

**Cable Advisory Committee
Minutes of February 4, 2016**

Present for the Cable Committee were: Chairman May Paquette, Vice Chair Hank Noel, Louis Rousseau, Gordon Lutz, David Patenaude, Lenny Proposki and Ted Kosiavelon. Also present was: Samantha Carver the recording secretary. The meeting was held at the Town Hall located at 62 Arlington Street, Dracut, MA.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

The Committee reviewed the minutes of January 28, 2016. Mr. Noel made a motion to approve the minutes of January 28, 2016 as presented. Mr. Rousseau seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Bill August arrived at the meeting and Ms. Paquette introduced the Committee to Attorney August.

Attorney August began by discussing a disclosure to the Committee that he has in the past worked for Dracut Access Television on a couple of items for them. He did not believe it was a conflict but wanted to make sure he mentioned it. He will call the Town Manager and make sure he is okay with it.

Ms. Paquette stated that their biggest item for negotiations is the Inet and asked Attorney August what he has seen on this aspect in other communities. He stated that it is very different from community to community. Some have received buy outs. Some are asking for fiber links. If this happen Comcast will preface it that it's for video only and if the Town uses it for data it's at their own risk. In other words, they are not responsible for the data end of it. The Committee needs to determine what there need is. Whether they need a data buyout or both data and video buyout; or if the Town would want to try and get some coax cable replaced with fiber links.

Attorney August talked about finding out where the aggregation point is whether it's at the DATV studio or the Central Fire Station where they moved the head end. There was a discussion on whether the Committee knew where the signal went from the video point – does it go from Town Hall to DATV to the Fire Station or? The Committee discussed the Inet routes and schematics and that they are not sure where the routes are. Attorney August stated he could inquire with Ben Pearlman at Comcast to get those.

Attorney August discussed consulting with the Town's IT Person to find out what would be the best data transmission for the Town. Attorney August talked about a multimedia approach to use the funding provided if a buyout occurs.

The Committee discussed the monopoly by Comcast and how Verizon and other won't come into the community. Attorney August stated that this is a non-exclusive license and Verizon and others can certainly come into the community but would have to be on an equal playing field as Comcast. He explained a lot of times they don't come into communities because they won't make their money back on their investment.

The Committee discussed with Attorney August the benefits if any to negotiating a shorter contract. He stated that if the Town wanted to do that, say they negotiated a five year contract they would be preparing to negotiate again in two years to prepare for the end of the contract. Most communities don't want to do that. He stated that the most communities make out better negotiating a longer contract and the return to the Town is greater.

Attorney August suggested the Committee figure out which origination sites can be eliminated, these sites are usually where the video is taken from, and depending on the mileage saved Comcast may connect links as part of the agreement. He stated they need to determine the Inet maintenance costs per mile in Dracut. He would try to get this from Ben Pearlman.

Attorney August stated the Committee will have better leverage with Comcast by getting the Selectmen on board. Figure out the needs in the next ten years and provide cost justification, an itemized budget with a narrative which explains the needs. Have the Selectmen adopt the findings of need with the explanation and have the Selectmen sign it.

The Committee thank Attorney August for his time.

Adjourn

Mr. Kosiavelon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Mr. Noel seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

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