



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
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**DOMESTIC SECTION 214 APPLICATION FILED FOR THE TRANSFER OF CONTROL OF
CERTAIN SUBSIDIARIES OF TDS TELECOMMUNICATIONS CORP.
TO RIVERSTREET NETWORKS, LLC**

NON-STREAMLINED PLEADING CYCLE ESTABLISHED

WC Docket No. 15-5

Comments Due: January 30, 2015
Reply Comments Due: February 6, 2015

On January 12, 2014, TDS Telecommunications Corp. d/b/a TDS Telecom (TDS Telecom) and RiverStreet Networks, LLC (RiverStreet Networks) (collectively, Applicants) filed an application pursuant to section 63.03 of the Commission's rules for the transfer of Barnardsville Telephone Company, Inc. (Barnardsville), Saluda Mountain Telephone Company, Inc. (Saluda Mountain), and Service Telephone Company, Inc. (Service) (together, TDS Subsidiaries) from TDS Telecom to RiverStreet Networks.¹

TDS Telecom currently operates 111 incumbent local exchange carriers (LECs) in 27 states. In addition, TDS Telecom operates competitive LECs in Illinois and North Dakota. Each of the TDS Subsidiaries is an incumbent LEC providing telecommunications services to rural communities in North Carolina. Barnardsville serves 852 loops in and around Barnardsville, North Carolina; Saluda Mountain serves 1,256 loops in and around Saluda Mountain, North Carolina, and Service serves 685 loops in and around Fair Bluff, North Carolina. TDS Telecom, a Delaware corporation, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Telephone and Data Systems, Inc. (TDS). TDS is controlled by a voting trust whose trustees are the following U.S. citizens: LeRoy T. Carlson, Jr., Walter D.C. Carlson, Prudence E. Carlson, and Dr. Letitia G.C. Carlson. BlackRock Inc., a Delaware corporation, and its affiliates own eleven percent of the stock of TDS.

RiverStreet Networks was recently formed and currently provides no services. The sole member of RiverStreet Networks is Wilkes Telephone Membership Corporation (WTMC), a North Carolina cooperative corporation. WTMC provides incumbent telecommunications services in the exchanges of Boomer, Champion, Clingman, and Lomax in western North Carolina, mostly within Wilkes County. WTMC is owned by its member/subscribers; no single member/subscriber owns or controls more than 5 percent of the WTMC's equity. A wholly owned subsidiary of WTMC, Wilkes Communications, Inc. (WCI), a North Carolina corporation, provides competitive telecommunications services in areas

¹ 47 C.F.R § 63.03; *see* 47 U.S.C. § 214. Applicants filed a supplement to their application on January 13, 2015.

bordering WTMC's incumbent LEC operations. WTMC also holds minority interests in two wireless companies; Carolina West Wireless, Inc. (Carolina West) (20.77 percent) and WSS, L.L.C. (WSS) (19.65 percent). Applicants state that Carolina West provides wireless services in and around Buncombe County, where Barnardsville operates and in Polk County, where Saluda operates, as well as areas adjacent to the Barnardsville and Saluda operating territories. Applicants state that WSS provides wireless services adjacent to the Barnardsville service area. WTMC also holds a 23.05 percent interest in Visions West, LLC a company owning video distribution facilities and holds an 18.99 percent interest in Access/On Multimedia Inc. L.L.C., a regional fiber transport network serving north-central and north-western North Carolina.

Pursuant to the terms of three agreements, RiverStreet will acquire one hundred percent of the capital stock of each of the TDS Subsidiaries from TDS Telecom. The transaction will result in Barnardsville, Saluda Mountain and Service becoming wholly owned subsidiaries of RiverStreet Networks.

Applicants state that the proposed transaction is in the public interest and will have no adverse impact on competition. Applicants maintain that after consummation of the proposed transaction, customers will continue to receive service at the same rates, terms and conditions. Because this transaction is more complex than usual, in order to analyze whether the proposed transaction would serve the public interest, this application will not be streamlined.²

Domestic Section 214 Application Filed for the Transfer of Control of Certain Subsidiaries of TDS Telecommunications Corporation to RiverStreet Networks, LLC, WC Docket No. 15-5 (filed Jan. 12, 2015).

GENERAL INFORMATION

The transfer of control identified herein has been found, upon initial review, to be acceptable for filing as a non-streamlined application. The Commission reserves the right to return any transfer application if, upon further examination, it is determined to be defective and not in conformance with the Commission's rules and policies. Pursuant to section 63.03(a) of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR § 63.03(a), interested parties may file comments **on or before January 30, 2015**, and reply comments **on or before February 6, 2015**. Pursuant to section 63.52 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 63.52, commenters must serve a copy of comments on the Applicants no later than the above comment filing date.

Pursuant to section 63.03 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR § 63.03, parties to this proceeding should file any documents in this proceeding using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS): <http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/ecfs2/>.

In addition, e-mail one copy of each pleading to each of the following:

- 1) Tracey Wilson, Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, tracey.wilson@fcc.gov;
- 2) Dennis Johnson, Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, dennis.johnson@fcc.gov;

² 47 C.F.R. § 63.03(b), (c)(1)(v).

- 3) David Krech, Policy Division, International Bureau, david.krech@fcc.gov;
- 4) Jim Bird, Office of General Counsel, jim.bird@fcc.gov.

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The proceeding in this Notice shall be treated as a “permit-but-disclose” proceeding in accordance with the Commission’s ex parte rules. Persons making ex parte presentations must file a copy of any written presentation or a memorandum summarizing any oral presentation within two business days after the presentation (unless a different deadline applicable to the Sunshine period applies). Persons making oral ex parte presentations are reminded that memoranda summarizing the presentation must (1) list all persons attending or otherwise participating in the meeting at which the ex parte presentation was made, and (2) summarize all data presented and arguments made during the presentation. If the presentation consisted in whole or in part of the presentation of data or arguments already reflected in the presenter’s written comments, memoranda or other filings in the proceeding, the presenter may provide citations to such data or arguments in his or her prior comments, memoranda, or other filings (specifying the relevant page and/or paragraph numbers where such data or arguments can be found) in lieu of summarizing them in the memorandum. Documents shown or given to Commission staff during ex parte meetings are deemed to be written ex parte presentations and must be filed consistent with rule 1.1206(b), 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206(b). Participants in this proceeding should familiarize themselves with the Commission’s ex parte rules.

For further information, please contact Tracey Wilson at (202) 418-1394 or Dennis Johnson at (202) 418-0809.

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