



Agenda Date: 2/24/16  
Agenda Item: IVA

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**Board of Public Utilities**  
44 South Clinton Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Suite 314  
Post Office Box 350  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350  
[www.nj.gov/bpu/](http://www.nj.gov/bpu/)

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF VERIZON )  
NEW JERSEY INC. FOR TALK AMERICA SERVICES, )  
LLC, FOR APPROVAL OF AN INTERCONNECTION )  
AGREEMENT UNDER SECTION 252(e) OF THE )  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1996 )  
ORDER APPROVING )  
INTERCONNECTION )  
AGREEMENT )  
DOCKET NO. TO15121382 )

**Parties of Record:**

**Stefanie A. Brand, Esq.**, Director, New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel  
**Sylvia Del Vecchio, Senior Staff Consultant**, Verizon New Jersey Inc.  
**Jeffery W. Small**, Talk America Services, LLC

**BY THE BOARD:**

By letter dated December 10, 2015, Verizon New Jersey Inc. ("Verizon"), a New Jersey corporation, and Talk America Services, LLC ("Talk America") (jointly, "Parties"), pursuant to Section 252(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, P.L. 104-104, 110 Stat. 56 (codified in scattered sections of 47 U.S.C. § 151 *et seq.*) ("Act"), submitted to the Board of Public Utilities ("Board") a joint application ("Application") for approval of a certain negotiated interconnection agreement dated November 1, 2015 ("Agreement"). Verizon asserts: "The Act specifies in § 252(e)(4) that, if a state agency does not act to approve or reject an agreement reached by negotiation within 90 days following the filing, it shall be deemed approved." Application at 1.

The Agreement sets forth the terms, conditions, and prices under which Verizon will offer and provide access to unbundled network elements, ancillary services, and wholesale telecommunications services available for resale to Talk America. The Agreement is in effect until October 31, 2017 and thereafter, as noted in the Agreement, continues in full force and effect unless terminated as provided in the Agreement.

By correspondence dated December 22, 2015, the New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel ("Rate Counsel") submitted comments to the Board recommending the Board approve the Agreement subject to specific modifications.

## **DISCUSSION**

Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 252(a)(1), an incumbent local exchange carrier may negotiate and enter into a binding interconnection agreement with a carrier requesting interconnection, service, or network elements. In addition, 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(1) requires approval by the Board of any interconnection agreement adopted by negotiation or arbitration, and further requires the Board to approve or reject the Agreement, with written findings as to any deficiencies. The Act provides that the Board may reject a negotiated agreement or any portion thereof only if it finds that: "(i) the agreement (or portion thereof) discriminates against a telecommunications carrier not a party to the agreement; or (ii) the implementation of such agreement or portion is not consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity . . ." 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(2)(A).

The Board finds that Rate Counsel's objections to certain provisions of the Agreement are without merit, and accordingly, the Board declines to make modifications to the Agreement. See I/M/O the Joint Application of Verizon New Jersey, Inc. and Ernest Communications, Inc. For Approval of an Interconnection Agreement Under Section 252(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Docket No. TO02050287, Order dated September 18, 2002 (rejecting Rate Counsel's recommendation that Condition 3 of the Pricing Section of the Agreement is inconsistent with FCC rules).

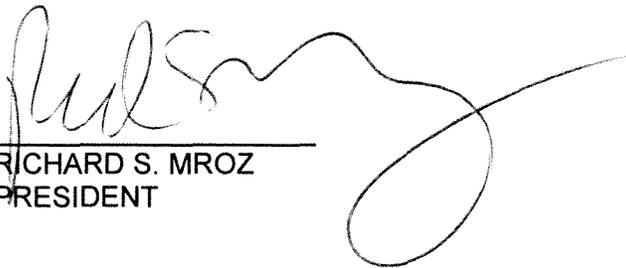
The Board's review of the Agreement and the record in this matter indicate that the Agreement is consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity, and that the Agreement does not discriminate against telecommunications carriers not parties to the Agreement. Therefore, the Board **FINDS** that the Agreement meets the standards set forth in the Act, and **HEREBY APPROVES** the Agreement as presented by the Parties. This approval should not be construed as preapproval of any future petitions for rate recovery of costs incurred pursuant to the Agreement, nor shall the Board be bound by any provisions within the Agreement regarding the confidentiality of information.

The Board notes that amendments or modifications to Board-approved interconnection agreements are subject to Board review and approval. No agreement shall be read, nor does the Board believe the Parties to the Agreement intend that it be read, to limit the authority of the Board under Section 252(e) of the Act to review interconnection agreements. Accordingly, until and unless otherwise provided by the Board, subsequent amendments or modifications to the Agreement approved herein shall be subject to review and approval by the Board. Additionally, pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 252(h), a copy of the Agreement will be made available for public inspection and copying within ten days of the issuance of this Order.

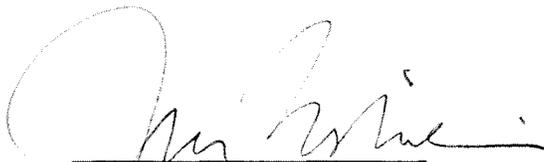
This Order shall be effective on March 5, 2016.

DATED: 2-24-16

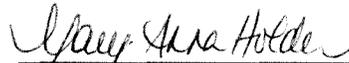
BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES  
BY:



RICHARD S. MROZ  
PRESIDENT



JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO  
COMMISSIONER



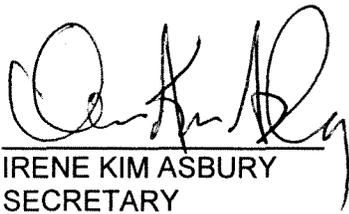
MARY-ANNA HOLDEN  
COMMISSIONER



DIANNE SOLOMON  
COMMISSIONER

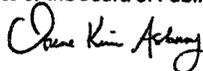


UPENDRA J. CHIVUKULA  
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST: 

IRENE KIM ASBURY  
SECRETARY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the within  
document is a true copy of the original  
in the files of the Board of Public Utilities



IN THE MATTER OF THE JOINT APPLICATION OF VERIZON NEW JERSEY INC. AND TALK  
AMERICA SERVICES, LLC FOR APPROVAL OF AN INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT

DOCKET NO. TO15121382

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