

**RAMSEY/WASHINGTON COUNTIES SUBURBAN
CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION II**

January 14, 2010, 5:30 P.M.

**2460 East County Road F
White Bear Lake, MN 55110**

Draft

Chairperson Friendt called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

ROLL CALL

Present: Greg Donovan Sue Cernohouse
Jeff Huber Newton Smith
Kim Facile Dave Zick
Lori Pulkrabek Jim Dustin
Duane Bengtson George Rouse
Beverly Friendt

Excused: Ginny Holder

Staff Present: Mike Bradley, Bradley & Guzzetta
Timothy Finnerty, Executive Director
Donna Coons, Administrative Assistant
Ted Arbeiter, Director of Facilities & Tech Support
Judy Skeie-Voss, Director of Production Services

Others Present: Kathi Donnelly-Cohen, Comcast
Randy LaFoy, Birchwood
Joanne Frane, Dellwood
Sheila Davis-Stahl, Grant
Bob Weisenburger, White Bear Twp.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Zick, MOVED, Mr. Bengtson SECONDED to approve the agenda as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Finnerty noted that the Resolution under Unfinished Business that was tabled at the November Commission meeting regarding an adjustment to the amount Comcast charges for a late fee would remain tabled as Comcast has not yet provided a Price Waterhouse cost study that Comcast claims would provide the justification for the adjustment.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA (AP 01)

Mr. Bengtson MOVED, Mr. Dustin SECONDED, to approve the consent agenda, including general fund checks 13593 through 13654 totaling \$227,552.10 and equipment fund checks 5282 through 5287 totaling \$21,952.00. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

REPORTS

Report of the Chairperson

Chairperson Friendt said she would hold final approval of 2010 committee appointments until the March meeting to allow committee appointments to be updated due to the change of representation for the City of Grant and its related impact on the Vice Chair.

Mr. Finnerty said discussion regarding the vacant Vice-Chair position is later in the agenda. With the exception of the Executive Committee, he recommended holding off making changes to Ms. Gochberg's committee appointments because she intends to pursue an appointment as alternate for the City of Mahtomedi and would then continue to serve on those committees.

Mr. Finnerty then introduced Jeff Huber, newly appointed Commissioner for the City of Grant.

Chairperson Friendt asked that the committees continue serving as they currently stand until the March meeting. She asked that Commissioners contact staff with any changes they want to make to their committee appointments.

Report of the Treasurer

Mr. Zick said financial reports were included in the packet.

Report of the Executive Director

Mr. Finnerty reviewed the handout summarizing the highlights, activities and accomplishments for 2009 that were over and above the Commission's normal operations. He noted 2009 highlights include celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Community Television with the various promotions and programming, special outreach activities, rewiring the building with Ethernet, making wireless available

to guests in the building, completion of the first part of the Master Control reconfiguration, and set up of the video streaming agreement with North Suburban.

Mr. Finnerty said a letter from Comcast was included in the packet regarding their network enhancement project called "World of More". He said Comcast put out a notice to affected subscribers in December letting them know their analog boxes would no longer work in the cable system effective January 15, 2010, and provided instructions on how the subscriber could obtain digital equipment. He said only a small percentage of subscribers still use the analog boxes.

Reports of GTN, Public Access and On Location Reports (AP 02 & 03)

Mr. Arbeiter provided an update on web streaming. He said the cities of Maplewood and North St. Paul have signed up for the service.

He reported Commission staff met with CTV staff to go through the arrangements for equipment and infrastructure. He said during the week of January 4th, tests on the systems were conducted, encoders were configured and installed at both cities, and there was a full testing of the signals between SCC, CTV, North St. Paul and Maplewood. He reported both the signal and the transport paths checked out really well. He said CTV would work with the cities next week on integrating the video into the city's websites. Training between SCC staff, city personnel and cablecasters would need to also be completed before the system is rolled out.

Mr. Arbeiter reported the applications for 2010 grants are now available in house and on the website. He said applications are due by Saturday, January 23, 2010.

