Agenda Date: 10/16/13 Agenda Item: 3A

CABLE TELEVISION



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Board of Public Utilities 44 South Clinton Avenue, 9th Floor Post Office Box 350 Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350 www.nj.gov/bpu/

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF VERIZON NEW JERSEY, INC. FOR PERMISSION TO CLOSE A)	ORDER OF APPROVAL
LOCAL BUSINESS OFFICE IN THE TOWNSHIP OF PEMBERTON (A/K/A "BROWNS MILLS"), COUNTY OF)	
BURLINGTON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, PURSUANT TO N.J.A.C. 14:18-5.1(c)) }	DOCKET NO. CO13060449
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Parties of Record:

William D. Smith, Esq., Assistant General Counsel, Verizon New Jersey, Inc. Stefanie A. Brand, Esq., Director, New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel

BY THE BOARD:

The matter concerns a petition by Verizon New Jersey, Inc. ("Petitioner" or "Verizon") for approval to close its customer service office currently located at 100 Pemberton Browns Mills Road N, Browns Mills, New Jersey 08015, Burlington County, and to redirect its customers to two other existing offices located at, 280 Dunns Mill Road, Bordentown, New Jersey, 08505, Burlington County and 700 Haddonfield Berlin Road, Eagle Plaza Shopping Center, Voorhees, New Jersey, 08403, Camden County.

On June 4, 2013, Verizon filed a petition, pursuant to <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 14:18-5.1(c), seeking Board approval to close a customer service office. Petitioner claims that the closing of its Browns Mills Township office is reasonable and will serve the public interest for several reasons including:

- The Browns Mills office which Verizon is seeking to close is open 54 hours a week, Monday – Saturday (9am to 6pm). The existing Bordentown and Voorhees offices provide customers with the same or greater number of hours of operation. (Bordentown is open seven days a week for a total of 67 hours, Voorhees has the same hours as Browns Mills.)
- 2. The number of available parking spaces at the existing Bordentown and Voorhees locations is sufficient for the amount of customers that use those offices.
- 3. Customers will benefit by being able to care for all of their Verizon FiOS service needs at both locations, in addition to handling their wireless needs at the Bordentown location.

4. These two existing offices (Bordentown and Voorhees) are already being used by the majority of Verizon FiOS customers in the region. Verizon through this filing, has advised its customers (claiming only a few currently utilize the Browns Mill office) to avail themselves of its two (2) other existing offices and have therefor effectively redirected the customers who use the Browns Mills office, to the Bordentown and Voorhees offices instead.

Petitioner indicates that no adverse impact is expected to the level of service provided to customers as a result of the office closing. The customer services at Bordentown are provided through a Verizon Wireless Premier Agent ("We R Wireless") and by Verizon's own personnel at the Voorhees office. Services include allowing customers to: pick-up, drop-off or exchange set top boxes, access public information files, submit applications for new Verizon FiOS service or make changes to existing FiOS service, present service inquiries, lodge complaints, make bill payments and schedule installation and service calls. Additionally, Bordentown office customers will have the ability to order new Verizon Wireless services and service their existing Verizon Wireless accounts. The Bordentown office is open to transact business on Monday through Saturday from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm and Sunday from 11am to 6:00 pm. The Voorhees office is open from Monday through Saturday from 9am to 6pm.

As required by N.J.A.C. 14:18-5.1(c), Petitioner posted notice of the proposed change of location on July 24, 2013, at its present office location. Notice was also published on July 19, 2013 in the <u>Star Ledger</u> and <u>Burlington County Times</u>, newspapers of general circulation in Petitioner's service area, informing area subscribers of the proposal and their right to file written comments or objections with the Board by August 19, 2013. Also, on July 17, 2013, Petitioner sent notice of its petition to the municipal clerks of affected municipalities in its service area. This office currently serves the following 23 municipalities:

Bordentown City, Bordentown Township, Burlington Township, Chesterfield Township, Eastampton Township, Evesham Township, Fieldsboro Borough, Hainesport Township, Lumberton Township, Mansfield Township, Maple Shade Township, Medford Township, Medford Lakes Borough, Mount Holly Township, New Hanover Township, North Hanover Township, Pemberton Township, Shamong Township, Southampton Township, Springfield Township, Westampton Township, Willingboro Township and Wrightstown Borough

Each of the municipalities was sent notice of the proposed office relocation. There were no objections from the affected municipalities, however Staff received four telephone calls from Verizon customers stating it is convenient to use the Browns Mills office to pay their bills. Staff noted that two payment agents will remain open at the same mall location as the Browns Mills office, where customers may continue to make in-person bill payments.

By letter dated September 26 2013, the New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel filed comments with the Board indicating they do not oppose Verizon's petition.

The proposed change in customer service office location conforms to all existing conditions regarding office location pursuant to the requirements of Petitioner's system-wide franchise granted by the Board in <u>I/M/O the Application of Verizon New Jersey. Inc. for a System-wide Cable Television Franchise</u>, Docket No. CE06110768 (December 18, 2006) for the areas served by the Petitioner.

Accordingly, and based upon the petition and supporting documentation, the Board <u>HEREBY FINDS</u> that the proposed closing will not adversely affect the subscribers in the system. Therefore, the Board <u>HEREBY ORDERS</u> that Petitioner's request to close its existing customer

service office located at 100 Pemberton Browns Mills Road North, Browns Mills, New Jersey, 08015, Burlington County, and redirecting its customers to two other existing customer service offices located at 280 Dunns Mill Road, Bordentown, New Jersey, 08505 (operated by Verizon's agent, "We R Wireless") and 700 Haddonfield Berlin Road, Voorhees, New Jersey, 08043, be **GRANTED** subject to the following:

- 1. The personnel at the We R Wireless location must be appropriately trained to perform the Verizon FIOS services described herein; and
- 2. Verizon must ensure that the Verizon offices have appropriate signage identifying them as Verizon FIOS customer service offices capable of providing the services described herein.

This Order shall be effective on October 26, 2013, and will be null and void if Verizon does not comply with the requirements above within 180 days from the effective date of this Order.

DATED: 10/16/13

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

PRESIDENT

JEANNE M. FOX COMMISSIONER

JOSÉPH L. FIORDALISO

CØMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER

ATTEST

SECRETARY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the within

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF VERIZON FOR PERMISSION TO CLOSE A LOCAL BUSINESS OFFICE IN THE TOWNSHIP OF PEMBERTON (A/K/A "BROWNS MILLS"), COUNTY OF BURLINGTON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, PURSUANT TO N.J.A.C. 14:18-5.1(c)

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