



AGENDA
MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP
COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
December 4, 2019 6:00 PM

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. PUBLIC REMARKS
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - A. October 2, 2019 Regular Meeting DRAFT Minutes
6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER & COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR REPORT
7. COMMISSION MEMBERS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
 - A. Chair's Report
 - B. Township Board Liaison's Report
8. ACTION ITEMS
 - A. 2020 Communications Commission Meeting Schedule
 - B. Appointment/Reappointment of Communications Commissioners
 - C. Recommended Changes to HOMTV Operating Policies & Procedures
9. DISCUSSION ITEMS
10. COMMUNICATIONS
 - A. Compliments/Complaints
11. REPORTS
 - A. VIDEO SERVICE PROVIDER (S)
 - B. PROGRAMMING
 1. Online Programming Analytics
 - C. WEBSITE ANALYTICS - YTD
 1. Website Visits
 2. Visitor Source
 3. Click-through to Website
 - D. PROMOTIONS/PUBLICATIONS
 - E. FINANCE
 - F. HOMTV INTERNSHIP/ALUMNI
13. PUBLIC REMARKS
14. ADJOURNMENT

All comments limited to 3 minutes, unless prior approval for additional time for good cause is obtained from the Commission Chair.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Communications Department; Communications Director, Deborah Guthrie, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4830 - Ten Day Notice is Required.
Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 Administrative Conference Room



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING **DRAFT** MINUTES
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864
Administrative Conference Room
Wednesday, October 2, 2019 6:00 pm

PRESENT: Chair, Walter Benenson; Commissioner, Leslie Charles; Commissioner, Brian Seipel and Alternate Commissioner, Riti Adhi
ABSENT: Vice-Chair, Tunga Kiyak; Commissioner, Mike Nevells and Alternate Commissioner, Kevin Thatcher
STAFF: Deborah Guthrie, Communications Director and Brandie Yates, Executive Producer
TOWNSHIP: Kathy Sundland, Meridian Township Board Trustee
COUNSEL: N/A
COMCAST: John Gardner, Director of External Affairs – Heartland Region

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Benenson called the meeting to order at **6:00 pm**.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Charles moved **TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS SUBMITTED**. Seconded by Chair Benenson

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner SEIPEL moved **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2019 REGULAR MEETING**. Seconded by Commissioner Charles.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Discussion about the restructuring of the Communications Department and Director receiving her Board approved severance packet. Director is working with staff on training and wrapping up open items. Commissioners are very concerned with the amount of staff, funding for the Communications Department and the workload for the remaining staff.

The Commission discussed writing a resolution or letter showing concern for the reorganization of the Communications Department for 2020 and adding to the agenda under New Business.

The Director announced that the Township Board approved three positions for the Communications Department and the elimination of the Director position and the Administrative Assistant position.

7. TOWNSHIP BOARD LIAISON'S REPORT

Showed concern that the reorganization was not discussed with the Communications Commission prior to presenting to the Township Board.

Budget approved for the Township. The HVAC system will be replaced and is in the approved budget. \$3.5 million, one-time allocations in this budget. Franchise fees are estimated at around \$600,000 for 2020, which used to be around \$900,000. All franchise fees and PEG fees will go into the general fund. A new IT Assistant Manager was hired.

9A. HOMTV OPERATING POLICIES

Recommended changes notated with red edits on the document. Discussed putting together a subcommittee of Commissioners to discuss changes further and make recommendations for the next Commission meeting scheduled for December 4, 2019. The policies are about HOMTV programming and operations, but should reflect changing in staff.

There was discussion about continuing the Commission for Communications if there is not a department moving forward. Discussion continued about the purpose of a Communications Commission and how the Commission oversees the HOMTV operations, regulations, cable compliance and franchise agreement, etc.

9B. CHANGES TO CABLE TELEVISION SECTION OF TOWNSHIP CODE OF ORDINANCES

Township Board approved amending the section.

The Commission discussed putting together a subcommittee of Commissioners to discuss any additional changes and make recommendations for the next Commission meeting scheduled for December 4, 2019. Many items in the ordinance are out of date and need to be updated to match state and federal law.

9C. CAMTV PEG ACCESS CHANNEL

Is it worth keeping CAMTV if funding is reduced and Comcast is able to start charging for the channel? Would the Commission recommend keeping the channel? Communications Department provided the history of the channel and the content that is added to the channel on a regular basis as well as the subscribers.

The Commission asked about the rules of adding content to the channel.

10A. COMPLIMENTS/COMPLAINTS

11A. VIDEO SERVICE PROVIDER

Updates provided by Comcast: iphone 11 is now available through Xfinity. Streaming App – used to be able to schedule recording on your phone, while you are away from how and now it is back.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Charles moved **TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**. Seconded by Commissioner Seipel.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously
Chair Benenson adjourned the meeting at 7:27 pm.



