

ITEM NO. 5

PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON  
STAFF REPORT  
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: December 18, 2003

REGULAR  X  CONSENT \_\_\_\_\_ EFFECTIVE DATE  January 1, 2004

DATE: December 9, 2003

TO: Lee Sparling through Phil Nyegaard

FROM: Dave Booth

SUBJECT: OREGON UNIVERSAL SERVICE (OUS) ADVISORY BOARD: Approval of candidates for open OUS Advisory Board positions.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

The Commission should appoint the following persons to fill positions on the Oregon Universal Service (OUS) Advisory Board, effective January 1, 2004:

Representing telecommunications utilities,

Sheila Harris, Qwest Corporation;

Representing competitive telecommunications providers,

Natalie Baker, AT&T Communications of the Pacific Northwest, Inc.; and

Representing radio common carriers (wireless carriers),

Joseph Gayer, Edge Wireless, LLC.

The term of office for all three appointments will end December 31, 2006.

**DISCUSSION:**

In docket UM 731, the Commission established an OUS Advisory Board (Board) consisting of ten members. See Order No. 99-197. One member is from the Commission's staff. The other nine members are as follows:

- Three from telecommunications utilities;
- Three from competitive telecommunications providers;
- One from radio common carriers;
- One from a consumer group representing residential customers; and
- One from among business customers.

The Commission established the following functions for the Board:

- Assist and advise the Commission in the selection of the OUS Administrator;
- Advise the Administrator and Commission regarding the effective operation of the OUS Fund;

- Assist the Administrator in reviewing and identifying irregularities in information provided on OUS worksheets;
- Provide an interface between the Administrator and telecommunications providers to resolve problems or disputes and to recommend appropriate actions; and
- Assist the Commission in evaluating the success of the OUS program.

Membership on the Board is limited to three consecutive years by any member representing a particular company. Members may seek reappointment to another term. The terms are staggered so that no more than one-third of the members will be new in any one year. The Commission's staff membership is permanent. Information about current Board members and their terms of office is available on the Commission's web site.

Terms of office for the following Board members will expire December 31, 2003:

- Telecommunications utilities,  
Sheila Harris, Qwest Corporation;
- Competitive telecommunications providers,  
Natalie Baker, AT&T Communications of the Pacific Northwest, Inc.; and
- Radio common carriers (wireless carriers),  
Joseph Gayer, Edge Wireless, LLC.

On October 31, 2003, staff mailed a letter seeking nominations to fill the upcoming vacancies. Staff provided a nomination form, and set a filing deadline of November 21, 2003. Staff also established a committee to review the nominations and recommend appointments for the Commission's consideration. Members of the selection committee are Vicki McLean, Phil Nyegaard, and Mike Grant.

Staff received nominations for all three open positions. By category, the nominations are:

- Telecommunications utilities,  
Steve Harper, Controller, Nehalem Telephone and Telegraph Co.,  
Sheila Harris, Manager, Regulatory, Qwest Corporation;
- Competitive telecommunications providers,  
Natalie Baker, District Manager, AT&T Communications of the Pacific Northwest,  
Inc.,  
John Stadter, President/CEO, Wantel, Inc.; and
- Radio common carriers (wireless carriers),  
Joseph Gayer, Director of Strategic Relations, Edge Wireless, LLC.

The selection committee met on December 5, 2003. The committee recommends the Commission appoint the following nominees to three-year terms beginning January 1, 2004:

- Telecommunications utilities,  
Sheila Harris, Qwest Corporation;
- Competitive telecommunications providers,  
Natalie Baker, AT&T Communications of the Pacific Northwest, Inc.; and
- Radio common carriers (wireless carriers),  
Joseph Gayer, Edge Wireless, LLC.

The selection committee recommends reappointment of Sheila Harris. She has been an active and effective member since the Board's inception. She represents the largest telecommunications carrier in the state. Her reappointment will maintain the current balance of two large utilities and one small utility. The other nominee, Steve Harper, is employed by a small utility.

The selection committee recommends the reappointment of Natalie Baker. Ms. Baker also has been an active and effective member since the Board's inception. She represents one of the largest competitive providers in the state. Her reappointment will maintain the current balance of one large, one medium, and one small-sized competitive provider. The other nominee, John Stadter, is employed by a small competitive provider.

The selection committee recommends the Commission reappoint Joseph Gayer. He is unopposed. Mr. Gayer was appointed August 6, 2002, to fill the remainder of a term that became vacant due to a resignation. He has been a valuable member of the Board and has effectively represented the interests of wireless carriers.

#### **PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:**

That the following persons be appointed to the OUS Advisory Board, effective January 1, 2004, with terms of office ending December 31, 2006:

Representing telecommunications utilities,

Sheila Harris, Qwest Corporation;

Representing competitive telecommunications providers,

Natalie Baker, AT&T Communications of the Pacific Northwest, Inc.; and

Representing radio common carriers (wireless carriers),

Joseph Gayer, Edge Wireless, LLC.