

MINUTES OF CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

After notice duly given, the Longmeadow Cable Television Advisory Committee met in open session on April 11, 2007 in the School Committee Meeting Room at Longmeadow High School, 95 Grassy Gutter Road, Longmeadow, MA. The meeting was called to order by the Chair who presided throughout. Those present were: Steven Wolman, Norman Michaels, Gerard Nolet, William McGurk, alternate E. Hollan Low, Comcast Rep. Stephen Fitzgibbon and at the invitation of the Chair, Tracey Durant, Station Manager of LCTV.

The meeting was called to order at 7 PM. In the absence of a Secretary, the Chair took the minutes.

Secretary's Report

The minutes of the January 23, 2007 meeting had been previously distributed by the Chair and were accepted as written.

Old Business

There has been no change to the programming of channel 8 and none is expected. Mr. Fitzgibbon looked into bringing channel 59 to Longmeadow but he has not received any word from his superiors in Manchester, NH. The FCC has published an order allowing the telephone companies to get a franchise within 90 days of filing for one. This is called a section 621 order. Upon failure of the locality to act or obey the limits of the order, then the franchise is automatically awarded. The National Cable Television Assn. has filed an objection to the order as have the other cable television providers. The FCC has 6 months from March 5, 2007, the date of the publication of the order, Sept. 5, 2007 to act. Comcast has asked for a waiver from the FCC of the requirement to provide cable card set top boxes due to prohibitive cost. The waiver has been denied. The set top box manufacturers have said that they will not make low cost set top boxes with cable card slots due to cost. The theory is that the consumer will buy the box and the cable provider will supply the card. If the consumer moves to a different town, the new provider will provide a new card for the set top box which the consumer owns. The set top box manufacturers have filed objections to this order. No date has been set for a review decision.

Comcast will not release the number of HD channels that it currently is capable of providing on its equipment in use. There will be three more HD channels added by the end of June. There has been no change in the carriage of the secondary digital channels.

With reference to the volume fluctuations on inserted commercials, Mr. Fitzgibbon has asked the technicians to watch the volume output more carefully. Dave Bartlett said that the problem has improved.

New Business

There has been no order issued as a result of the March 27 rate setting hearing. The Chair asked Mr. Fitzgibbon about carrying Boston local news as an insert on channel 23 or on an unused channel. Mr. Fitzgibbon stated that Boston local news is on NECN and on channel 38. The Chair asked about adding WBZ local news on channel 23 or an unused channel and Mr. Fitzgibbon said he will look into it. Mr. Fitzgibbon stated that a new call center has opened in Enfield, CT. It will have 400 reps and may expand to 600 reps. The Chair reported that he had received a packet from Mr. Fitzgibbon regarding legislation in the State House and Senate which would permit Verizon to obtain a statewide franchise and bypass local franchising. The packet requested that a letter be sent to the State Representatives and State Senators in opposition to this legislation. The Chair reported that he had sent the letters and that he had received a response from Mary Rogeness who indicated that she would oppose the legislation if it were shown to her that this legislation would negatively impact PACT-L. The Chair asked Mr. Fitzgibbon to prepare a letter in support of Public Access, what Comcast does to support Public Access stations for no cost and for cost, and what Comcast's commitment is for the future of Public Access. Mr. Fitzgibbon stated that the Mass. Mayors Assn. opposes this legislation as does the Mass. Municipal Assn.

Mr. McGurk asked about Comcast's Scholarship for Leaders and Achievers. The application is on the Comcast website.

Comments from Visitors

There were no visitors present.

Next meeting date: July 10, 2007 at 7PM in the School Committee Meeting Room at Longmeadow High School if available, otherwise in the studio of LCTV also at Longmeadow High School

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:40PM

Respectfully submitted,

Steven A. Wolman, Chair