Communications Commission

Action Items



To: Communications Commission
From: Brandie Yates, HOMTV Executive Producer
Date: November 26, 2019
Re: 2020 Communications Commission Regular Meeting Schedule

The Communications Commission of Meridian Township recommends meeting every other month and the adoption of the 2020 regular meeting schedule is as follows:

Wednesday, February 5, 2020	6:00 pm	Administrative Conference Room
Wednesday, April 1, 2020	6:00 pm	Administrative Conference Room
Wednesday, June 3, 2020	6:00 pm	Administrative Conference Room
Wednesday, August 5, 2020	6:00 pm	Administrative Conference Room
Wednesday, October 7, 2020	6:00 pm	Administrative Conference Room
Wednesday, December 2, 2020	6:00 pm	Administrative Conference Room



To: Communications Commission
From: Brandie Yates, HOMTV Executive Producer
Date: November 26, 2019
Re: Term Expiration and Reappointment/Appointment Recommendations

The Communications Commission has the following terms expiring on December 31, 2019:

Walter J. Benenson, Commission Chair – Term Expires: 12/31/2019
Leslie Charles, Commissioner – Term Expires: 12/31/2019
Kevin Thatcher, Alternate Commissioner – Term Expires: 12/31/2019
Riti Adhi, Alternate Commissioner – Term Expires: 12/31/2019

The Communications Commission has the following vacancies:

Alternate Commissioner – New Term: 12/31/19 – 12/31/20

Staff requests that the Communications Commission review the public service applications submitted and make recommendations to the Township Board to fill the commissioner vacancies in the following way, with the need for active commissioners who will be brand ambassadors and have experience in fundraising and foundation work.

The Communications Commission moves **TO RECOMMEND THE REAPPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONER ADHI TO ALTERNATE COMMISSIONER** with a new term expiring on December 31, 2020 and **TO RECOMMEND THE NEW APPOINTMENT OF DEBORAH GUTHRIE TO ALTERNATE COMMISSIONER** with a new term expiring on December 31, 2020.

The Communications Commission moves **TO RECOMMEND TUNGA KIYAK TO COMMISSION CHAIR** with a new term expiring on December 31, 2022, **TO RECOMMEND WALTER BENENSON TO COMMISSIONER** to fill the remaining term expiring on December 31, 2020 and **TO RECOMMEND LESLIE CHARLES TO COMMISSIONER** with a new term expiring on December 31, 2022. (Please refer to Public Service Applications and Resume included for new appointment, Deborah Guthrie.)

Per the Communications Commission (CC) Rules and Procedures:

RULE 2: MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Members. The Commission shall consist of five (5) regular members and two (2) alternate members appointed by the Township Board of the Charter Township of Meridian. The Commission may recommend names of suggested appointees to the Township Supervisor. Members must be residents of the Township. No Commission member may:

1. Be employed by a locally franchised cable company.
2. Hold a contract with a locally franchised cable company.
3. Have ownership interest in a locally franchised cable company.

Submitter DB ID 9110
IP Address 173.167.20.118
Submission Recorded On 11/14/2019 5:41 PM
Time to Take the Survey 21 minutes, 36 secs.

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Public Service Application Form

I am interested in service on one or more of the following public bodies as checked below:

***Special conditions restrict eligibility for appointment**

1.

Communications Commission*

2. Occupation:

Communications Consultant

3. Indicate areas not included above which may warrant special attention or study that are of interest to you:

I am highly interested in the ongoing transparency of government communications with Meridian Township residents. I am interested in the continued efforts of the Communications Department to build a HOMTV alumni network and strong brand presence within the community. My last day as an employee with Meridian Township will be December 31, 2019. It would be an honor to be a Communications Commissioner and continue to serve the public in this capacity.

4. Describe education, experience or training which will assist you if appointed:

Currently I am the Communications Director/Public Information Officer (PIO), Brand Manager and Content Management Strategist for Meridian Township. I filed my LLC this year; Guthrie Communications and currently provide some services on a very small scale. During my time with Meridian Township, I developed communications best practices and procedures through digital and print communications including Media and Public Relations.

In 2012, I created the Communications Department with Communications Specialist Brandie Yates. Together, we created best practices for social media including comment use policy and procedures. As part of Meridian Township becoming Redevelopment Ready Certified, I created the Community Engagement Plan and Marketing and Promotion Strategy.

I graduated from Michigan State University in 1997 with a Communication Arts and Sciences degree. I authored the Township's Community Engagement Plan, Marketing and Promotion Strategy, Social Media Policies, CAMTV Operating Policies and Procedures and HOMTV Internship Policies and Procedures. I have represented that township in providing social media and communications presentations at local, regional and national levels.

I have hosted several HOMTV programs focusing on the local community in Haslett, Okemos and Meridian Township; where I've spent a majority of my time.

5. Contact Information:

Name: Deborah Guthrie **Occupation:** Communications Director/PIO

Place of Employment: Meridian Township **Home Address:** 2575 Dustin Rd.

Phone (days): 5172141530 **Phone (evenings):** Not answered

Date: 11.14.19

**Deborah Guthrie
Communications Consultant
Guthrie Communications, LLC
2575 Dustin Rd., Okemos, MI. 48864
517.214.1530 debgtv@aol.com**

**Communications Director/PIO, Meridian Township
June 2011 – December 2019**

Communications Director/Public Information Officer, Brand Manager, Content Specialist/Manager, Media and Public Relations Manager and Social Media Manager for Meridian Township. Specialized in video franchising and compliance, METRO permitting and small cell applications and rights of way permitting. Staff Liaison to the Communications Commission. Content Producer, Writer and HOMTV Program host.

**Chapter President (Elected), Michigan NATOA
2010 – Present**

Work with local member government agencies to provide up-to-date information about local, state and national legislation to help maximize the effective use of cable and telecommunication systems. Requires extensive knowledge on franchise regulation, administration and public rights of way at the state and national level.

**Board Member (Elected), Michigan Alliance for Community Media
December 2014 – December 2017**

Drive legislative initiatives to preserve public, educational and government programming and channels. Provide legislative updates.

