

Taunton Community Cable Advisory Committee

Minutes of February 9, 2022

Silver City Conference room

Present were: Chairman Higgins, Commissioners Glynn, Gonsalves, Mendros, and Rapoza and Marcus Guy from Taunton High School, Taunton Education Network.

The meeting opened at 7:23 PM after some minor technical issues on Comcast Ch 17 Verizon Ch 24

On Line: <https://cloud.castus.tv/vod/taunton>

Conversation with Niall Connors Verizon's Liaison to the City of Taunton

Mr. Niall Connors Verizon's Liaison to the city came in through ZOOM. It was discussed the fact that Verizon would continue to renew contracts. They will continue to negotiate 5 year contracts with a clause that states that the clause of unilateral termination of the contract will stay. It was explained that the termination could happen by either party after 30 months and notice 6 months prior to the termination date. The pay outs of PEG grant monies would be paid out to cover the 5 year contract. A question by Chairman Higgins relative to the possible loss of PEG revenue due to customers "cutting the cord". Statements from Mr. Gay and Commissioner Glynn that the revenue coming had not change any significant amount. Mr. Connors reiterated that the cable contract do not have anything to do with the internet services. Also Mr. Connors was questioned relative to the 5G services. He stated that this will continue to be rolled out but not in all communities. The 5G service encompasses 3 types of service. Fixed Mobile, In the home broadband and remote edge services. Mr. Connors also stated that the FAA seems to be satisfied with the modifications that have been made to the 5G services around airports. We thanked Mr. Connors and he was excused from the meeting.

II. Communications from the Chairman.

1. Response from the Law Department to Commissioner Higgins regarding the selection process for legal representation during Taunton's Verizon Contract negotiations.

It was discussed that 3 names attorneys that we have worked with over the years are known to the Law Department and the topic of possibly using a local attorney had come up with no other conversation.

2. The Committee needs to propose a selection process for reviewing and selecting the attorney candidates interested in representing Taunton with the Verizon Cable Contract negotiations.

It was discussed that the Commission feels that each of the attorneys in question should come in, individually in person or virtually.

3. Reported changes in Comcast and Verizon P.E.G. allocations funds. There haven't been additional charged to date levied against P.E.G. allocation funds. We need to ascertain total Annual Access Grants in order to determine if there is a loss of revenue.

There has been to no appreciable loss of revenue from the cable companies.

4. Commissioner Higgins has been in contact with Ben Thomas an aide to Senator Markey's office regarding the status of HR 5699 & S3218 The Protecting Community Television Act. Co-Sponsored by Senators Markey and Congresswoman Anna S. Eshoo and will report findings to the Committee. Chairman Higgins discussed these bills relative to how they might affect our revenues for PEG channels. They are meant to protect our Community Access funding

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NEW PROPOSED LEGISLATION AT THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE HOUSE

State Senator Jason Lewis et al have sponsored S.2200 An Act Relative to Digital Entertainment On Public Rights Of Way: Referred to: Joint Committee On Telecommunication, Utilities And Energy. Chaired by Sen. and Vice Chairman Sen. Marc Pacheco. Representative Carol Doherty is also a co-petitioner.

It was stated earlier by Mr. Connors that Verizon vehemently opposes this bill and stated that contracts do not cover internet. This would cover streaming over the internet and also any 5G services over the air to the home. The break-out of how this would be distributed is 20% to the state, 40% to municipality general funds, and 20% to PEG operations.

Bill H.3152 An Act To Modernize Participation in Public Meeting Sponsored by Denise Garlick of Needham. An effort to create Hybrid participation at Public Meetings

This relative to making HYBRID meetings and allowing the public to view and participate virtually. This would allow the home bound, sick, or people from out of town that may have business with a community to attend and participate in meetings virtually.

After discussing these pending legislations, Chairman Higgins delegated Commissioner Mendros to do more research and reach out to the legislative parties for more information relative to the S.2200 bills. Also the chair delegated the same to Commissioner Rapoza to do more research on the House bill H.3152 and also reach out to our local Legislators to get more information.

IV. Old business *There was no old business*

V. New Business *There was no new business.*

Meeting adjourned at 8:23pm. The next commission meeting will be MARCH 9 2022

TCCAC FY21/22 March 9,2022, May 11, 2022