

Exhibit MDP-15

News Reports Discussing Meeting of New England
Commissions to Discuss FairPoint Problems
(September 9, 2009)

Associated Press

Northern New England states question FairPoint

By HOLLY RAMER , 09.09.09, 05:16 PM EDT

DERRY, N.H. – Executives from FairPoint Communications Inc. told utility regulators from three states Wednesday that it will be another two months before the company has a clear plan to resolve its customer service, billing and other problems.

Vicky Weatherwax, who in July was appointed to a new position of vice president of business solutions, said she expects to get recommendations from outside analysts by mid-November. By the end of that month, Fairpoint will decide how to implement them, she said.

Weatherwax was among four Fairpoint executives to speak at a highly unusual joint meeting of the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission, the Maine Public Utilities Commission and the Vermont Public Service Board. The goal was to give regulators an update on FairPoint's efforts to stabilize its troubled operation systems, as well as organizational changes and financial matters.

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FairPoint, which is based in Charlotte, N.C., owns and operates phone companies in 18 states, but its largest holdings by far are in northern New England, where it bought Verizon Communications (VZ - news - people)' landline telephone and Internet business last year. The company officially took over the system seven months ago and has been beset with problems ever since.

Fairpoint CEO David Hauser, who was hired two months ago, said the company has begun shifting from a "work around" mentality to a "fix-it and improve it" mentality. Calls to the company's customer service center are now answered in 20 seconds or less more than 89 percent of the time, he said, though problems remain, particularly with the accuracy of billing for business and wholesale customers. And about 22 percent of orders for new service or changes to existing services are late, he said.

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VZ	\$30.15	0.90%

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"We have identified the areas that need further attention and have improvement plans in place for those areas," he said.

Regulators repeatedly pressed the executives for estimates of when the problems would be fixed, but company officials offered no firm deadlines.

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"One of the reasons we're here today is, frankly, frustration," said Vermont Public Service Board Chairman James Volz. He reminded the executives of their previous assurances that the problems would be cleared

Northern New England states question FairPoint - Forbes.com

Setup by May.

"Quite clearly, that day has long since past, and we've seen neither sufficient progress nor a firm commitment that will achieve an acceptable level of service," he said.

Volz said performance has improved in some areas, but progress has come "only at high unsustainable costs." And he said Fairpoint has been given more than adequate time to get its act together.

"At this time we would like to hear concrete plans for addressing those problems," he said.

Commissioner Vendean Vafiades of Maine congratulated Fairpoint for improving the speed with which customer service representatives answer the phone, but said she wondered what happens after that. How many times are callers transferred before reaching someone who can help? How many times do they have to call back?

"I know you've only been at this two months; but we feel a greater sense of exigency," she told Hauser, who was quick to assure he shared her sentiments.

"I have a huge sense of urgency," he said. "Let's face it - Northern New England is what makes or breaks FairPoint, now, tomorrow and next week and as far as we can see."

As he opened the hearing, New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission Chairman Thomas Getz said regulators have found no reason to further investigate allegations made through anonymous e-mail last month that FairPoint faked its readiness to take over the phone networks.

Getz said the person who wrote the e-mail was satisfied with the explanation FairPoint sent to Vermont authorities, and that authorities in all three states saw no basis for continuing the investigation.

Hauser also said an independent investigation also found no wrongdoing.

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09/25/2009 4:01PM ET

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VZ	\$29.94	-0.70%

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