



Agenda Date: 1/29/14
Agenda Item: 7D

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Avenue, 9th Floor
Post Office Box 350
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350
www.nj.gov/bpu/

CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE

UNITED TELEPHONE COMPANY OF NEW JERSEY,)
INC. d/b/a CENTURYLINK -- PETITION FOR)
RELOCATION OF ITS FLEMINGTON CUSTOMER)
SERVICE CENTER FROM 100 REAVILLE AVE. TO)
160 CENTER ST. CLINTON, NEW JERSEY)

ORDER OF APPROVAL

DOCKET NO. TO13100985

Parties of Record:

Zsuzsanna E. Benedek, Esq., Clinton, New Jersey, on behalf of United Telephone Company of New Jersey, Inc. d/b/a CenturyLink

Stefanie A. Brand, Esq., Director, New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel

BY THE BOARD:

On October 28, 2013, CenturyLink filed a verified petition, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1, to relocate its Flemington Customer Service Center ("CSC") from 100 Reaville Avenue to 160 Center Street, Clinton, New Jersey, which is 11 miles from the current location. The Company has complied with N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1(c) and (e) in their entirety, including mailing copies of the petition on October 29, 2013, to the Clerk of the affected municipality, as well as to the New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel ("Rate Counsel").

In its petition, CenturyLink gave three reasons why the relocation of its New Jersey office is reasonable and is in the public interest. First, the current CSC is located in a rental property and provides billing and service-related assistance to customers. The lease for the existing space expired on December 31, 2013. CenturyLink stated that the relocation of this office to 160 Center Street is beneficial since it allows the Company to utilize existing property and facilities. In addition, the Company stated that the new location offers more convenient and accessible parking facilities.

Second, CenturyLink serves approximately 97,719 total access lines in portions of Hunterdon, Sussex and Warren Counties. Flemington (old location) and Clinton (new location) are only 11.25 miles apart, making the relocation reasonable, economical and efficient, given CenturyLink's limited, contiguous service territory in New Jersey.

Third, CenturyLink stated that the hours of operation at the current Flemington CSC will continue to be the same, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., Monday through Friday, as will the functions performed for its customers.

In its petition, CenturyLink asserted that it would comply or continue to comply with all notice requirements set forth in N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1(e)(2) and (f); would be posting notice of its proposed relocation in the New Jersey Star Ledger, the Express Times, and the New Jersey Herald, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1(e)(2); notice has been posted at the door of the Flemington office informing customers of the proposed relocation and of the filing of the petition; and affected municipalities were being simultaneously notified in accordance with N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1(e).

The Company requested that the Board authorize the closure and relocation of its Flemington office, asserting that such relocation is justified, especially because the closure and relocation of the Flemington CSC site is reasonable and will not unduly prejudice or inconvenience the public interest.

In response to discovery, CenturyLink stated that the 160 Center Street CSC site will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act; CenturyLink will be reducing the number of representatives at the new location by one, but that decision is driven by low traffic volumes and not due to the office relocation; appropriate notice of the petition was published in the Hunterdon Democrat on November 7, 2013; and all Company inquiry and collection telephone personnel will have the relocation information in order that they may direct customers to the proposed new location.

Rate Counsel advised Board Staff by letter dated January 7, 2014 that it has no objections to the Board's approval of CenturyLink's request under the petition because, after review of CenturyLink's petition, "Rate Counsel is satisfied that the office closure and relocation from Flemington to Clinton will not unduly prejudice the public interest and meets the standards set forth by N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1." Id. at 1-2. The Board has received no letters in opposition to the relocation from interested parties or customers.

After review of the entire record in this matter, including the comments filed on behalf of Rate Counsel, the Board **HEREBY FINDS:**

1. On October 28, 2013, CenturyLink filed a petition, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1, to relocate its Flemington CSC from 100 Reaville Avenue to 160 Center Street, Clinton, New Jersey.
2. CenturyLink has complied with N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1, including the relevant notice requirements.
3. No objections to this relocation have been received by the Board.
4. The closure of the office located at 100 Reaville Avenue, Flemington, New Jersey and its relocation to 160 Center Street, Clinton, New Jersey, is not unreasonable and will not unduly prejudice the public interest.

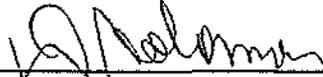
Therefore, based on the foregoing, the Board **HEREBY APPROVES** the relocation of CenturyLink's CSC office located at 100 Reaville Avenue, Flemington, New Jersey to 160 Center Street, Clinton, New Jersey, subject to the following conditions:

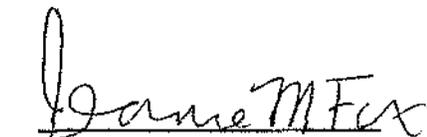
1. CenturyLink shall maintain the same hours of operation and level of service as were provided at its Flemington location;
2. This Order shall not be construed as directly or indirectly fixing for any purposes whatsoever the value of any tangible or intangible assets now owned or hereafter to be owned by CenturyLink; and
3. This Order shall not affect nor in any way limit the exercise of the authority of this Board or of this State, in any future petition or in any proceedings with respect to rates, franchises, service, financing, accounting, capitalization, depreciation or any other matter affecting the Company, including any request that may be made to recover costs associated with this move.

