

# Taunton Community Cable Advisory Committee

## Minutes for March 9, 2022

City Hall Conference room

Chairman Higgins opened the meeting at 7:06 pm.

Present were Peter Higgins, Chairman, Gregory Glynn, George Mendros, Daniel Rapoza and Patrick Shearns, Senior Manager, Government & Regulatory Affairs.

7PM Comcast Ch 17 Verizon Ch 24  
On Line: Taunton.vod.castus.tv

### I. Zoom Conversation with Patrick Shearns Verizon's Liaison to the City of Taunton

Chairman Higgins welcomed Mr. Shearns to the meeting. The chair asked if anyone had a question. Commissioner Glynn asked if there had been any more complaints about service on N. Walker St. Mr. Shearns commented that other than the usual outages during storms there had been none. Mr. Shearns was then asked for comments. He stated that Comcast was upgrading the upload and download speeds of all of their internet services. This would include the speeds of 50, 100, 200, 400, and 800 Mbs services. He also stated that this week was free movie week and all movie services movies would be free to all customers at no charge. He continued that Comcast was continuing to promote their Internet Essentials which provides internet services to low income households and that new programs were to rolled out to make the internet services more affordable to many more by creating a point system with requirements relative to the Internet Essentials.

### II. Communications from the Chairman.

#### 1. Clarification of legal parties interested in representing the City Of Taunton's TCCAC in the Verizon Cable License renewal Process.

#### 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.

Sections 1 and 2 were discussed together. Chairman Higgins made comment that the Commission needed to get a process in order to select legal council for the upcoming Verizon contract talks. After some discussion with the Law Office, nothing had been resolved from that end. The Commission discussed a request for resumes, or parties that might be interested in representing the city, to invite the possible candidates that we have knowledge of to attend a meeting, either in person or via ZOOM. These meetings will likely be held in "executive session". The question of who else beyond the potentials that we have on file would or could represent the city. Chairman Higgins stated that he would reach out to the President of Mass. Access to see if his group had a possible list of candidates for our needs. No further action was taken on the matter and was moved to our next meeting for more discussion.

#### 3. Clarification of revenue losses to PEG Access Corporations.

The discussion on this matter was that overall there has been really no loss of revenue as customers of cable tend to switch companies when service deals are available and with many subscribers "cutting the cord" the cable companies services have increased in costs which tend to balance out any losses.

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**4. Commissioner John Gonsalves and Dan Rapoza to report on information provided by 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**

As Commissioner Gonsalves has not been re-appointed at this time, Chairman Higgins made multiple calls to Senator Markey's office and played phone tag with members of the Senator's office and still waiting to make a solid contact with the office. This will be continued to be worked on.

### **NEW PROPOSED LEGISLATION AT THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE HOUSE**

**Commissioner George Mendros to contact Sen. Marc Pacheco and report on the status of State Senator Jason Lewis' sponsored S.2200 An Act Relative to Digital Entertainment On Public Rights Of Way: Referred to: Joint Committee On Telecommunication, Utilities And Energy. Sen Marc Pacheco is the Vice Chairman of this Committee**

Commissioner Mendros had some luck with making contact with Scott Young who is the Communications Director for Senator Pacheco's office. He had no other information other than a contact number. Chairman Higgins explained that this bill is very important for Public Access as it will supplement Public Access funding that will come from digital entertainment services that use the public ways to get to customers homes via established cables on publicly owned utility poles.

**Commissioner Dam Rapoza to contact Representative Carol Doherty a Petitioner of 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 and report the Bills status back to the committee**

Commissioner Rapoza commented that he had done a search of the House bills and had difficulty to find the correct Bill. He was able to download the Bill in question after much research. He also tried several times to contact Representative Doherty's office at the State House but found that the number listed for her also was in service for several other people in the State House. Also that there was no local number that she could be reached. Chairman Higgins, being an acquaintance of Representative Doherty, he was able to provide Commissioner Rapoza with a local telephone number for him to make the contact.

### **IV. Old business**

There was no old business

### **V. New Business**

It was briefly discussed as to the terms of several Commission members and if and when they would be reappointed. Chairman Higgins said he would look into talking to the Mayor about the issue.

Adjourned at 8:00 pm.