**National Board Member (Elected), NATOA
September 2012 – December 2014**

Provide support to members on many local, state, and federal communications laws, administrative rulings, judicial decisions and technology issues impacting the interests of local governments. Actively analyze and address emerging telecommunication issues.

**Producer/Station Manager/Intern Coordinator, HOMTV 21
April 1998 – June 2011**

Executive Producer of Programming and Stories. Oversee the multimedia student training HOMTV Internship Program including the creation and implementation of policies and procedures. Franchise Compliance Specialist overseeing cable complaints, METRO permits and staff liaison to the Meridian Township Cable Communications Commission.

Michigan State University – 1997
BA, Communications Arts and Sciences
Field Of Study, Telecommunications



8. C

To: Communications Commission
From: Brandie Yates, HOMTV Executive Producer
Date: November 26, 2019
Re: Recommended Changes to HOMTV Operating Policies & Procedures

At the August 7, 2019 meeting, the current HOMTV Operating Policies & Procedures were presented to the Communications Commission for review. Staff requested the Commission prepare their recommended changes to the HOMTV Operating Policies & Procedures to discuss at the next meeting.

With the reorganization of the Communications Department, changes to the HOMTV Operating Policies & Procedures is imperative for future operations of the channel. The HOMTV Operating Policies & Procedures were last revised and approved by the Commission on February 1, 2012.

Staff asked the Communications Commission to review and discuss the recommended changes, as well as suggest any additional changes to the HOMTV Operating Policies & Procedures.

Staff recommends that the Communications Commission move **TO RECOMMEND MAKING CHANGES TO THE HOMTV OPERATING POLICIES & PROCEDURES.**



OPERATING POLICIES

~~CHARTER~~ ~~TOWNSHIP~~ ~~OF~~ ~~MERIDIAN~~ MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP

GOVERNMENTAL ACCESS

CABLE ~~TELEVISION~~ CHANNEL

Originally approved by the Cable Communications Commission on March 4, 1992
Approved by the Township Board on October 8, 1992
Revised & approved by the Cable Communications Commission on February 19, 1993
Amendments recommended by the Activity Coordination Committee on April 14, 1993
Amendments recommended by the Personnel Committee on April 26, 1993
Approved by the Township Board on May 4, 1993
Revised & approved by the Cable Communications Commission on September 2, 1998
Approved by Township Board on September 15, 1998
Revised & approved by the Cable Communications Commission on April 28, 2000
Approved by Township Board on July 5, 2000
Revised and approved by the Cable Communications Commission on January 7, 2009
Approved by the Township Board on April 7, 2009

Revised and approved by the Cable Communications Commission on February 1, 2012

PREAMBLE

The Cable Communications Commission was established in 1977 to oversee the administration and implementation of the Cable Franchise Agreement, including:

- 1) to advise the Township Board regarding the implementation of the Franchise Agreement;
- 2) to encourage the use of the access channels which include public, educational, and governmental channels;
- 3) to formulate policy relating to the access channels. All such policies are subject to approval by the Township Board.

(For a complete list of functions, refer to the Township Ordinances, Title XV, Chapter 115.)

The Government Access Cable Television ~~station-channel~~ serving ~~the Charter Township of Meridian~~ Meridian Township is known as HOMTV. The operating policies of HOMTV are based upon the Goals and Objectives of the ~~Cable~~ Communications Commission, as approved by the Meridian Township Board. It is the intent of these policies and procedures to consolidate and regulate the implementation of the Goals and Objectives. The ~~Cable~~ Communications Commission shall monitor the implementation of these policies and procedures as administered by the Township Cable TV Coordinator.

Employees within ~~the Cable Television~~ HOMTV's ~~Operation~~ operation are governed by the Township Personnel Policy. On matters related to programming, the ~~Cable~~ Communications Commission shall govern. ~~The Township Manager shall seek the advice of the Cable Commission in carrying out functions related to the Township Personnel Policy relative to Township employees working within the cable operations.~~

SECTION ONE: GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAMMING AND PRODUCTION

- I. ~~The Township Cable Coordinator is the Communications Director.~~ The ~~Communications Director~~Executive Producer is responsible for generating program ideas, and for implementing and overseeing their production, either directly, or by delegation through his or her subordinates. All programming decisions are to be made by the ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer according to established policies and guidelines as approved by the ~~Cable~~Communications Commission.
- II. Programming shall be developed in accordance with the "Goal Statements" adopted and periodically revised by ~~the Township Cable Commission and~~ the Township Board.
- III. Programming of a non-local origin is to be avoided in all but the most exceptional situations. Such exceptions shall only be approved by the ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer. In the case where programming of non-local origin is used, it must be presented with locally originated opening and closing statements.
- IV. All production decisions are to be made by the ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer, either directly, or by delegation through his or her subordinates.
- V. The HOMTV production equipment and facilities ~~of the Communications Department~~are to be used only by staff members of ~~the Communications Department, or staff members of~~Meridian Township who have been trained and approved for equipment use under the direction of the ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer.
- VI. Special production requests must be submitted to the ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer at least one week prior to the requested taping date.

SECTION TWO: TOWNSHIP MEETING COVERAGE

- I. HOMTV is responsible for providing ~~television~~live coverage of the regular meetings of the Township Board, the Planning Commission, the Park Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Environmental Commission, up to a total of ten meetings per month. The Township ~~Cable-Communications~~ Commission may recommend to the Township Board expansion or limitation of meeting coverage responsibilities based upon staff and facility capabilities.
- II. Live coverage of regularly scheduled Township meetings shall be the number one

programming priority of HOMTV. Program schedule adjustments must be made to accommodate irregular starting times of televised meetings.