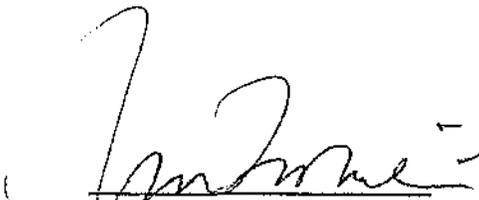
This Order shall be effective on February 7, 2014.

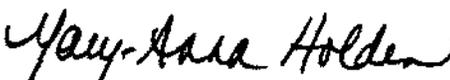
DATED: 1/29/14

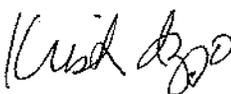
BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
BY:


DIANNE SOLOMON
PRESIDENT


JEANNE M. FOX
COMMISSIONER


JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO
COMMISSIONER


MARY-ANNA HOLDEN
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST: 
KRISTI IZZO
SECRETARY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the within document is a true copy of the original in the files of the Board of Public Utilities


IN THE MATTER OF UNITED TELEPHONE COMPANY OF NEW JERSEY, INC.
d/b/a CENTURYLINK -- PETITION FOR RELOCATION OF ITS FLEMINGTON
CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER FROM 100 REAVILLE AVE TO
160 CENTER ST. CLINTON, NEW JERSEY

DOCKET NO. TO13100985

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CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

STEFANIE A. BRAND
Director

January 7, 2014

Via Electronic and Regular Mail

Kristi Izzo, Board Secretary
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Avenue, 9th Floor
P.O. Box 350
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350

Re: I/M/O the Petition of the United Telephone Company of New Jersey, Inc.,
d/b/a CenturyLink – Petition for Relocation of CenturyLink’s Flemington
Office.
BPU Docket No. TO13100985U

Dear Secretary Izzo:

The New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel (“Rate Counsel”) has reviewed the above referenced Petition of the United Telephone Company of New Jersey, Inc., d/b/a CenturyLink, (“CenturyLink”) requesting permission from the Board of Public Utilities (“Board”) to relocate a local business office located in Flemington and relocate the office to an existing office in Clinton. Rate Counsel submits the within comments on this matter for the Board’s consideration. Enclosed with this original please find ten copies, as well as a self-addressed and prepaid postage stamped envelope. Kindly return a date/stamped “Received” and/or “Filed” copy to Rate Counsel. For the reasons that follow, Rate Counsel does not object to approval of CenturyLink’s request for permission to relocate the Flemington office to the new Clinton office location.

After review of the CenturyLink’s Petition, exhibits and filing, Rate Counsel is satisfied that the office closure and relocation from Flemington to Clinton will not unduly prejudice the public interest and meets the standards set forth by *N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1*.

In its Petition, CenturyLink asserts that the office closure of the Flemington business office is reasonable as the Clinton location offers more convenient, and more accessible parking

for customers. Furthermore, the Clinton location is approximately only 11.25 miles from the Flemington office location and can easily continue to serve customers from the congruent areas of Hunterdon, Sussex and Warren counties. The Clinton office will offer customers the same services as those offered in Flemington. In addition, customers may also contact and access CenturyLink for services and payment through both the toll-free number and CenturyLink's website, making it possible for customers to continue to have the same ease of service as at the Flemington office location.

As required by *N.J.A.C.14:3-5.1(e)(2)*, CenturyLink posted the Public Notice of the proposed office closing at the subject locations and provided notice to the public via newspaper publication in local area newspapers.¹ Additionally, notice was sent to the Municipal Clerks for the affected area towns with the Board's contact information and alerting that comments regarding CenturyLink's Petition for closure of the subject business office.² Rate Counsel notes that to date no written municipal or customer comment or objection has been filed with the Board in response to any of the notices posted or mailed in this matter.

Therefore, after review of the application and supplemental information provided by CenturyLink in its Petition, responses to discovery propounded by the Board, Rate Counsel has no objection to the Board's approval of CenturyLink's request under the Petition.

Sincerely,

STEFANIE A. BRAND, ESQ.
Director, New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel

By: 

Maria T. Novas-Ruiz, Esq.
Assistant Deputy Rate Counsel

cc: Service list

¹ / Petition at p. 3.

² / *Id.*

**IMO Petition United Telephone
d/b/a CenturyLink for Relocation
of Flemington Office**

BPU Docket No. _____

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