(text box: 1)BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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| --- | --- | --- |
| IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR EXTENDED AREA SERVICE (EAS)  BETWEEN MALAD CITY AND REXBURG AND SURROUNDING AREAS, AND BETWEEN LOST RIVERS VALLEY AND OTHER SOUTHEAST IDAHO COMMUNITIES | )  )  )  )  )  )  ) | CASE NO. GNR-T-97-6  NOTICE OF SCHEDULE  NOTICE OF TECHNICAL            HEARING  ORDER NO. 27719 |

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that in October 1997, the Commission received a petition from residents of the Lost Rivers Valley, which includes the communities of Arco, Moore, Butte City, Howe, Mackay, Leslie, and Darlington, requesting implementation of toll-free calling between their communities and other southeastern Idaho communities that comprise a large extended area service (EAS) region served by U S WEST Communications.  Basic telephone service in Lost Rivers Valley is provided by Westel, Inc.  The Commission consolidated the Lost Rivers Valley case with Case No. GNR-T-97-6, which is to consider implementing toll free calling between Malad City and Rexburg.  The local exchange carrier in Malad City also is Westel.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Commission Staff is investigating community-of-interest and public interest issues involved in the case, including what rate increases are required to implement the EAS requests.  The petitions allege generally that access to medical services, the Idaho Engineering and Environmental Laboratory, other businesses, and colleges and universities will be enhanced by including Westel, Inc.’s customers in the regional EAS areas.  Most petitions indicated a willingness to pay an additional $3-$10 per month for basic local service that includes the expanded calling areas.  In recent cases involving similar EAS requests, the Commission has approved monthly rates of $24.10 for residential customers and $42.00 for business customers.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the scheduling requirements of this case and the proceedings already scheduled on the Commission’s calendar may prevent holding public hearings in this case until spring 1999.  Accordingly, to prevent further delays in this case, the Commission Staff will present the results of its public interest investigation in a technical hearing in Boise.  If the Commission is satisfied that the public interest issues have been adequately addressed by Staff, it may decide the case without conducting additional public hearings.

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Commission will conduct a technical hearing in this case on THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1998, AT 9:30 A.M. IN THE COMMISSION’S HEARING ROOM LOCATED AT 472 WEST WASHINGTON, BOISE, IDAHO.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Commission has adopted the following schedule in this case:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Deadline to prefile direct testimony and exhibits by all parties  Deadline to prefile rebuttal testimony and exhibits by all parties  Technical Hearing | October 23, 1998  November 6, 1998  November 19, 1998 |

The prepared testimony and exhibits must conform to the requirements of Rules 230-231 of the Commission’s Rules of Procedure.  There will be no discovery deadlines imposed in this proceeding.  The parties are directed to act in good faith in submitting and responding to discovery requests in accordance with the Commission’s Rules of Procedure.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all hearings will be conducted pursuant to the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Idaho Public Utilities Commission.  IDAPA 31.01.01.000 et seq.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all hearings and prehearing conferences in this matter will be held in facilities meeting the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.  Persons needing the help of a sign language interpreter or other assistance of the kind that the Commission is obligated to provide under the Americans with Disabilities Act in order to participate in or to understand the testimony and argument at a public hearing may ask the Commission to provide a sign language interpreter or other assistance at the hearing.  The request for assistance must be received at least five (5) working days before the hearing by contacting the Commission Secretary at:

IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

PO BOX 83720

BOISE, IDAHO  83720-0074

(208) 334-0338  (TELEPHONE)

(208) 334-3151  (TEXT TELEPHONE)

(208) 334-3762  (FAX)

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all proceedings in this case will be held pursuant to the Commission’s jurisdiction under Title 61 of the Idaho Code and that the Commission may enter any final Order consistent with its authority under Title 61.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Petitions in this case are available for public inspection during regular business hours at the Commission offices.

O R D E R

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the above identified schedule is adopted to process this case.

DONE by Order of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission at Boise, Idaho this                  day of September 1998.

                                                                                                                                      DENNIS S. HANSEN, PRESIDENT

                                                                                           RALPH NELSON, COMMISSIONER

MARSHA H. SMITH, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

Myrna J. Walters

Commission Secretary

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**COMMENTS AND ANNOTATIONS**

Text Box 1:

**TEXT BOXES**

Office of the Secretary

Service Date

September 8, 1998