- III. To cancel regular meeting coverage, the staff liaison to the Board or Commission in question must present the cancellation notice to the HOMTV Executive Producer in writing as early as possible before the scheduled meeting.

==

SECTION TWO: TOWNSHIP MEETING COVERAGE (cont'd.)

- ~~III.~~ To cancel regular meeting coverage, the staff liaison to the Board or Commission in question must present the cancellation notice to the Communications Director in writing as early as possible before the scheduled meeting.
- IV. To schedule special meeting coverage, the staff liaison to the Board or Commission in question must present the television coverage request to the ~~Director~~**Communications Director/HOMTV Executive Producer** in writing at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Special efforts will be made to provide "skeleton crew" coverage of Township Board meetings, which are scheduled with less than two weeks notice.
- ~~V.~~ Coverage of Township meetings shall include presentation of a "Post-Meeting Report" following the meeting, unless staff levels are too low to successfully execute this production. Such reports will include at least one live interview with a Board or Commission member, a Township Staff member, or a local resident. Opportunities to be interviewed will be offered evenly among Board and Commission members.
- VI. When a Board or Commission goes into "closed session" during the live cablecast of a meeting, the HOMTV Meeting Producer is authorized to display a message describing the current status of the meeting, ~~or to play a taped program during the break.~~ When a Board or Commission goes into "recess" during the live cablecast of a meeting, the HOMTV Meeting Producer is authorized to ~~follow either of the previously listed procedures,~~ display a message describing the current status of the meeting or to continue live coverage of the meeting room during the break.
- VII. Video recordings of the live coverage of Township meetings are not to be edited for replay as a whole.
- VIII. ~~Videotapes~~ Video recordings of Township meetings shall not be considered the official record of the meetings and shall not be treated as such. These ~~tapes~~ recordings will be ~~retained for a time period of one year from the date of the meeting.~~ DVD copies of video recorded meetings will periodically be offered through the Township staff liaison to each Board or Commission. ~~If the tapes are not retained by the staff liaison, they may be discarded by the Communications Department.~~ available online and retained on the HOMTV Archiving System.

SECTION THREE: TOWNSHIP ELECTION COVERAGE

- I. HOMTV shall present ~~television~~ programming pertaining to ~~all Meridian Township elections held in Meridian Township~~. The scope and format of such coverage shall be determined by the ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer. The minimum acceptable coverage shall be graphic material summarizing election results, initially presented sometime on election night, and carried on HOMTV at least until the normal program schedule begins the next day. The ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer shall work with the Township Clerk and Election Commission to provide graphic material and/or other material announcing pre-election administration information.

- II. Special efforts shall be made to produce programming in "even year" Township elections, with a maximum emphasis on elections held to fill positions on the Township Board of Trustees and/or the Park Commission. All registered candidates shall be afforded an equal opportunity to be included in this coverage. The scope and format of such election year programming shall be determined by the ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer, but it ~~should~~may include the following components:
 - A. An interview program for candidates, including standardized questions and follow-up questions.
 - B. An opportunity for candidates to make ~~up to a two minutes~~short statements on their candidacy.
 - C. A debate-style program for candidates, organized by party affiliation and/or desired office.
 - D. A call-in show to allow residents to ask questions of the candidates.

- III. The ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer shall ensure that all programming featuring registered candidates be fairly balanced with programming featuring their opponents. In cases where balance is not possible due to the lack of participation of one or more candidates, the participating candidates will receive balanced coverage in comparison to the entire field of participating candidates.

- IV. Candidates for elected office shall not be included in HOMTV programming ~~during the time period~~ninety days before an election, with the exception of Township meeting coverage, special election coverage and coverage of incumbents performing official duties ~~which warrant cablecasting~~. The ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer shall decide if equal time for opposing candidates is necessary to balance the coverage of incumbent candidate's performance of official duties.

SECTION FOUR: PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM-SERIES

- ~~I. There shall be one program series in the HOMTV Program Schedule available for use by members of the Township Board and the Park Commission. The Communications Director will reserve taping slots based on staff and facility capabilities, and interest for this series. Members of the Board of Trustees and Park Commission interested in using these time slots must confirm their interest to the Communications Director on a monthly basis. The available taping slots will be distributed evenly among those elected officials who express interest in participating. Members who cannot be available to make a scheduled program, must provide the Communications Director a minimum forty eight (48) hour advance notice.~~
 - ~~A. Topics for this series will be selected by the elected officials or the Communications Director and should focus on events and issues of interest and importance to Meridian Township Government. The format for these programs may be either talk show style with one or two guests, or single-speaker format featuring the elected official.~~
 - ~~B. Taping options for this series afforded to elected officials may not be transferred to any other individual or group. Elected officials must appear in each program in this series.~~
 - ~~C. Remote tapings to supplement programs in this series shall take no more than two (2) hours of staff time per quarter per elected official. This time cannot be "built up" and "carried over" for use later as a larger block.~~
 - ~~D. It shall be the responsibility of the Communications Director to provide a producer for the series.~~
 - ~~E. The Cable Commission shall hear and decide any appeal of the Communications Director's cancellation. Such decisions shall normally be decided the day the appeal is heard.~~

- II. There shall be one series in the HOMTV Program Schedule based on a "public forum" format. This program may include panels of guest experts or residents, opportunity for call-in participation by viewers, and/or the opportunity for involvement by a live studio audience. Topics in this series should be of local interest, but may include statewide or national issues discussed from a local perspective.

