

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of the Application of Steelville Telephone)
Exchange, Inc. dba STE Communications for Designation)
as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier for Purposes of)
Receiving Federal and State Lifeline and Disabled Support) **File No. IA-2022-0278**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

COMES NOW the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission and submits its Recommendation as follows:

1. On April 11, 2022, Steelville Telephone Exchange, Inc. d/b/a STE Communications (“STE Communications” or “Company”) filed an Application for expanded designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”) in order to receive federal and state Lifeline and Disabled discounts.

2. The Company is certificated in the state of Missouri as an incumbent local exchange carrier and registered as an interconnected voice over internet protocol (IVoIP) services provider.

3. Commission rule 20 CSR4240-31.016 governs the specific ETC requirements that each applicant must meet. Staff conducted an investigation and has provided a memorandum attached to this pleading as Appendix A. Staff’s memorandum outlines the reasons why Staff believes STE Communications has met the requirements of 20 CSR 4240-31.016 and should receive ETC designation.

4. STE Communications sought waiver of the 60-day notice requirement pursuant to the Commission’s rule 20 CSR 4240-4.017. Staff recommends that the waiver be granted.

WHEREFORE, Staff recommends that the Commission grant Steelville Telephone Exchange, Inc., d/b/a STE Communications request for designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier for the purpose of receiving federal and state Lifeline and Disabled Support; that it grant a waiver of the 60-day notice requirement; and that it grant such other and further relief as the Commission finds appropriate in the circumstances.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Ron Irving

Ron Irving
Senior Counsel
Missouri Bar No. 56147
Attorney for the Staff of the
Missouri Public Service Commission
P. O. Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102
(573) 751-8702 (Telephone)
(573) 751-9285 (Fax)
ron.irving@psc.mo.gov

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served by electronic mail, or First Class United States Postal Mail, postage prepaid, on this 11th day of May, 2022, to all counsel of record.

/s/Ron Irving

MEMORANDUM

To: Missouri Public Service Commission Official Case File
Case No. IA-2022-0278

From: Kari Salsman, Senior Research/Data Analyst
Telecommunications Department

Subject: Staff's Recommendation to Approve Steelville Telephone Exchange, Inc.
d/b/a STE Communications Request for Expansion of
Existing ETC Designation

Date: May 11, 2022

On April 11, 2022, Steelville Telephone Exchange, Inc. dba STE Communications (STE Communications) filed an application for expansion of their designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC).¹ The company is headquartered in Steelville, Missouri and is a certificated ILEC in Missouri.² STE Communications seeks to expand its ETC designation state-wide to provide federal and state Lifeline and Disabled discounts.

Federal authority enables state commissions to grant ETC status to a company.³ Missouri's ETC application requirements are contained in existing Missouri Commission rule 20 CSR 4240-31.016. Staff reviewed the company's request for compliance with Missouri's rules as well as federal requirements. In Staff's opinion the company has adequately met all requirements. Consequently Staff supports the company's application for expansion of its ETC status.

Staff recommends the Commission expand Steelville Telephone Exchange, Inc. d/b/a STE Communications' ETC status for the purpose of receiving federal low income support and Missouri USF support for the Lifeline and Disabled programs state-wide.

¹ ETC status granted in Case No. TA-88-38.

² Case No. TA-88-38. Name changed in Case No. IN-2021-0102.

³ 47 U.S.C. §214(e)(2) and FCC rule §54.201.