

**CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Flint Public Library Downstairs Conference Room B  
One South Main Street  
Middleton, Massachusetts 01949**

**Tuesday, May 1, 2018  
5:30 PM**

*Present: John Erickson, Paul Pellicelli*

*Absent: Richard Gregorio*

*Others Present: Town Administrator Andrew Sheehan, Assistant Town Administrator Ryan Ferrara, Minutes Secretary Judi Stickney, Attorney Bill Hewig*

**5:37 PM** Chair Erickson called the meeting to order at 5:37PM

**5:38 PM** **Review/Approve Minutes:** After a brief review of the minutes, the Board took the following action:

On a **MOTION** made by **Pellicelli**, second by **Erickson**, the Cable Advisory Committee **VOTED** to accept the March 27, 2018 Cable Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes as presented.

**5:38 PM** **Cable Contracts Discussions:**

- **Tasks to be Completed:** Attorney Bill Hewig provided the Committee members with handouts outlining the tasks that need to be completed for the renewal of the cable contracts with Comcast and Verizon, such as the scheduling of public hearings, surveying of cable customers, etc. Hewig began with noting that the process of ascertainment consists of one hearing, which he suggested is scheduled before their submission to the cable company. Hewig added that there are two purposes for ascertainment: 1) To determine the cable needs of the community, and, 2) To determine if the cable operators are in compliance with their licenses, as far as signal quality and customer service response time. A brief discussion ensued on what would justify non-compliance, and the requirements for customer service. There was a brief discussion on the Cable Department and whether they should change to an access company. Hewig suggested that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." Discussion turned to the Cable Department budget and whether there were any plans for the excess funds in the budget. Assistant Town Administrator, Ryan Ferrara suggested that they may be looking at a small studio in the Howe-Manning School and asked if they could request additional money for a studio or additional personnel, if they expand the Cable Department. Attorney Hewig advised if they could make a case for a specific project, the cable companies may agree to it, adding that it might be better to save the excess income stream every year and put it into a capital fund for future projects. Town Administrator Andrew Sheehan asked what a reasonable capital request might be. Attorney Hewig suggested that PEG access support is at 4.5% in both licenses and the Town can ask for up to 5%, which would amount to approximately \$20,000 per year, or \$200,000 over ten years. A discussion

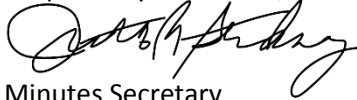
ensued on negotiation strategy, with Hewig noting that both companies' contracts are the same and that whatever is negotiated for one company, the other company will match it.

- **Establish a Schedule:** Hewig suggested that the Committee discuss establishing a schedule for required tasks and the overall renegotiation process and decided on the following:
  - **Ascertainment Hearing:** Hewig suggested that the public hearing be held in early Fall, possibly the second week in September. He added that the Comcast license is up September 22. A lengthy discussion ensued on the ascertainment hearing; no date was finalized.
- **Assign Responsibilities for Identified Tasks:**
  - **Survey Department Heads:** The Town Administrator and Assistant Town Administrator will survey the department heads for their cable needs.
  - **Anticipated Cable Department Costs:** Paul Pellicelli will research anticipated future studio upgrades and costs.
  - **Fiber Connection Quotes:** The Town Administrator and Assistant Town Administrator will get fiber connection quotes for a local I-Net.
  - **More Meetings Broadcast:** John Erickson will contact Theresa Buono to get her input on increased coverage of meetings.
- **Set the Next Meeting Date:** After a brief discussion, the Committee will next meet on May 29<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM, at the Flint Public Library.

**7:14 PM**

With no further business, on a **MOTION** made by **Pellicelli**, the Cable Advisory Committee adjourned at 7:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Minutes Secretary

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John Erickson, Committee Chair

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Date

Documents either distributed to the Cable Advisory Committee before the meeting in a packet or at the meeting:

1. Agenda: May 1, 2018
2. Minutes: March 27, 2018
3. Handout: KP Law: A Strategy for Effective Franchise Renewal
4. Handout: Advisory Commission Survey
5. Draft: Notice of Cable Television Public Hearing
6. Sample Notification of Commencement of License Renewal Proceedings
7. Sample Business Plan: Public, Government & Educational Access
8. Actual FY18 and Proposed FY19 Public, Education, Government (PEG) Budget

9. Letter from Verizon Assistant General Counsel to Board of Selectmen, Re: Franchise Renewal Notice Requesting Commencement of Formal Renewal Proceedings under Section 626 of the Communications Act, 4/5/16
10. Letter from Comcast to Board of Selectmen, Re: Commencement of Renewal Process, 1/29/16