

1 STAFF CONFERENCE

April 26, 2021

2 CHAIR MITCHELL: Good morning. Let's come  
3 to order and go on the record, please. I'm Charlotte  
4 Mitchell, Chair of the Utilities Commission, and with  
5 me this morning are the following Commissioners. When  
6 I call your name, please announce your presence.  
7 Commissioner Brown-Bland.

8 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Good morning.

9 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Clodfelter.

10 COMMISSIONER CLODFELTER: Yes, good morning.

11 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Duffley.

12 COMMISSIONER DUFFLEY: Good morning.

13 CHAIR MITCHELL: And Commissioner McKissick.

14 COMMISSIONER MCKISSICK: Good morning.

15 COMMISSIONER GRAY: I thought I'd try to  
16 attend, also, Chair Mitchell.

17 CHAIR MITCHELL: And Commissioner Gray.  
18 There you are, Commissioner Gray, good morning.

19 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Good morning.

20 CHAIR MITCHELL: In compliance with the  
21 State Government Ethics Act, I remind members of the  
22 Commission of their duty to avoid conflicts of  
23 interest, and inquire at this time as to whether any  
24 member of the Commission has a known conflict of

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1 interest with respect to matters coming before us?

2 (No response)

3 The record will reflect that no conflicts  
4 have been identified, so we will proceed with Public  
5 Staff, Natural Gas Item P1. Ms. Naba, I believe we  
6 are with you.

7 MS. NABA: Good morning. I'm Zarka Naba  
8 with the Public Staff's Energy Division. Item P1 is  
9 Docket G-5, Sub 632. On April 1st, 2021, PSNC filed  
10 an Application with the Commission requesting  
11 authority to adjust and increase its rates and charges  
12 for customers served in North Carolina, effective May  
13 1, 2021.

14 The Public Staff recommends that an Order be  
15 issued establishing a general rate case and suspending  
16 rates. Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: I move approval  
18 of the recommendation.

19 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

20 CHAIR MITCHELL: We've got a motion that's  
21 been seconded that the recommendation of the Public  
22 Staff be approved. Any questions or discussion on the  
23 motion?

24 (No response)

1           Hearing none, I'll call the roll for a vote.  
2       Indicate your support for the motion with an aye and  
3       your opposition with a no. Commissioner Brown-Bland.

4           COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Aye.

5           CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Gray.

6           COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

7           CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Clodfelter.

8           COMMISSIONER CLODFELTER: Aye.

9           CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Duffley.

10          COMMISSIONER DUFFLEY: Aye.

11          CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner McKissick.

12          COMMISSIONER MCKISSICK: Aye.

13          CHAIR MITCHELL: And for the record I  
14       support the motion as well and the motion carries.

15                       (MOTION PASSES)

16          CHAIR MITCHELL: Thank you, Ms. Naba.

17               We will proceed now to Public Staff,  
18       Communications Item P1. Ms. Proffitt, you're up.

19               MS. PROFFITT: Good morning. My name is  
20       Karen Proffitt with the Public Staff, Water, Sewer and  
21       Telephone Division. Item P1 presents the January 6th  
22       filing of the Application of RiverStreet  
23       Communications of North Carolina, Inc., seeking  
24       designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier

1 for the purpose of qualifying to receive federal  
2 Universal Service -- excuse me -- federal Universal  
3 Service Fund support to provide voice and broadband  
4 services in certain areas defined by census blocks  
5 that lack these services and to allow it to offer  
6 discounts to qualifying low-income customers through  
7 the FCC's Lifeline Program.

8 RiverStreet seeks ETC designation for census  
9 blocks located in Stokes and Granville Counties,  
10 specified in Attachment A of their Application, and  
11 also seeking ETC designation in additional areas of  
12 Stokes County where it is currently offering service  
13 in the exchanges of King, Quaker Gap, Rural Hall, and  
14 Walnut Cove.

15 The Public Staff investigated RiverStreet's  
16 Application and response -- and responses to the  
17 Public Staff's data request and concluded that  
18 RiverStreet satisfies the requirements for designation  
19 as an ETC.

20 The Public Staff recommends that the  
21 Commission issue an Order finding that RiverStreet has  
22 met the requirements to serve as an ETC in the  
23 requested census blocks in Stokes and Granville  
24 Counties, and the requested areas in the King, Quaker

1 Gap, Rural Hall, and Walnut Cove exchanges; and  
2 designating RiverStreet as an ETC for those census  
3 blocks and areas as requested.

