

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Request by COLUMBIA COUNTY)	DOCKET NO. 860219-TL
COMMISSIONERS for extended area)	ORDER NO. 20777
service in Columbia County.)	ISSUED: 2-20-89

The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

MICHAEL McK. WILSON, CHAIRMAN
JOHN T. HERNDON

ORDER REQUIRING A NEW CUSTOMER SURVEY

BY THE COMMISSION:

ALLTEL Florida, Inc., is hereby directed to resurvey the customers located in its White Springs exchange to determine whether a second balloting would result in a simple majority approving the implementation of traditional flat rate, two-way, nonoptional Extended Area Service between White Springs and Lake City.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

This docket was initiated pursuant to a resolution filed by the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners on February 17, 1986, requesting that we consider implementing Extended Area Service (EAS) between all points within Columbia County. In accordance with our rules, we ordered ALLTEL Florida, Inc., (ALLTEL) and Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company to conduct their respective traffic studies between all points in Columbia County. We ordered the traffic studies to determine, based upon our rules, whether a community of interest existed between any route in Columbia County to warrant implementation of EAS.

The results of the traffic studies revealed that the White Springs to Lake City route was the only route that met the requirements of Rule 25-4.060(2)(a), Florida Administrative Code. Inasmuch as the majority of the White Springs exchange is located in Hamilton County, a pocket study was ordered for just that portion of the White Springs exchange located in Columbia County.

The results of the original traffic study revealed a calling rate of 9.94 messages per main station per month (M/M/Ms), with 68.19% of the subscribers making two or more calls per month. The results of the pocket traffic study for the portion of the White Springs exchange located in Columbia County revealed a calling rate of 17.54 M/M/Ms, with 78.05% of the subscribers making two or more calls per month.

Subsequent to obtaining the results of the traffic study we issued Order No. 16564 which directed that cost and economic impact studies be conducted on the White Springs to Lake City route. As a result of those studies a public hearing was conducted in Lake City on January 22, 1987.

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As a result of the evidence received at the hearing we ordered ALLTEL to implement the alternative toll plan known as the Threshold Plan. The Threshold Plan was to be implemented after ALLTEL submitted its implementation plan. Upon review of ALLTEL's implementation plan our Staff identified several areas of concern. Our Staff then conducted discovery to determine the appropriateness of requiring ALLTEL to go forward with the implementation of the Threshold Plan. Accordingly, at the September 22, 1988 Agenda Conference we reconsidered our decision that ALLTEL implement the Threshold Plan and directed ALLTEL to survey the White Springs' customers on the 25/25 plan.

The results of the survey demonstrated that a simple majority of the White Springs' customers of record that voted failed to approve implementation of the 25/25 plan. Approximately 55% of the ballots were returned with 40.8% of the voters approving the plan. In order for the survey to have been successful an additional 9.4% of the voters would have needed to vote affirmatively.

We believe that the vote was close enough for us to consider whether there were any mitigating factors that unreasonably led to the survey's failure. One significant factor that may have led to the survey's failure was the timing of the survey. The ballots were to be returned on or before December 16, 1988. This date falls between the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. We believe it is quite possible that ballots could have been lost in the mail, or that customers may have neglected returning the ballots due to distractions surrounding the holidays. Additionally, the wording of the ballot may have resulted in subscriber confusion, thereby resulting in a less than accurate result.

Accordingly, ALLTEL is hereby directed to resurvey the White Springs' customers. Additionally, the ballot and its explanatory letter shall be developed in conjunction with our Staff, a representative from the county commission and representatives of the White Springs' community. Upon completion of the drafting of the ballot and explanatory letter the survey shall be completed within thirty (30) days thereafter.

Based on the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that ALLTEL Florida, Inc. shall resurvey its White Springs' customers to determine whether a second balloting will result in a simple majority of the customers approving implementation of the 25/25 plan on the White Springs to Lake City route, as set forth in the body of this Order. It is further

ORDERED that the drafting of the ballot and explanatory letter shall be done with input from our Staff, a representative from the county commission and representatives of the White Springs exchange. It is further

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ORDERED that this docket remain open.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission
this 20th day of FEBRUARY, 1989.


STEVE TRIBBLE, Director
Division of Records and Reporting

(S E A L)

DWS

NOTICE OF FURTHER PROCEEDINGS OR JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Florida Public Service Commission is required by Section 120.59(4), Florida Statutes, to notify parties of any administrative hearing or judicial review of Commission orders that is available under Sections 120.57 or 120.68, Florida Statutes, as well as the procedures and time limits that apply. This notice should not be construed to mean all requests for an administrative hearing or judicial review will be granted or result in the relief sought.

Any party adversely affected by the Commission's final action in this matter may request: 1) reconsideration of the decision by filing a motion for reconsideration with the Director, Division of Records and Reporting within fifteen (15) days of the issuance of this order in the form prescribed by Rule 25-22.060, Florida Administrative Code; or 2) judicial review by the Florida Supreme Court in the case of an electric, gas or telephone utility or the First District Court of Appeal in the case of a water or sewer utility by filing a notice of appeal with the Director, Division of Records and Reporting and filing a copy of the notice of appeal and the filing fee with the appropriate court. This filing must be completed within thirty (30) days after the issuance of this order, pursuant to Rule 9.110, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure. The notice of appeal must be in the form specified in Rule 9.900(a), Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.