium Building, 1200 N Street, Lincoln, Nebraska. A telephone bridge will be made available for this workshop.

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that the above-captioned application be, and it is hereby, approved.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a workshop to discuss reporting requirements for this grant will be held on **July 22, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.** in the Commission Hearing Room, 300 The Atrium Building, 1200 N Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Application No. NUSF-92.34

Page 4

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Applicant shall submit detailed and accurate invoices and other documentation required by the Department prior to reimbursement for the supported project(s).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Applicant shall use Nebraska Broadband Program support only for the purposes described in its application and authorized by the Commission.

MADE AND ENTERED at Lincoln, Nebraska this 27th day of May, 2015.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:



Vice-Chairman



ATTEST:



Executive Director

//s//Tim Schram

//s//Frank E. Landis