

PRIMMER PIPER EGGLESTON & CRAMER PC
Attorneys at Law

PAUL J. PHILLIPS
pPhillips@primmer.com

TEL: (603) 626-3300
FAX: (603) 626-0997

900 Elm St., 19th Floor | P.O. Box 3600 | Manchester, NH 03105-3600

ADMITTED IN NEW HAMPSHIRE AND VERMONT

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

March 17, 2017

Ms. Debra Howland
Executive Director and Secretary
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 South Fruit Street
Concord, NH 03301

NHPUC 28MAR17AM10:40

**Re: DT 16-872 (Joint Petition for Findings in Furtherance of the
Acquisition of FairPoint Communications, Inc. and its New
Hampshire Operating Subsidiaries by Consolidated Communications
Holdings, Inc.)**

Dear Ms. Howland:

FairPoint Communications, Inc. ("FairPoint") received your letter today suspending the date of the Technical Session next Wednesday at the request of the Hearings Examiner. FairPoint considers it unfortunate that the suspension decision was made without input from the parties affected. In FairPoint's view, the Technical Session should be reinstated.

As my letter to you earlier today indicated, FairPoint does not believe that the current state of discovery in this matter warrants any changes in the Procedural Schedule. The deadline for the Petitioners' responses to the Staff's Data Requests (Sets 1 and 2) is the close of business today. FairPoint has now delivered Supplemental Responses to Staff Set 1 and its Responses to Staff Set 2. It is premature to suspend the Technical Session based on missing discovery before the deadline for responses has even arrived.

As I explained in my earlier letter, FairPoint welcomes the opportunities afforded both by the meeting with the Hearings Examiner on Tuesday and by the Technical Session on Wednesday to work through any remaining open discovery items. This is a proper function for the Technical Session, and that opportunity will be lost if the session is postponed or canceled. The discovery process in this Docket has already seen several missed opportunities to clarify and resolve the data requests in a way that would have facilitated a more efficient result.

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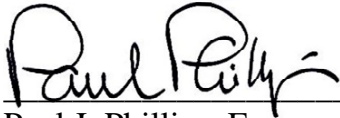
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FairPoint would prefer taking advantage of all available opportunities from this point forward to keep the Procedural Schedule on track. Reinstating the Technical Session for this Wednesday would be an important step in this process.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Phillips", written over a horizontal line.

Paul J. Phillips, Esq.
Counsel for FairPoint Communications, Inc.

cc: Electronic Service List, DT 16-872