

FAIRPOINT COMMUNICATIONS INC

Form 425

March 08, 2017

UNITED STATES

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 8-K

CURRENT REPORT

Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of

the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Date of Report (Date of Earliest Event Reported): **March 3, 2017**

CONSOLIDATED COMMUNICATIONS HOLDINGS, INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware

000-51446

02-0636095

(State of Incorporation) (Commission File Number) (IRS employer identification no.)

121 South 17th Street

Mattoon, Illinois

61938-3987

(Address of principal executive offices) (Zip code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: **(217) 235-3311**

Not Applicable

(Former name or former address, if changed since last report)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)

Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)

Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))

Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Item 8.01. Other Events.

On March 3, 2017, an alleged class action complaint was filed by a purported stockholder of Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc. (the “Company”) in the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware captioned *Vento v. Currey, et al.* (Case No. 2017-0157) against the members of the Company’s board of directors (the “Lawsuit”). The Lawsuit relates to the Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of December 3, 2016, by and among the Company, Falcon Merger Sub, Inc., a newly formed Delaware corporation and wholly-owned subsidiary of the Company, and FairPoint Communications, Inc. (“FairPoint”) (as amended by the First Amendment to Agreement and Plan of Merger entered into as of January 20, 2017, the “Merger Agreement”). Among other things, the Lawsuit alleges that the members of the Company’s board of directors breached their fiduciary duties in connection with soliciting approval of the Company’s stockholders of the issuance of the Company’s common stock to stockholders of FairPoint in the merger (the “Merger”) contemplated by the Merger Agreement (the “Stockholder Vote”) because Amendment No. 1 to the Registration Statement on Form S-4 filed by the Company on February 24, 2017 failed to disclose allegedly material information relating to the retention, compensation and financial incentives of a financial advisor to the Company in connection with the proposed Merger. The plaintiff seeks, among other relief, to enjoin the Stockholder Vote.

Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-looking Statements

The Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”) encourages companies to disclose forward-looking information so that investors can better understand a company’s future prospects and make informed investment decisions. Certain statements in this communication are forward-looking statements and are made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements reflect, among other things, current expectations, plans, strategies, and anticipated financial results of Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc. (the “Company”) and FairPoint Communications, Inc. (“FairPoint”), both separately and as a combined entity. There are a number of risks, uncertainties, and conditions that may cause the actual results of the Company and FairPoint, both separately and as a combined entity, to differ materially from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. These risks and uncertainties include the timing and ability to complete the proposed acquisition of FairPoint by the Company, the expected benefits of the integration of the two companies and successful integration of FairPoint’s operations with those of the Company and realization of the synergies from the integration, as well as a number of factors related to the respective businesses of the Company and FairPoint, including economic and financial market conditions generally and economic conditions in the Company’s and FairPoint’s service areas; various risks to stockholders of not receiving dividends and risks to the Company’s ability to pursue growth opportunities if the Company continues to pay dividends according to the current dividend policy; various risks to the price and volatility of the Company’s common stock; changes in the valuation of pension plan assets; the substantial amount of debt and the Company’s ability to repay or refinance it or incur additional debt in the future; the Company’s need for a significant amount of cash to service and repay the debt and to pay dividends on its common stock; restrictions contained in the Company’s debt agreements that limit the discretion of management in operating the business; legal or regulatory proceedings or other matters that impact the timing or ability to complete the acquisition as contemplated, regulatory changes, including changes to subsidies, rapid development and introduction of new technologies and intense competition in the telecommunications industry; risks associated with the Company’s possible pursuit of acquisitions; system failures; losses of large customers or government contracts; risks associated with the rights-of-way for the network; disruptions in the relationship with third party vendors; losses of key management

Important Merger Information and Additional Information

This communication does not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities or a solicitation of any vote or approval. In connection with the proposed transaction, the Company and FairPoint have and will file relevant materials with the SEC. The Company and FairPoint have mailed the Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus to their respective stockholders. **Investors are urged to read the Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus regarding the proposed transaction because it contains important information.** The Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus and other relevant documents that have been or will be filed by the Company and FairPoint with the SEC are or will be available free of charge at the SEC's website, www.sec.gov, or by directing a request when such a filing is made to Consolidated Communications Holdings, Inc., 121 South 17th Street, Mattoon, IL 61938, Attention: Investor Relations or to FairPoint Communications, Inc., 521 East Morehead Street, Suite 500, Charlotte, North Carolina 28202, Attention: Secretary.

The Company, FairPoint and certain of their respective directors, executive officers and other members of management and employees may be considered participants in the solicitation of proxies in connection with the proposed transaction. **Information about the directors and executive officers of the Company is set forth in its definitive proxy statement, which was filed with the SEC on March 28, 2016. Information about the directors and executive officers of FairPoint is set forth in its definitive proxy statement, which was filed with the SEC on March 25, 2016, and in the Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus.** These documents can be obtained free of charge from the sources listed above. Investors may obtain additional information regarding the interests of such participants by reading the Joint Proxy Statement/Prospectus.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

Date: March 7, 2017

Consolidated Communications
Holdings, Inc.

By: /s/ Steven L. Childers
Name: Steven L. Childers
Title: Chief Financial Officer