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

In the Matter of the Application of yondoo Broadband, LLC for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Missouri )

Case No. DA-2021-0258

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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**COMES NOW** the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission, by and through counsel, and for its *Recommendation* in this matter hereby states:

1. On February 15, 2021, yondoo Broadband, LLC, (Company or yondoo) filed an Application and Verification of yondoo Broadband for Designation as an Eligible *Telecommunications Carrier* with the Commission requesting that the Commission issue an order granting the Company eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) status for specific census blocks. The Company's request, if approved, would permit it to receive federal high cost and low-income support pursuant to the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) auction held by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The company also seeks support through the Missouri Universal Service Fund (MoUSF) for Lifeline program purposes.

2. The RDOF program is part of the FCC's attempt to bridge the digital divide. It seeks to expand high speed fixed broadband service to rural homes and small businesses presently lacking the service. Phase one of the auction began October 29, 2020, and targeted over six million homes and businesses unserved by voice and broadband speeds with downloads of at least 25 Mbps. Phase two of the auction will cover areas that are partially unserved and those areas not covered in Phase one. Winning bidders must submit to the FCC proof of their ETC status within 180 days of being announced as a winning bidder.

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3. The Company is presently registered in the state of Missouri as an interconnected voice over internet protocol (IVoIP) services provider. The Company included Exhibit A with its *Application*, which outlines the specific census blocks for which it requests ETC designation.

4. Commission rule 20 CSR 4240-31.016 governs the specific eligible telecommunications carrier requirements that each applicant must meet. Applications must also comply with 20 CSR 4240-2.060 and shall be verified by oath as to the truthfulness contained in the application by an officer or director of the applicant.

5. The FCC requires all winning bidders to submit a Long Form that includes information about a company and its plans to fulfill its bid requirements, which must be approved prior to a company receiving any funds. The ETC process under 20 CSR 4240-31.016 does not address and is not designed to assess a company's technology broadband speed and latency capabilities.

6. 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 yondoo Broadband has met the requirements of 20 CSR 4240-31.016 and should receive ETC designation.

7. yondoo Broadband sought waiver of the 60-day notice requirement pursuant to the Commission's rule 20 CSR 4240-4.017.

WHEREFORE, Staff recommends that the Commission approve yondoo Broadband, LLC's, request for designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier for the purpose of receiving federal high-cost and low-income support and in compliance with

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the RDOF Auction; that the designation be specific to the census blocks identified in Exhibit A of the *Application*; authorize the company to receive MoUSF support; grant waiver of the 60-day notice provision; and that it grant such other and further relief as the Commission considers just in the circumstances.

Respectfully submitted,

## <u>/s/ Whitney Payne</u>

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## **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 16<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2021, to all counsel of record.

## <u>/s/ Whitney Payne</u>

# **MEMORANDUM**

То:	Missouri Public Service Commission Official Case File Case No. DA-2021-0258
From:	Kari Salsman, Research/Data Analyst John Van Eschen, Regulatory Compliance Manager Telecommunications Department
Subject:	Staff's Recommendation to Approve yondoo Broadband, LLC's Request for ETC Designation
Date:	March 16, 2021

On February 15, 2021, yondoo Broadband, LLC (yondoo) filed an application for designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) for the purpose of receiving federal high cost and low-income universal service fund support.<sup>1</sup> yondoo is a registered IVoIP provider in Missouri.<sup>2</sup> The company was recently awarded federal Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) support to build broadband facilities in more rural areas.<sup>3</sup> The RDOF funding requires the company to extend broadband service to a designated number of locations in certain census blocks. yondoo seeks ETC designation in the won census blocks.<sup>4</sup> yondoo is seeking Missouri USF support for Lifeline program purposes.

Federal authority enables state commissions to grant ETC status to a company.<sup>5</sup> 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 rule as well as federal requirements. In Staff's opinion the company has adequately met all ETC application requirements. Consequently Staff supports the company's application for ETC status.

Staff recommends the Commission grant ETC status to yondoo Broadband, LLC for the purpose of receiving federal high-cost and low-income support and Missouri USF support for the Lifeline program in the area identified by census blocks in Exhibit A of the company's application.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> yondoo Broadband, LLC is a subsidiary of MidAtlanticBroadband, Inc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Case No. DA-2021-0256. The company's principal office is located in Baltimore, MD.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The company has been awarded \$54,834 over 10 years to extend broadband service to 100 locations. The company deploys fiber as the last mile technology.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Census Block Service areas are listed in Exhibits A of ETC application.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> 47 U.S.C. §214(e)(2) and FCC rule §54.201.