

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the  
Establishment and Operation  
of an Advisory Board for the  
State Universal  
Communications Service  
Program Pursuant to WAC  
480-123-150

DOCKET UT-150067  
  
ORDER 05  
  
ORDER APPOINTING  
ADVISORY BOARD  
MEMBERS

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 The legislature established a state universal communications program (Program) in 2013 to provide targeted financial support to small incumbent telephone companies serving high-cost rural areas in the state of Washington.<sup>1</sup> The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) is responsible for implementing and administering the Program and has adopted rules to fulfill this statutory obligation.<sup>2</sup>
- 2 As part of its responsibilities, the Commission established an industry and consumer advisory board to provide recommendations to the Commission on the implementation and management of the program.”<sup>3</sup> The board must be comprised of members who represent each of the following interests:
- Incumbent local exchange companies (ILECs) serving fewer than 40,000 access lines in Washington;
  - ILECs serving more than 40,000 access lines in Washington;
  - Competitive local exchange carriers (CLECs) serving customers in Washington;
  - Wireless communications service providers offering service in Washington;
  - The Public Counsel Unit of the Washington Attorney General’s office (Public Counsel);
  - The Governor’s State Broadband Office; and
  - Commission staff (Staff).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> RCW 80.36.650 – 700.

<sup>2</sup> WAC 480-123-100 – 170.

<sup>3</sup> WAC 480-123-150(1); *accord* RCW 80.36.650(7).

<sup>4</sup> WAC 480-123-150(2)(a).

3 On January 29, 2015, the Commission entered Order 01, Order Appointing Advisory Board Members and Initiating Meeting (Order 01). In Order 01, the Commission appointed Rick Vitzhum, Mark S. Reynolds, Cindy J. Manheim, and Rhonda Weaver as industry representatives to serve on the advisory board for an initial three-year term, at the end of which the Commission could reappoint those members for two subsequent three-year terms.<sup>5</sup> Public Counsel and Staff representatives have permanent membership on the advisory board and have no restrictions on the amount of time they serve on the board.

4 On January 25, 2018, the Commission entered Order 02, Order Reappointing Advisory Board Members (Order 02). In Order 02, the Commission reappointed Rick Vitzhum, Mark S. Reynolds, Cindy J. Manheim, and Rhonda Weaver to serve on the advisory board for a subsequent three-year term.

5 In 2019, the legislature extended the Program through June 30, 2024, and added broadband as a supported service. The Commission initiated a rulemaking in Docket UT-190437 and filed General Order R-598 on May 27, 2020, adopting revised rules that went into effect on June 27, 2020. The new rules expand board membership to include a representative from the Governor's State Broadband Office and authorize the Commission secretary to determine and modify the number of seats on the board.

6 On August 27, 2020, the Commission entered Order 03, Order Appointing Advisory Board Members (Order 03). In Order 03, the Commission appointed William Bridges and Russ Elliott to serve on the advisory board and reappointed Rick Vitzhum, Mark S. Reynolds, Cindy J. Manheim, and Rhonda Weaver to serve a subsequent three-year term.

7 On January 18, 2022, the Commission entered Order 04, Order Appointing Advisory Board Members (Order 04). In Order 04, the Commission appointed Peter Gose, Carl Gipson and Erika Henry to serve on the advisory board.

#### **DISCUSSION AND DECISION**

8 In 2022, Mark Vasconi became the Director of the Governor's State Broadband Office and has expressed a willingness to serve on the advisory board. We thank Erika Henry for her service.

9 Accordingly, the Commission appoints the following persons to membership on the board to complete the current three year term ending January 24, 2024:

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<sup>5</sup> WAC 480-123-150(2)(b).

<b>Advisory Board Membership</b>	
ILECs serving fewer than 40,000 access lines in Washington (Three year term)	Rick Vitzhum, Chief Financial Officer, Kalama Telephone Company and Tenino Telephone Company
ILECs serving more than 40,000 access lines in Washington (Three year term)	Peter Gose, Regulatory Affairs Director - Northwest Region, CenturyLink/Lumen
CLECs serving customers in Washington (Three year term)	Rhonda Weaver, Senior Director - State Government Affairs, Comcast
Wireless communications providers offering service in Washington (Three year term)	Carl Gipson, Director – External and Legislative Affairs – Washington` AT&T
Governor’s State Broadband Office	Mark Vasconi, Director
Public Counsel	Lisa Gafkin, Assistant Attorney General
Staff	Jing Roth, Deputy Director, Regulatory Services Division

10 Chair Roth will establish the date and time of the next board meeting in consultation with the other board members. All meetings of the advisory board will take place at the Commission’s office located at 621 Woodland Square Loop SE, Lacey, Washington, or virtually using the Microsoft Teams platform.

**ORDER**

**THE COMMISSION ORDERS:**

- 11 (1) Membership of the advisory board shall be as set forth in this Order.
- 12 (2) The chair of the advisory board will schedule annual board meetings and will prepare and provide notice of the agenda in advance of the meeting.
- 13 (3) The Commission retains jurisdiction over this matter to take such future actions as may be appropriate.

The Commissioners, having determined this Order to be consistent with the public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective January 6, 2023

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

AMANDA MAXWELL  
Executive Director and Secretary

**NOTICE TO PARTIES: This is an order delegated to the Executive Secretary for decision. As authorized in WAC 480-07-904(3), you must file any request for Commission review of this order no later than 14 days after the date the decision is posted on the Commission's website.**