4 A proposed order has been provided to the  
5 Commission staff.

6 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Move approval of  
7 the recommendation of the Public Staff.

8 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

9 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and  
10 seconded that the item be approved as recommended by  
11 the Public Staff. Any questions or discussion on the  
12 motion?

13 (No response)

14 Hearing none, I'll call the roll for a vote.  
15 Indicate your support with an aye and your opposition  
16 with a no. Commissioner Brown-Bland.

17 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Aye.

18 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Gray.

19 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

20 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Clodfelter.

21 COMMISSIONER CLODFELTER: Aye.

22 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Duffley.

23 COMMISSIONER DUFFLEY: Aye.

24 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner McKissick.

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1 COMMISSIONER McKISSICK: Aye.

2 CHAIR MITCHELL: And for the record I  
3 support the motion as well and the motion carries.

4 (MOTION PASSES)

5 CHAIR MITCHELL: Thank you, Ms. Proffitt.

6 We will proceed to Public Staff,  
7 Communications Item P2?

8 MS. PROFFITT: Item P2 presents the  
9 January 6th filing of the Application of Wilkes  
10 Communications, Inc., seeking designation as an  
11 Eligible Telecommunications Carrier for census blocks  
12 located in Wilkes County, specified in Attachment A of  
13 their Application.

14 The Public Staff investigated Wilkes'  
15 Application and concluded that they satisfy the  
16 requirements for designation as an ETC.

17 The Public Staff recommends that the  
18 Commission issue an Order finding that Wilkes has met  
19 the requirements to serve as ETC in the requested  
20 census blocks in Wilkes County, and designating Wilkes  
21 as an ETC for those census blocks as requested.

22 A proposed order has been provided to The  
23 Commission staff.

24 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Move approval of

1 the recommendation.

2 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

3 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and  
4 seconded that the item be approved as recommended by  
5 the Public Staff. Any questions or discussion on the  
6 motion?

7 (No response)

8 Hearing none, I'll call the roll for a vote.  
9 Again, indicate your support with an aye and your  
10 opposition with a no. Commissioner Brown-Bland.

11 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Aye.

12 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Gray.

13 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

14 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Clodfelter.

15 COMMISSIONER CLODFELTER: Aye.

16 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Duffley.

17 COMMISSIONER DUFFLEY: Aye.

18 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner McKissick.

19 COMMISSIONER MCKISSICK: Aye.

20 CHAIR MITCHELL: For the record I support  
21 the motion as well and the motion carries.

22 (MOTION PASSES)

23 CHAIR MITCHELL: Ms. Proffitt, we'll proceed  
24 to Public Staff, Communications Item P3.

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1 MS. PROFFITT: Item P3 presents the February  
2 2nd filing of the Application of Randolph Telephone --  
3 Telephone Telecommunications, Inc., seeking  
4 designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier  
5 for the census blocks located in Guilford and Randolph  
6 Counties specified in Exhibit A of its Application.  
7 In addition, Randolph seeks ETC designation in the  
8 exchanges listed in Exhibit B.

9 The Public Staff reviewed Randolph's  
10 Application and concluded that it satisfies the  
11 requirements for designation as an ETC.

12 The Public Staff recommends that the  
13 Commission issue an Order finding that Randolph has  
14 met the requirements to serve as an ETC in the  
15 requested census blocks of Guilford and Randolph  
16 Counties listed in Exhibit A, and the exchanges listed  
17 in Exhibit B, and designating Randolph as an ETC for  
18 those census blocks and exchange areas as requested.

19 A proposed order has been provided to  
20 Commission staff.

21 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Move approval of  
22 the recommendation.

23 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

24 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and



1 seconded that the item be approved as recommended by  
2 the Public Staff. Any questions, discussion on the  
3 motion?

4 (No response)

5 Hearing none, I'll call the roll for a vote.  
6 Indicate your support with an aye and your opposition  
7 with a no. Commissioner Brown-Bland.

8 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Aye.

9 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Gray.

10 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

11 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Clodfelter.

12 COMMISSIONER CLODFELTER: Aye.

13 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Duffley.

14 COMMISSIONER DUFFLEY: Aye.

15 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner McKissick.

