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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

OF OREGON

UM 1061

In the Matter of)
EXTENDED AREA SERVICE) ORDER
Investigation to Southern Oregon EAS Region.)
)

DISPOSITION: APPOINTMENTS GRANTED

During its August 20, 2002 public meeting, the Public Utility Commission opened Docket No. UM 1061, which is an investigation into a request for a Southern Oregon EAS Region. The Commission approved the concept of an advisory panel of local citizens in Jackson and Josephine Counties, the *Advisory Task Force on a Southern Oregon EAS Region*, to recommend EAS region boundaries based on community of interest considerations.

In a September 17, 2002 letter to Commissioner Lee Beyer, Senator Lenn Hannon recommended fourteen people for appointment to the task force. The fourteen individuals are from communities and business development organizations in the area at issue, and each has been contacted to ensure their willingness to serve on the task force. A description of the filing and its procedural history is contained in the Staff Report, attached as Appendix A¹, and incorporated by reference.

At its Public Meeting on October 1, 2002, the Commission adopted Staff's Recommendations and approved the fourteen people recommended by Senator Hannon to be appointed to the Advisory Task Force on a Southern Oregon EAS Region.

¹ The list of recommended names is attached herein.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED THAT the fourteen people recommended by Senator Hannon to be appointed to the Advisory Task Force on a Southern Oregon EAS Region is granted.

Made, entered and effective _____.

BY THE COMMISSION:

Becky Beier
Commission Secretary

A party may request rehearing or reconsideration of this order pursuant to ORS 756.561. A party may appeal this order to a court pursuant to ORS 756.580.

**PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON
STAFF REPORT
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: October 1, 2002**

REGULAR X CONSENT EFFECTIVE DATE Not Applicable

DATE: September 24, 2002

TO: John Savage through Phil Nyegaard

FROM: Lance Ball

SUBJECT: EXTENDED AREA SERVICE (EAS): (Docket No. UM 1061) Appointment of members to the Advisory Task Force on a Southern Oregon EAS Region.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission appoint to the Advisory Task Force on a Southern Oregon EAS region the fourteen people recommended by Senator Hannon.

DISCUSSION:

During its August 20, 2002 public meeting, the Commission opened Docket No. UM 1061, which is an investigation into a request for a Southern Oregon EAS Region. Staff brought the request to the Commission based upon a groundswell of support in Jackson and Josephine Counties for an investigation concerning a possible unified toll-free calling area in southern Oregon.²

In the August 20, 2002 public meeting, the Commission approved the concept of an advisory panel of local citizens in Jackson and Josephine Counties, the *Advisory Task Force on a Southern Oregon EAS Region*, to recommend EAS region boundaries based on community of interest considerations. The Commission's decision reflects its beliefs that EAS region boundaries are best formulated and debated at a local level.

To this end, the task force was established. It is designed to allow local citizens to make proposals about the size and shape of an EAS region that best fits the needs of Oregonians in Jackson and Josephine Counties. It will serve as an advisory panel to the Commission and forward community of interest recommendations to the

² Community support for a unified EAS region was documented in the staff report to the Commission. See EXTENDED AREA SERVICE (EAS): Request from staff to open a Southern Oregon EAS Region investigation, Item No. 1, August 20, 2002 Public Meeting.

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Commission to accept, modify, or reject, commensurate with the Commission's statutory authority.

The investigation of the task force and this Commission's consideration of any recommendations will constitute Phase I of the two-phase EAS process. Phase I is known as the community of interest investigation. In the event the Commission finds a community of interest, Phase II would be an investigation into proposed EAS costs and rates. This phase would commence immediately following a Commission order making community of interest findings.

The Commission intends for the recommendations of the task force to carry substantial weight. State law, however, requires the Commission establish EAS region boundaries. Accordingly, any conclusions drawn by the task force regarding the EAS boundary will only be advisory. Staff does not specify a particular time frame for completion of the task force's work. Staff will provide technical support to the task force as needed.

In a September 17, 2002, letter to Commissioner Lee Beyer, Senator Lenn Hannon recommends fourteen people for appointment to the task force. Senator's Hannon's list is found in the accompanying attachment. The fourteen individuals are from communities and business development organizations in the area at issue. The list appears to include representatives of a reasonable geographic mix. The likely diversity of viewpoints of these individuals will hopefully assist the Commission in balancing the community of interest needs of most Oregonians in Jackson and Josephine counties. In order to ensure their willingness to serve on the task force, staff has contacted each proposed member.

PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:

That the Commission exercise its authority under ORS 756.036(1)(e) to appoint to the *Advisory Task Force on a Southern Oregon EAS Region* the fourteen people recommended by Senator Hannon.

Attachment