Mr. Rouse asked Commissioners to review the outreach contact list included in the packet materials and let staff know of any churches that are not included on the list. Mr. Arbeiter reported December outreach efforts yielded four contacts.

Committee Reports (AP 04)

Chairperson Friendt asked if the satellite is up and running.

Mr. Arbeiter reported the large movable satellite was up and running but there have been some mechanical and electrical issues recently. He said the original vendor that installed it has not addressed the issues so staff is now working with a local expert to resolve them. Additionally, Mr. Arbeiter said the Commission obtained a fixed satellite from Comcast at no cost that is fully operational.

Mr. Rouse asked if more of the programming could be obtained through web streaming instead of relying on the satellite. Mr. Arbeiter said staff is obtaining

programming through websites already, but programming would always be obtained through a mix of sources.

Chairperson Friendt asked staff to prepare a list of programs each satellite dish receives and provide an update on the satellite dish repair at the February Executive Committee meeting.

Report of Attorney

Mr. Bradley had no additional report. He said there are articles of interest linked to the firm's blog at munitelecom.blogspot.com.

Comcast Report (AP 05)

Ms. Donnelly-Cohen reported Comcast has had little response to the notices sent to approximately 2300 accounts in the metro area in an effort to locate and replace their analog boxes before they are turned off January 15th. She said due to the low response, Comcast plans to turn off only 600 accounts at a time.

Ms. Donnelly-Cohen said on January 19th a second letter would be mailed to digital and standard subscribers welcoming them to Comcast's "World of More", a network enhancement project that would convert Basic 2 channels to digital format. She said standard subscribers would see 15 additional channels on their service if they have a digital box. Instructions for getting a box are included with the letter. She reported that is the beginning of the process to make all service, except Basic 1, digital by the end of the year. For the Ramsey/Washington area, cut over to all digital is set for September 27, 2010. She noted Basic 1 cable service, which is the local channels, would remain in analog format. She said a Webinar has been put together as an instruction tool.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

Additional Municipal Equipment Funding Request

Commissioners reviewed Mr. Dustin's proposal for the Commission to authorize an additional \$25,000 for each municipality to use for equipment purchases in accordance with the current Municipal Equipment Grant Policy.

Mr. Rouse MOVED, Mr. Bengtson SECONDED to ask the Finance Committee to make sure the money is available and authorize the Executive Committee to

review and approve the additional funding at their next meeting and send notification to the municipalities.

Ms. Facile asked where the money for the equipment purchases comes from. Mr. Finnerty said it is taken from the Equipment and Capital Improvements budget and has no effect on the amount of franchise fees returned to municipalities. After discussion, Commissioners agreed the matter would not need to be referred to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Rouse and Mr. Bengtson WITHDREW their MOTION.

Ms. Facile MOVED, Mr. Donovan SECONDED, to allocate an additional \$25,000 to each of the municipalities for the purchase of equipment subject to the terms of the original equipment grant agreement. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

OTHER BUSINESS

Change of Representative for City of Grant

Mr. Finnerty reported that Karen Gochberg was no longer serving as representative for the City of Grant but was pursuing appointment as the alternate for the City of Mahtomedi. He said this leaves a vacancy in the Vice Chair position and asked Commissioners how they wanted to proceed to fill it.

Mr. Bradley said the Bylaws and Joint Powers Agreement don't speak to officers not being Commissioners. Throughout the history of the Commission, he said officers have always been Commissioners. As Ms. Gochberg has been replaced as Commissioner for the City of Grant, he said, she has also effectively been removed as Vice-Chair and that officer vacancy can be filled at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Chairperson Friendt said she spoke to Mr. Bengtson and he had agreed to serve as Vice-Chair. She asked if anyone else would like to serve or make any other nominations. There were no additional nominations.

Ms. Friendt MOVED, Ms. Facile SECONDED to appoint Duane Bengtson as Vice-Chair. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Donovan MOVED, Ms. Cernohouse SECONDED to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.