16 COMMISSIONER MCKISSICK: Aye.

17 CHAIR MITCHELL: For the record I support  
18 the motion as well and the motion carries.

19 (MOTION PASSES)

20 CHAIR MITCHELL: Ms. Proffitt, we'll proceed  
21 to Public Staff, Communications Item P4.

22 MS. PROFFITT: Item P4 presents the  
23 March 5th filing of the Application of CenturyLink  
24 Communications, LLC, seeking designation as an

1 Eligible Telecommunications Carrier for the census  
2 blocks specified in Exhibit B of its Application.

3 The Public Staff reviewed CenturyLink's  
4 Application and concluded that it satisfies the  
5 requirement for designation as an ETC.

6 The Public Staff recommends that the  
7 Commission issue an Order finding that CenturyLink has  
8 met the requirements to serve as an ETC in the  
9 requested census blocks as specified in Exhibit B, and  
10 designating CenturyLink as an ETC for those census  
11 blocks as requested.

12 A proposed order has been provided to  
13 Commission staff.

14 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Move approval of  
15 the recommendation.

16 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

17 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and  
18 seconded that the item be approved as recommended by  
19 the Public Staff. Are there any questions or  
20 discussion on the motion?

21 (No response)

22 Hearing none, I'll call the roll for a vote.  
23 Indicate your support with an aye, opposition with a  
24 no. Commissioner Brown-Bland.

1 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Aye.

2 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Gray.

3 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

4 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Clodfelter.

5 COMMISSIONER CLODFELTER: Aye.

6 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Duffley.

7 COMMISSIONER DUFFLEY: Aye.

8 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner McKissick.

9 COMMISSIONER MCKISSICK: Aye.

10 CHAIR MITCHELL: For the record I support  
11 the motion as well and the motion carries.

12 (MOTION PASSES)

13 CHAIR MITCHELL: Thank you very much,  
14 Ms. Proffitt.

15 MS. PROFFITT: Thank you.

16 CHAIR MITCHELL: We will proceed now to  
17 Public Staff, Electric Item P1. Mr. Williamson,  
18 you're up.

19 MR. WILLIAMSON: Good morning. I'm David  
20 Williamson with the Energy Division. And Item P1 is  
21 an Application for an amended Certificate of Public  
22 Convenience and Necessity for a solar facility.

23 The Public Staff recommends that the  
24 Commission approve this Application and issue the

1 Certificate.

2 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Move approval of  
3 the recommendation.

4 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

5 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and  
6 seconded that the item be approved as recommended by  
7 the Public Staff. Are there any questions or  
8 discussion on the motion?

9 (No response)

10 Hearing none, I'll call the roll for a vote.  
11 Indicate your support with an aye and your opposition  
12 with a no. Commissioner Brown-Bland.

13 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Aye.

14 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Gray.

15 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

16 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Clodfelter.

17 COMMISSIONER CLODFELTER: Aye.

18 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Duffley.

19 COMMISSIONER DUFFLEY: Aye.

20 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner McKissick.

21 COMMISSIONER MCKISSICK: Aye.

22 CHAIR MITCHELL: For the record I support  
23 the motion as well and the motion carries.

24 (MOTION PASSES)

1 CHAIR MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Williamson.  
2 We'll proceed now to Public Staff, Water  
3 Item P1. Mr. Junis, you're up.

4 MR. JUNIS: Yes. Charles Junis, Engineer of  
5 the Public Staff, Water, Sewer and Telephone Division.  
6 Water Items P1 and P2 filed by Aqua North Carolina,  
7 Inc., in Docket Number W-218, Subs 529 and 530,  
8 respectively, are Notifications of Intention to begin  
9 water and sewer utility operations in contiguous  
10 service areas.

11 The Public Staff recommends that the  
12 Commission issue the proposed orders recognizing the  
13 contiguous extensions.

14 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Move approval of  
15 the recommendations for Water Items P1 and P2.

16 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

17 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and  
18 seconded that Items -- Water Items P1 and P2 be  
19 approved as recommended by the Public Staff. Are  
20 there any questions or discussion on the motion?

21 (No response)

22 Hearing none, I'll call the roll for a vote.  
23 Indicate your support with an aye and your opposition  
24 with a no. Commissioner Brown-Bland.

1 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Aye.

