

BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

November 23, 2010

IN RE:

PETITION OF NORTH CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS,
INC. FOR A CCN TO PROVIDE COMPETITIVE LOCAL
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN TENNESSEE

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DOCKET NO.
10-00139

ORDER GRANTING CERTIFICATE OF
PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY

This matter came before Chairman Mary W. Freeman, Director Kenneth C. Hill and Director Sara Kyle of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority (the "Authority"), the voting panel assigned to this docket, at a Hearing held on September 27, 2010 to consider the *Application for a Certificate to Provide Competitive Local Telecommunications Services* (the "*Application*") filed on July 12, 2010 by North Central Communications, Inc. ("North Central" or "Company"), a subsidiary of North Central Telephone Cooperative. In its *Application*, North Central seeks a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity ("CCN") for authority to provide competing local telecommunications services in Tennessee.

Legal Standard for Granting Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity

North Central's *Application* was made pursuant to and considered in light of the criteria for granting a CCN as set forth in Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-4-201 (Supp. 2009), which provides, in pertinent part:

(a) No public utility shall establish or begin the construction of, or operate any line, plant, or system, or route in or into a municipality or other territory already receiving a like service from another public utility, or establish service therein, without first having obtained from the authority, after written application and hearing, a certificate that the present or future public convenience and necessity require or will require such construction, establishment, and operation, and no person or corporation not at the time a public utility shall commence the construction of any plant, line, system or route to be operated as a public utility, or the operation of

which would constitute the same, or the owner or operator thereof, a public utility as defined by law, without having first obtained, in like manner, a similar certificate . . .

* * *

(c) After notice to the incumbent local exchange telephone company and other interested parties and following a hearing, the authority shall grant a certificate of convenience and necessity to a competing telecommunications service provider if after examining the evidence presented, the authority finds:

(1) The applicant has demonstrated that it will adhere to all applicable commission policies, rules and orders; and

(2) The applicant possesses sufficient managerial, financial, and technical abilities to provide the applied for services.

* * *

Furthermore, pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-5-112 (2004), a competing telecommunications provider is required to file with the Authority (1) a plan containing the provider's plan for purchasing goods and services from small and minority-owned telecommunications businesses; and (2) information on programs that might provide technical assistance to such businesses.

The September 27, 2010 Hearing

Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-4-204 (2004), public notice of the Hearing in this matter was issued by the Hearing Officer on September 20, 2010. No persons sought intervention prior to or during the Hearing.

During the Hearing held on September 27, 2010, Ms. Nancy Johnson White, President and CEO, participated in the Hearing, affirmed her pre-filed testimony and was subject to examination by the panel. Melvin J. Malone, Esq. represented the Company.

I. North Central's Qualifications

1. North Central was incorporated under the laws of the State of Tennessee and was licensed to transact business in Tennessee by the Secretary of State as of January 9, 1997.

2. The complete street address of the corporate office of North Central is 872 Highway 52 By Pass East, Lafayette, Tennessee 37083. The telephone number is (615) 666-2151.

3. The *Application* and supporting information existing in the record indicate that North Central has the requisite technical and managerial ability to provide the applied for telecommunications services within the State of Tennessee. Specifically, North Central's senior management team possesses sufficient business, technical and operational experience.

4. North Central has the necessary capital and financial ability to provide the services it proposes to offer.

5. North Central has represented that it will adhere to all applicable statutes, policies, rules and orders of the Authority.

II. Proposed Services

North Central plans to offer a wide variety of local exchange services to both residential and business subscribers in Tennessee. The Company will provide basic access line service as well as trunk services, including PBX service, high-speed data, calling features, and directory services and additional telecommunications services as may be warranted in response to market demand.

III. Permitting Competition to Serve the Public Convenience and Necessity

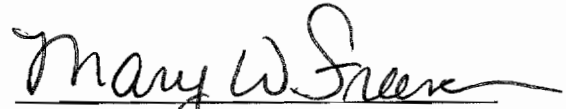
Upon a review of the *Application* and the record in this matter, the panel found that approval of North Central's *Application* would inure to the benefit of the present and future public convenience by permitting competition in the telecommunications services markets in the State of Tennessee and fostering the development of an efficient, technologically advanced statewide system of telecommunications services.

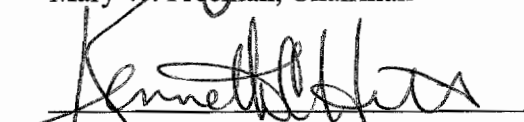
IV. Small and Minority-Owned Telecommunications Business Participation Plan and Business Assistance Program

North Central has filed a satisfactory small and minority-owned telecommunications business participation plan pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-5-112 (2004) and the Authority's Rules.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

The *Application for a Certificate to Provide Competitive Local Telecommunications Services* filed by North Central Communications, Inc. is approved.


Mary W. Freeman, Chairman


Kenneth C. Hill, Director


Sara Kyle, Director