

**THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

In the Matter of the Application of ) Case No. 21-1172-TP-ATR  
Consolidated Communications of Ohio )  
Company, LLC to Conduct a Transaction )  
Involving One or More LECs Providing BLES

**REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION**  
SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE STAFF OF  
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

On December 30, 2021, Consolidated Communications of Ohio Company, LLC (CCOC), a foreign (i.e., non-Ohio) limited liability company and wholly owned indirect subsidiary of Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc. (CCHI), filed an application with the Commission requesting approval of the asset purchase of its ILEC business by Hanson Communications of Ohio, LLC. (HCO), an Ohio limited liability company and direct wholly owned subsidiary of Hanson Communications, Inc. (HCI). HCI is the parent of Telephone Service Company, an Ohio ILEC, who will be the ultimate service provider after the transaction is completed.

CCOC is an ILEC that resulted from the merger application, 18-1735-TP-AMT, in which CCHI acquired Columbus Grove, Germantown, and Orwell Telephone Companies from Fairpoint Communications, Inc. and merged them into one entity. Columbus Grove, and Germantown's Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCNs) were canceled and Orwell's CPCN, 90-5033, was renamed CCOC.

Through an Asset Purchase Agreement between CCOC and HCI, HCI is purchasing only the ILEC assets of CCOC resulting in CCOC's CPCN, 90-5033, being owned by HCI. CCOC will retain all its other assets and its corporate control is not being transferred. In addition, no Section 214 authorizations will be transferred as all entities to the agreement have their own respective authorizations.

Upon closing of the Asset Purchase Agreement, HCO, the HCI subsidiary specifically created for this transaction, will transfer CCOC'S CPCN, 90-5033, to Telephone Service Company (TSC), another HCI subsidiary, who currently holds CPCN, 90-5039, as it will ultimately be the service provider in CCOC'S territory. The two certificates will remain separate so that TSC can serve the former CCOC customers but the name for CPCN, 90-5033, will be changed to Telephone Service

Company.

On January 1, 2022, bill inserts were provided in customer invoices to inform them of the transaction between the parties and to ensure them that no changes to their service, rates, or terms and conditions would result. On January 31, 2022, a second customer notice will be mailed advising that CCOC'S name will be changed to Telephone Service Company. A third notice will be mailed in May 2022 when the billing has been transitioned over to TSC.

As part of the application, links were provided to CCOC's Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Section 214 application, the FCC's Public Notice seeking comment (none were posted), and the FCC granting approval of their application. Below are the links.

**Link to the 214 Application:**

<https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/101416789077/HCIConsolidated%20214%20Application.pdf>

**Link to the Public Notice:** <https://www.neca.org/docs/default-source/wwpdf/public/da211416.pdf>

**Link to the 214 Application Granted:** <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-21-1591A1.pdf>

Lastly, a copy of the newly formed entity, HCO, Secretary of State certificate showing the company to be in good standing with the State of Ohio and evidence of registration with the Ohio Department of Taxation were included.

The application is being filed pursuant to Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-6-29. Absent full or partial suspension, applications to conduct a transaction involving one or more LEC providing BLES will be approved in accordance with the thirty-day automatic approval process described in rule Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-6-05.

The Staff reviewed all documents and exhibits filed with this application, and amended on January 25, 2022, and has determined that the proposed application appears to satisfy the Commission's requirements set forth in Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-6-29(B)(1). Staff recommends that this application, as amended on January 25, 2022, be approved on January 29, 2022.

**This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities  
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**in**

**Case No(s). 21-1172-TP-ATR**

Summary: Staff Review and Recommendation electronically filed by Mrs. Tanika  
Hawkins on behalf of PUCO Staff