2 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Gray.

3 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

4 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Clodfelter.

5 COMMISSIONER CLODFELTER: Aye.

6 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner Duffley.

7 COMMISSIONER DUFFLEY: Aye.

8 CHAIR MITCHELL: Commissioner McKissick.

9 COMMISSIONER MCKISSICK: Aye.

10 CHAIR MITCHELL: And for the record I  
11 support the motion as well and the motion carries.

12 (MOTION PASSES)

13 CHAIR MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Junis.

14 The Commission has before it for approval  
15 its minutes of April 19th, 2021, Staff Conference.

16 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Move approval.

17 COMMISSIONER DUFFLEY: Second.

18 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and  
19 seconded that our minutes be approved. Any question,  
20 discussion on that motion?

21 (No response)

22 Hearing none, all in favor of approving the  
23 minutes indicate with an aye.

24 (All Commissioners say aye)

1 CHAIR MITCHELL: Any Commissioner opposed?

2 (No response)

3 Our minutes of April 19th, 2021 are  
4 approved.

5 And it is my understanding that there is  
6 additional business for the Commission this morning.  
7 I'll start with Sam. Mr. Watson, you may proceed.

8 MR. WATSON: Yes, good morning. I am  
9 pleased to be able to present Monica Webb-Shackleford  
10 to the Commission and the public this morning. She's  
11 a new attorney starting on the Commission staff. She  
12 got her undergraduate and Masters degree at UNCG and  
13 her law degree at UNC. We won't hold that against  
14 her. She formerly clerked with Chief Justice Sarah  
15 Parker and worked with our former colleague Jim Kerr  
16 at McGuireWoods for a number of years. So we're  
17 excited to have her joining us today. I'll give her a  
18 chance to say hi so at least she pops up on  
19 everybody's picture and you get to see who she is.  
20 Monica?

21 MS. WEBB-SHACKLEFORD: Good morning. Thank  
22 you, Sam. It's my first day as Sam said and I am  
23 happy to be joining the staff of the Commission.

24 MR. WATSON: Thank up, Chair, for giving us

1 this opportunity.

2 CHAIR MITCHELL: Absolutely. And, Monica,  
3 welcome. We are so happy that you are here with us  
4 and we look forward to working with you and getting to  
5 know you. So, thank you.

6 James McLawhorn, I understand you have some  
7 business for the Commission this morning as well.

8 MR. McLAWHORN: Yes. Chair Mitchell and  
9 Members of the Commission, I am James McLawhorn,  
10 Director of the Public Staff's Energy Division. I'd  
11 like to take this opportunity to introduce Mr. Jim  
12 Singer, the newest member of the Public Staff's Energy  
13 Division. Mr. Singer has been assigned to the Natural  
14 Gas Section of the Energy Division. He's a 2004  
15 graduate of Penn State with a B.S. degree in  
16 mechanical engineering. He has approximately 17 years  
17 of engineering experience primarily with electric  
18 utilities, including direct work with the development,  
19 operation and maintenance of natural gas electric  
20 generating plants. His primary focus with the Energy  
21 Division will be on natural gas matters, but he will  
22 also assist the Electric Section in reviewing the  
23 operation of electric generating plants.

24 I hope everyone will welcome Mr. Singer to



1 the Public Staff. And I, likewise, will give him an  
2 opportunity to say hello so you can see him, his face  
3 and how to recognize him.

4 MR. SINGER: Good morning. Thanks, James.  
5 I'm glad to be here.

6 CHAIR MITCHELL: Good morning, Mr. Singer.  
7 We are glad to have you as well and nice to put a face  
8 with a name. Looking forward to working with you.

9 MR. SINGER: Likewise.

10 CHAIR MITCHELL: Any additional business for  
11 the Commission this morning before we adjourn?

12 (No response)

13 Hearing none, we will be adjourned. Thank  
14 you very much everybody. Let's go off the record,  
15 please.

16 \_\_\_\_\_  
17 WHEREUPON, this conference is adjourned.  
18 \_\_\_\_\_

## C E R T I F I C A T E

I, KIM MITCHELL, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the Proceedings in the above-captioned matter were taken before me, that I did report in stenographic shorthand the Proceedings set forth herein, and the foregoing pages are a true and correct transcription to the best of my ability.

Kim Mitchell

Kim Mitchell