SECTION FOUR: PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM-SERIES (cont'd.)

- III. ~~Township residents shall have the opportunity to produce short editorial commentaries on any subject they choose, on a first come, first served basis. Such commentaries must be written and submitted in advance, and the script must be adhered to. Commentaries may not include foul language or slanderous statements. Residents must sign a waiver assuming full responsibility for any statements made in a commentary. Playtimes for commentaries will be determined by the Communications Director.~~
- IV. A magazine-format series will be produced by HOMTV on a regular basis as a news and information program.
- V. Other program-series will be produced by HOMTV under the direction of the ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer. It is the goal of HOMTV to produce programs of a similar nature on a regular basis to form a series. The ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer shall decide which programs to produce as a series, and shall supervise their production and regulate their format and frequency.
- VI. Other programs may be produced by HOMTV which do not fit into any existing program series. These will be considered "specials" and may be of any format.
- VII. There shall be a Computer Graphics Message Display Sequence on HOMTV during times when there is no live or taped programming. ~~Messages can be submitted for use in this sequence by Township Staff in any written form. Township residents and local organizations may submit messages at least two weeks ahead of the requested usage period.~~ Messages of an emergency nature will be ~~included in the display sequence~~displayed as soon as possible by HOMTV staff. ~~The Communications Director shall be responsible for all decisions regarding usage of messages in this sequence.~~
- VIII. The HOMTV Program Schedule will be determined by ~~the Communications Director~~HOMTV Staff. Primary concepts for Program Schedule formulation include variety and high frequency of program replays.

SECTION FIVE: LOCAL PROGRAMMING DEVELOPMENT

- I. Requests or suggestions for program development may be made by officials and employees of Meridian Township Government and from the general public. Requests must be made in writing. Each request for programming received by ~~the Communications Director~~HOMTV Staff may be reported to the ~~Cable Communicatons~~ Commission. The ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer will respond to requests for programming ~~from Township Staff~~ within a

reasonable time, based on staff and facility limitations.

SECTION FIVE: LOCAL PROGRAMMING DEVELOPMENT (cont'd.)

- II. The ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer shall use any of the following criteria to make judgments regarding the initiation of new programming:
 - A. The programming is about Meridian Township, its residents, its employees, its elected officials, and/or its appointed officials.
 - B. The programming is in demand by Meridian Township residents or employees.
 - C. The programming is a public service to Meridian Township residents.
 - D. The programming serves to promote Meridian Township as a community.
 - E. The programming serves as communication from Meridian Township employees to Meridian Township residents.
 - F. The programming serves as communication from Meridian Township residents to Meridian Township residents.

- III. The ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer shall use any of the following criteria to make judgments regarding the denial of new programming:
 - A. The programming shall include no pornographic material.
 - B. The programming shall include no religious material.
 - C. The programming shall include no paid advertising.
 - D. The programming shall include no direct appeals to purchase commercial goods or services.
 - E. The programming shall be of sufficient technical quality to match the current minimum quality level of programming on the channel.
 - F. The programming does not meet one or more of the criteria set forth in paragraph II of this Section.

SECTION FIVE: LOCAL PROGRAMMING DEVELOPMENT (cont'd.)

- IV. The ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer shall use any of the following criteria to make judgments regarding the termination of existing programming:
- A. The programming has served its original purpose.
 - B. The programming can be more appropriately produced by another local access channel.
 - C. Producers of the programming are not cooperating with the management or staff of HOMTV in a consistent or professional manner.
 - D. Staff or facility limitations cause the need to reduce programming levels in general.
 - E. The criteria used for denying new programs can also be used to terminate existing programs. (See paragraph III above).
- V. The ~~Cable-Communications~~ Commission shall hear and decide appeals from those who have been denied programming requests under this Section. Such decisions shall normally be rendered within thirty (30) days of the ~~Cable-Communications~~ Commission's first consideration of the appeal.

SECTION SIX: GENERAL POLICIES

- I. HOMTV shall not be used to produce video programming for private or commercial organizations. HOMTV may collaborate and charge a fee for services to other public agencies and similar organizations to develop programming, which further serves the public interest, as determined by the ~~HOMTV-Township~~ Manager.
- II. It is the objective of HOMTV to ~~eablecast live or taped programs for~~program at least eight (8) hours per day, seven (7) days per week. The ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer may cancel or reduce programming for up to ten (10) weeks per calendar year for the purpose of equipment maintenance, or due to staff limitations ~~caused by Michigan State University break periods.~~

SECTION SIX: GENERAL POLICIES (cont'd.)

