

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Dan Lipschultz	Vice Chair
Matt Schuerger	Commissioner
John Tuma	Commissioner
Katie Sieben	Commissioner

In the Matter of the Petition of Lake County for
Relinquishment of ETC Designation

MPUC Docket No.: _____

Lake County, Minnesota, d/b/a Lake Connections (“Lake County”) respectfully submits this petition, pursuant to Minn. Rules part 7811.1400, subp. 14, to relinquish its designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier. In support of its petition, Lake County states as follows:

1. On December 5, 2014, the Federal Communications Commissioner (“FCC”) provisionally awarded Lake County \$3.5 in Rural Broadband Experiment funds (“RBE”), to be used for the purpose of expanding broadband access in rural Minnesota.
2. Lake County’s receipt of the RBE funds was conditional on, among other things, Lake County being designated as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”).
3. On January 29, 2015, Lake County filed a petition with this Commission to be designated as an ETC in specific census blocks for which the FCC had granted funding. The area for which Lake County sought ETC designation included specific census blocks for which the FCC approved funding, including census blocks located in Duluth and Silver Bay, where Century Link is the incumbent carrier; census blocks in Aurora, Babbitt, Ely, Embarrass, Hoyt Lakes, Isabella, Palo, and Two Harbors where Citizens Telecommunications Company of Minnesota, LLC is the incumbent carrier, and a limited number of specified, neighboring census blocks not at the time being served by any carrier.

4. Lake County is not, itself, authorized by this Commission to provide telecommunications services. Rather, as described in its petition to be designated an ETC, Lake County is the owner of the broadband network. Lake County is eligible to be designated as an ETC by virtue of its contracting with a third party carrier, initially Lake Communications and, subsequently, Consolidated Telephone Company, to provide voice service using Voice Over Internet Protocol (“VOIP”), operate the network, and manage relationships with customers.

5. By Order dated July 27, 2015, this Commission granted Lake County’s petition subject to conditions and required a compliance filing.

6. Lake County subsequently made the required compliance filing and, by Order dated December 2, 2015, the Commission found that Lake County had satisfied the conditions set out in its July 27 Order and granted Lake County’s petition without conditions. Lake County has annually recertified its ETC status by filing Form 481 with the FCC and this Commission.

7. Lake County has entered into an agreement with for Pinpoint Holdings, Inc. (“Pinpoint”) to purchase Lake County’s broadband network. Upon closing of the sale, which is expected to take place on June 1, 2018, Lake County will no longer meet the requirements to be designated as an ETC. Accordingly, Lake County is petitioning to relinquish its ETC status.

8. Customers currently receiving service over the Lake County network will, after Lake County’s relinquishment of its ETC status, continue to have access to at least one other provider of voice service.

9. Lake County respectfully requests that the Commission allow Lake County to relinquish its ETC status coincident with the closing of the sale of its broadband network.

Dated: February 28, 2019

**GRAY, PLANT, MOOTY,
MOOTY & BENNETT, P.A.**

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