DECISION MEMORANDUM

TO:COMMISSIONER NELSON

COMMISSIONER SMITH

COMMISSIONER HANSEN

MYRNA WALTERS

TONYA CLARK

DON HOWELL

STEPHANIE MILLER

DAVE SCHUNKE

JOE CUSICK

DAVID SCOTT

WORKING FILE

FROM:BRAD PURDY

DATE:JANUARY 29, 1997

RE:CASE NO. USW-T-97-1/CTC-T-97-1.  PETITION OF CUSTOMERS OF MARSING TO INCLUDE THE COMMUNITIES OF NAMPA AND MELBA WITHIN THEIR EXTENDED AREA OF SERVICE.

On January 9, 1997, the Commission received a petition from 22 customers of Citizens Telecom Company’s Marsing exchange requesting that the Commission include the communities of Nampa and Melba within their “extended area of service” for telephone service.  The stated primary rationale for the petition is to acquire access to the Internet.  Presently, the petition states, there is no toll-free access to this service which places all of the residents in Citizens Telecom’s service areas in Idaho and Oregon, particularly school age children who have access to a personal computer, at a severe disadvantage.  The petition contends that the Internet provides tremendous opportunities to access the myriad of educational programs and libraries and the ability to broaden educational possibilities.  The petition concludes that those children who live in Owyhee County and parts of Canyon County should not be discriminated against in their ability to access these educational tools.  The necessity of using a toll line to access the Internet, the petition states, renders it financially unfeasible.

The second stated for the request is that, currently, it requires a toll charge to Melba for citizens to call county offices in Murphy.  It is possible to call a Homedale number in order to reach the Owyhee County Courthouse, but this call goes through the sheriff’s dispatcher.  The petition argues that it is unwise to tie up the sheriff’s line while waiting to talk to the County Clerk to inquire about jury duty, etc.

Staff has reviewed the petition and believes that this case should be combined with Case Nos. GNR-T-93-7 and GNR-T-93-11.  These latter two cases are also EAS proceedings involving Citizens Telecom and access to U S WEST service areas in the southwest Idaho.  It is believed that they will be scheduled for hearing sometime in April of this year.  Staff believes that it would be the most efficient use of the Commission’s time and resources to combine the three similar proceedings.

Commission Decision:

Should the Commission consolidate this case with Case Nos. GNR-T-93-7 and GNR-T-93-11?  If not, should this matter be handled under modified procedure or set for hearing on its own?

Brad Purdy

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