- III. HOMTV will make ~~videotape duplicate~~ copies of programs produced by HOMTV for a nominal fee according to the attached fee schedule.
- A. Fees may be waived by the ~~Communications Director~~HOMTV Executive Producer for people closely involved with the production of the program being copied.
- B. HOMTV will only make copies of programs that have aired on the channel.
- IV. ~~HOMTV non-salaried staff members who have rendered exemplary service may be presented a gift upon departure from the Township. Such gifts shall not exceed \$50.00 in cost per person. Decisions regarding selection of the gift will be made by the Communications Director.~~
- V. Expenditures ~~from the Communications Department budget~~ to finance the operations of HOMTV may be authorized by the ~~Communications Director~~Township Manager, subject to all requirements of the Township Purchasing Policies, and within maximum amounts appropriated in the Township Budget. Purchases proposed by ~~the Communications Director~~HOMTV Staff that are projected to exceed the total ~~Communication Department~~budget appropriations shall require a budget amendment recommended by the ~~Cable Communications Commission~~Township Manager and approved by the Township Board, in conformance with Township purchasing and budget policies. Transfers among line items within the total amount appropriated in the ~~Communications Department~~operating budget may be made by the ~~Communications Director, upon approval of the Superintendent and the Cable Communications Commission. All purchases are to be reported to the Cable Commission on a monthly basis. No payment shall be made for any purchase until the bill is approved by the Township Board.~~Finance Director upon approval of the Township Manager
- VI. All HOMTV video recordings ~~used for production of television programs by the staff of HOMTV~~shall remain the property of HOMTV ~~and Meridian Township~~.

FEE SCHEDULE

Video Copies

1. ~~\$10~~15.00 flat rate per order
2. ~~\$5~~10.00 per hour of running time on order, or any increment thereof.
3. ~~\$3~~6.00 for videotape supplied by HOMTV for the copy.
4. \$6.00 Shipping & Handling

Audio Copies

1. ~~\$5~~10.00 flat rate per order
2. ~~\$5~~10.00 per hour of running time on order, or any increment thereof.
3. ~~\$2~~4.00 for audiotape supplied by HOMTV for the copy.



Communications
Commission

Compliments/ Complaints

Thank You SELECT SPONSOR!





GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

ORLENE HAWKS
DIRECTOR

TREMAINE L. PHILLIPS
COMMISSIONER

SALLY A. TALBERG
CHAIRMAN

DANIEL C. SCRIPPS
COMMISSIONER

October 14, 2019

To Cities/Villages/Townships:

This letter is being sent to franchise entities (municipalities) within the state of Michigan regarding Public Act 480 of 2006, the Uniform Video Services Local Franchise Act (the Act). The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) is the agency designated to implement the Act. Pursuant to Section 12(2) of the Act, the MPSC shall file an annual report to the Governor and Legislature that includes information on the status of video service competition in Michigan.

To assist MPSC Staff with gathering information for the report, please complete our electronic survey, which is located at michigan.gov/mpsc beginning **October 18, 2019**. Responses to the survey are due by **November 15, 2019**. *Please note that the survey will not be available on the website after November 15, 2019.* Due to recent changes to the MPSC website, you may find the survey by following these steps:

1. Go to michigan.gov/mpsc and click on "Regulatory Information" at the top of the page.
2. Next, scroll down and click on "Telecommunications" at the bottom.
3. Lastly, click on "Video/Cable Regulatory Information" and you will find the survey under the "Provider & Franchise Entity Information" category.

The survey is quick and easy and should take only a few minutes of your time. It is important that MPSC Staff receives feedback from franchise entities. Your feedback will help to provide MPSC Staff with a better insight of the video/cable issues that may be occurring in your community. While MPSC Staff cannot provide you with answers to the survey questions, please contact Staff if you require clarification regarding the questions being asked.

In addition to the survey, please find attached two Consumer Tips that provide information regarding filing a video/cable complaint with the MPSC. One is relevant to customers, the other to a municipality. We would encourage you to share this information with your residents. You may also find the complaint information online at michigan.gov/mpsc by clicking the "Consumer Information" link at the top of the page. You may consider posting the MPSC contact information and/or a link to our Consumer Tips to your community's webpage.

Your cooperation in submitting your survey answers to our office is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions, please contact Cindy Stephens at (517) 284-8167 or by email at stephensc1@michigan.gov.

Sincerely,

Ryan McAnany, Manager
Telecommunications Division

Attachments

Filing a Video/Cable Complaint

The MPSC's role in handling video/cable television complaints

On December 21, 2006, Governor Granholm signed legislation to promote competition for video services in the state of Michigan. Public Act 480 of 2006, or as it is more commonly known, the "Uniform Video Services Local Franchise Act" charges the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) with implementing the Act. The MPSC now has the responsibility to handle cable inquiries and complaints.

Are you having a problem with your video/cable television provider?

If you are experiencing problems with your provider, you should first contact your provider and attempt to resolve your dispute with them.

Not satisfied? File an informal complaint with the MPSC.

If you are dissatisfied with the provider's response, or the dispute is not resolved to your satisfaction, you may file an informal complaint with the MPSC.

How does the informal complaint process work?

- A customer contacts the MPSC with a video/cable television complaint.
- MPSC Staff forwards the complaint to the provider & informally mediates (if necessary) between the provider and the customer.
- The provider is allowed up to 10 business days (under normal circumstances) to respond and provide a detailed resolution to both the customer and the MPSC.

Still not satisfied? File a formal complaint and request a hearing

If you remain dissatisfied even after the Staff has completed the informal complaint process, you may file a Formal Complaint.

A customer will be permitted to file a formal complaint **only after**:

- the informal complaint process has been completed; and
- a satisfactory resolution has not been reached between the provider and the customer.

To request a formal hearing, prepare a letter of complaint explaining the problem. Send the original and seven (7) copies of the letter/ complaint to the MPSC at the following address:

**Executive Secretary
MPSC
P.O. Box 30221
Lansing, MI 48909**

The written complaint must contain the following information:

- customer name, address, telephone number, and signature;
- the name and address of the provider with whom there is a disagreement;
- the location/address of the disputed action;
- the time and dates of the disputed actions;



consumer TIPS

January 2019

michigan.gov/mpsc

- a description of exactly what happened – include all details, the names and addresses of any persons involved, disputed charges and costs.
- Identify the specific section(s) of the Video Act that are alleged to have been violated and state sufficient facts to support the alleged violation (s). Specify the relief requested.

Next Action

An MPSC Staff attorney will review the formal complaint, and if the disputed amount is under \$5,000 and all required information is included, the Commission shall appoint a mediator within seven (7) business days of the date the complaint is filed. Mediation may include a review of the complaint and discussions with the customer and company. If through this process the customer and company are still unable to agree, the mediator will issue a recommended solution within 30 days from the date of appointment. The customer and company have 10 days to either accept or reject the recommendation. If the customer or company rejects the solution, the complaint proceeds to a formal hearing. If the dispute involves an amount over \$5,000, it proceeds directly to a contested case hearing with no prior mediation.

Formal Complaint Hearing Process

A formal complaint hearing is a trial-like proceeding. This means that the customer, the cable company, and MPSC Staff will come before an administrative law judge. A formal complaint proceeding is separate from any informal proceeding related to the problem that may have taken place. Lawyers represent the cable company.

Customers may hire a lawyer, represent themselves (excluding some businesses), or bring someone to assist them. The customer must present information and witnesses to prove or justify his/her position. The MPSC cannot provide a lawyer or pay any legal fees. After the hearing, the judge will issue a proposed decision. However, the MPSC will make the final decision, and will issue its decision in a MPSC order. During this process the customer and the company may continue to try to settle the problem. However, the MPSC must approve any agreement that is reached.

Required Costs

If the customer or company rejects the mediator's decision and is found by MPSC order to be at fault, that party will be responsible for the legal costs of the other party. If both the customer and the company reject the mediator's decision, each party pays their own legal costs.

For more information:

For more information about filing a complaint, PA 480, or the dispute resolution process, go to the MPSC website at: michigan.gov/mpsc. Click on the Video/Cable button.

You may also contact the MPSC at:

Telecommunications Division
Attn: Video Franchising
P.O. Box 30221, Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: (800) 292-9555
Fax: (517) 284-8200

Filing Satellite Complaints

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at: (877) 382-4357 or ftc.gov handles satellite complaints/inquiries.



Dispute Resolution: Franchise Entity (Municipality) or Provider vs. Provider

The Michigan Public Service Commission's (MPSC) role in informal and formal video/ cable television complaints:

Public Act 4 of 2009 — Providing a dispute resolution process for complaints between municipalities or providers and cable providers.

Who can file an informal complaint on behalf of a municipality/provider?

A municipality/provider may speak on behalf of itself when filing an informal complaint. Legal representation is not required until a formal complaint is filed.

What does a municipality/provider need to do to file an informal complaint?

The municipality/provider shall file a written notice of the dispute with the MPSC.

What information is required in the notice of dispute?

- Identifying the nature of the dispute.
- Language that requests an informal dispute resolution process.
- Language stating the other party has been served the notice of the dispute.

What happens after the notice is filed?

Commission staff will conduct an informal mediation with both parties in an attempt to resolve the dispute.

What if the dispute is not resolved with informal mediation?

If a satisfactory resolution to the dispute is not achieved, any named party in the complaint may file a formal complaint.

How does the formal complaint process begin?

- A representative submits the following, in writing, to the commission:
- Information that states the section(s) of the public act or franchise agreement that was allegedly violated.
- Sufficient facts to support the allegations.
- The relief requested.
- All information— testimony, exhibits and other documents— in possession the party intends to rely on to support the complaint.

How does the formal complaint process proceed?

- Once the complaint is filed each party has ten days to agree on alternative means to resolve the complaint.
- If no agreement is reached within 10 days, the Commission shall order mediation.
- Within 60 days from the date mediation is ordered, the mediator shall issue a recommended settlement.



What happens after the proposed settlement is presented?

- Each party shall file, with the Commission, a written acceptance or rejection of the recommended settlement within 7 days.
- If the parties accept the recommendation, then the recommendation shall become the final order.
- If a party rejects or fails to respond within 7 days to a proposed settlement, then the complaint will proceed to a contested case hearing.
- A party that rejects the recommended settlement shall pay the opposing party's actual costs of proceeding to a contested case hearing.

What is the format of a contested case hearing?

A contested case hearing is provided under section 203 of the Michigan telecommunications act, 1991 PA 179, MCL 484.2203

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-Act-179-of-1991.pdf>

For more information:

For more information about filing a formal complaint, Public Act 480, or the dispute resolution process (PA 4 of 2009), go to the MPSC website at:

michigan.gov/mpsc; click on the Video/Cable tab.

You may also contact the MPSC at:

Telecommunications Division Attn: Video Franchising
7109 W. Saginaw Hwy.
P.O. Box 30221 Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: (800) 292-9555
Fax: (517) 284-8200

Online Formal Complaint Form:

Complaints can be filed online via the video/cable web site.

michigan.gov/mpsc/complaints



Communications
Commission

Video Service Provider



October 2, 2019

Ms. Deborah Guthrie, Communications Director
Meridian Township
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

Re: Xfinity TV Channel Updates

Dear Ms. Guthrie:

We are committed to keeping you and our customers informed with Xfinity TV changes and enhancements. Below we share details regarding new programming that we are launching and the drop of a channel from our line-up.

New Channel Effective October 29, 2019

For our customers who subscribe to the Xfinity Latino package, on October 29 we will begin offering a new Spanish-language channel, Kanal D Drama. Kanal D Drama is a Spanish-language network featuring telenovelas and series. We are communicating this change to our affected customers through a bill message.

Loss of Channel Effective December 5, 2019

We also wanted to inform you that MVStv will be dropped from Xfinity Latino on December 5. We are communicating this change to our affected customers through a bill message.

We are excited about the addition to our robust entertainment offerings and for the opportunity to continue enhancing our Xfinity TV product.

Please feel free to contact me at 734-359-2077 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John P. Gardner
Director, External Affairs
Comcast, Heartland Region
1401 E. Miller Rd.
Lansing, MI 48911



October 15, 2019

Ms. Deborah Guthrie, Communications Director
Meridian Township
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

Re: Xfinity TV Channel Updates

Dear Ms. Guthrie:

We are committed to keeping you and our customers informed about changes to Xfinity TV services.

Effective December 10, 2019, Comcast will no longer carry Starz Edge, Starz in Black, Starz Comedy, Starz Cinema and Starz Kids & Family. For more information about this change, visit xfinity.com/StarzChanges.

Effective December 10, 2019, we're adding Epix to certain packages. Starz will no longer be available with those packages. With Epix and its associated content you'll get unlimited access to hit films, critically acclaimed original series, documentaries and more, uncut and commercial-free. For more information about this change, visit xfinity.com/EpixChanges.

Effective December 10, 2019, Comcast will no longer carry RetroPlex, IndiePlex, Encore Classic, Encore Suspense, Encore Family and Encore Español. For more information about this change, visit xfinity.com/EncoreChanges.

Additionally, pursuant to P.A. 480 of 2006, Section 9 (4), Comcast Cable's local operating entity hereby reports that Comcast does not deny access to services to any group of potential residential subscribers because of the race or income of the residents in the local area. A similar report will be filed with the Michigan Public Service Commission.

Please feel free to contact me at 734-359-2077 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John P. Gardner
Director, External Affairs
Comcast, Heartland Region
1401 E. Miller Rd.
Lansing, MI 48911

Important Information Regarding Xfinity Services and Pricing

Effective January 1, 2020

Xfinity TV	Current	New
Broadcast TV Fee	\$9.50	\$14.75

Xfinity Internet	Current	New
Performance Starter	\$50.00	\$53.00
Performance	\$70.00	\$73.00
Blast!	\$80.00	\$83.00
Extreme	\$90.00	\$93.00
Extreme Pro	\$100.00	\$103.00
Gigabit Speed	\$110.00	\$113.00
xFi Advantage	\$15.00	\$20.00

Xfinity Equipment	Current	New
Internet/Voice Equipment Rental	\$13.00	\$14.00



November 1, 2019

Ms. Deborah Guthrie, Communications Director
Meridian Township
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

Re: Xfinity TV Channel Updates

Dear Ms. Guthrie:

We are committed to keeping you and our customers informed about changes to Xfinity TV services.

We are committed to keeping you and our customers informed about Xfinity TV changes and enhancements. Below we share details regarding the removal of FM cable network from our line-up and a general reminder about expiring programming contracts.

Loss of FM Network Effective January 1, 2020

In addition to the regular updates we've posted on the programming contracts web page referenced below, we want to confirm for you that Comcast's programming agreement with cable network FM expires on December 31, 2019, and this channel will no longer be available starting on January 1, 2020. We are communicating this change to our customers through a bill message.

General Reminder About Programming Contract Expirations

We regularly inform our customers in their bills and annual notices that we maintain a website (www.xfinitytv.com/contractrenewals) and toll free number ((866) 216-8634) that are updated regularly to provide notice of the programming contracts that are set to expire in the coming months and the channels we might or will lose the rights to continue carrying.

Please feel free to contact me at 734-359-2077 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John P. Gardner
Director, External Affairs
Comcast, Heartland Region
1401 E. Miller Rd.
Lansing, MI 48911



November 15, 2019

Ms. Deborah Guthrie, Communications Director
Meridian Township
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

RE: Important Information—Price Changes

Dear Ms. Guthrie,

At Comcast, we're committed to delivering the entertainment and services that matter most to our customers in Meridian, as well as exciting experiences they won't find anywhere else. As we continue to invest in our network, products, and services, the cost of doing business rises. Programming fees – the cost associated with carrying the programming our customers demand, especially broadcast television and sports programming – continue to rise each year and are one of our biggest expenses. While we absorb some of these costs, these fee increases affect service pricing. As a result, starting January 1, 2020, prices for certain services and fees will be increasing, including the Broadcast TV Fee and the Regional Sports Network Fee. Please see the enclosed Customer Notice for more information.

While some prices may increase, we continue to invest in technology to drive innovation. We work hard to bring our customers great value every day and exciting new developments, including:

- Xfinity Stream app included with Xfinity TV has the most free shows and movies
- Apps like Netflix, Pandora, Amazon, and YouTube integrated on our X1 platform and easily accessed using our Voice Remote
- 163,000+ shows and movies on Xfinity On Demand
- Enhanced control of in-home Wi-Fi with Xfinity xFi
- Advanced security with the Xfinity Wireless Gateway
- The fastest Internet speeds in the country
- 19 million Xfinity WiFi hotspots nationwide

We know you may have questions about these changes. If I can be of any further assistance, please contact me at 734-359-2077.

Sincerely,

John P. Gardner
Director, External Affairs
Comcast, Heartland Region
1401 E. Miller Rd.
Lansing, MI 48911