

Cable Communications Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

Administrative Conference Room
Meridian Municipal Building, Okemos, MI

May 6, 2015

Present: Commissioners: Chair, Walter Benenson; Vice Chair, Patrick Crowley; Commissioner, Tunga Kiyak; Commissioner, Brian Seipel and Commissioner, Ron Styka
Staff: Deborah Guthrie, Communications Director and Andrea Smiley, Administrative Assistant
Township: None
Comcast: Leslie Brogan, Comcast Sr. Director Government Affairs
AT&T: None
Haslett Schools: None
Okemos Schools: None

Call Meeting to Order: Chair, Benenson called the meeting to order at **6:04 pm**.

Public Remarks: No Public Present

Introductions: Leslie Brogan stated that she was attending the meeting in John Gardner's absence.

Approval of Agenda:

Chair, Walter Benenson moved **TO APPROVE AGENDA AS SUBMITTED**. Seconded by Commissioner Kiyak.

Voice vote: Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Crowley questioned whether there was more than one meeting minutes to approve. Commissioner Crowley stated that it appeared as if the minutes from the last meeting were tabled. Commissioner Kiyak commented that his name appeared but he wasn't sure why since he didn't attend the meeting. Administrative Assistant, Smiley stated that it was the transcribed minutes that were tabled, but those minutes don't require approval, per Commissioner Styka. Director Guthrie clarified that Commissioner Kiyak was asking that the minutes be amended to show clarification that the transcribed minutes were tabled and the actual minutes were approved.

Chair Benenson asked the question again about whether the minutes from April 1, 2015 were approved. Director Guthrie commented that the minutes were approved with an amendment to provide clarification on the tabled minutes.

Voice vote: Motion carried unanimously.

Communications/Announcements:

Director Guthrie started the discussion by announcing a broadband webinar to be held on May 14. (Information was provided as a hand out; to be included in June 3 CCC packet) Director Guthrie informed everyone and asked if she should attend or if any commissioners should attend.

Commissioner Seipel asked if Director Guthrie felt the webinar would be worthwhile. Director Guthrie commented that she wasn't sure if the Township was ready for a broadband initiative but that she could definitely sit in to hear the information.

Chair Benenson asked for clarification and Director Guthrie responded that it was about deploying your own system of broadband. Commissioner Crowley asked if a motion was needed. Director Guthrie stated she was just making the announcement to see if the commission was interested in the information.

Commissioner Kiyak stated that he needed more clarification about whether broadband falls under the responsibilities of the commission or not. Commissioner Crowley stated that it does. Director Guthrie stated that at the time the ordinance for the Cable Commission was written, the term broadband was not included. Commissioner Crowley recommended that the topic be added to the next meeting agenda to discuss amending or to recommend to the Board an amendment to the CCC Bylaws. Commissioner Kiyak stated that the future of cable is going away and the way that the commission and HOMTV operate is moving towards broadband.

Chair Benenson asked if Director Guthrie could actually explain how the broadband system would work without attending the Webinar. Director Guthrie recommended attending the webinar to answer any questions about the system. Director Guthrie stated she would forward the information about the webinar sign up process.

Old Business:

1. AT&T Audit Update

Director Guthrie started the discussion by stating that an agreement had been reached but with discrepancies in regards to the amount of money owed to the communities. AT&T agreed to draft an agreement and a resolution to go along with the agreement. Once all parties involved have agreed to the terms, then a settlement will be made. She stated that the commission needs to look at future audits involving AT&T because AT&T has not agreed to amend the calculations of the fees. In California, AT&T is audited every two years and then receives a check every two years. As a collective group, we could agree to perform an audit every two years and collect the difference. For Meridian Township, the difference

in fees was approximately \$12,000 and the auditor expense was approximately \$5,000.

Commissioner Kiyak stated that it definitely seemed worthwhile, although the expense doesn't include time spent for staff to complete the audit. Director Guthrie stated that it was good to find out the willingness to cooperate on AT&T's part. Once the audit is finalized, Director Guthrie will provide the information to the commission.

*Commissioner Seipel asked to be excused because of a prior engagement.

Commissioner Styka commented that one of the goals for Meridian Township and the Communications Department is to **“Investigate options for establishing Meridian Township as a smart community and explore viable plans for expanding municipal fiber, broadband, and public Wi-Fi in Meridian Township” (Goal #4aa).**

2. Comcast

a. Time Warner/Charter Transaction Terminated

Commissioner Seipel asked Leslie Brogan, Comcast Sr. Director Government Affairs, if she had any numbers on the amount of money spent trying to push through the transactions. She replied that she only had a media number, not a Comcast number, but it was over 3 hundred million dollars.

b. Franchise Renewal

Director Guthrie stated that she and Mike Watzka, Esq. had an initial meeting with Comcast Representatives; John Gardner and Leslie Brogan to discuss the renewal and all of the points that have been presented to the commission. She also stated that progress is being made and they have already set up a second meeting to continue discussions.

Chair Benenson asked for the time frame of the renewal. Director Guthrie stated that the agreement expires July 31, 2015. “Once there is enough information to put in writing, the commission will be notified”, stated Director Guthrie. Then the commission will need to make a recommendation to the Township board. Director Guthrie stated that she would like to have a preliminary agreement in front of the Board, so as to not have to ask for an extension.

New Business:

1. Website Redesign – RFP Draft document

Director Guthrie started the discussion by stating that the Communications Department is in charge of heading up a new website for Meridian Township. Commissioner Crowley asked if the HOMTV website is part of that. Director Guthrie explained that HOMTV is a separate website, but that the

Communications Department does oversee that website, as well. Commissioner Crowley asked if the two websites would both have a redesign or at least function together in the redesign process.

Director Guthrie commented that an RFP was put into place to clarify the additional websites that the Township maintains. The Township included in the proposal the possibility of changing the other websites over a period of time. Right now, the initial request for proposals is just for the main website.

Director Guthrie provided an explanation of the processes to upload documents, etc. with the current website and stated that the Township is looking for a more user-friendly, dynamic website. The RFP included in the packet is a draft; more information will be added, including dates and then the final RFP will be posted to the website, as well as mailed out to companies that have contacted the Communications Department concerning a redesign.

Chair Benenson asked if the new website would have a bill pay section. Director Guthrie stated that she is looking for the new website to have a volunteer section, a bill pay section, as well as an eNewsletter subscription sign up section.

Commissioner Kiyak asked about the software to manage agendas, packets and voting, iLegislate. Director Guthrie commented that it had been put on hold but that it could be added to the next agenda, especially since the budget is coming up in July. Director Guthrie recommended that the Clerk's Office looks into this option, as well as other companies, such as Swaggit. Swaggit allows for board meetings to be tagged corresponding to the appropriate agenda item, as well as closed captioning.

Commissioner Kiyak added a comment concerning the RFP. He suggested that a security provision be added to the RFP because of the bill payment section and personal records section, etc.

Reports:

1. Cable Compliments/Complaints:

Chair Benenson commented on one of the Comcast customer issues concerning her Internet and the fact that she feels someone is tapping into her service with additional cables that she didn't authorize. Director Guthrie explained that this is an on-going issue for this customer.

Director Guthrie commented that the commission requested recognition for John Gardner, Sr. Manager Governmental and Regulatory Affairs because of his attentiveness to the Comcast customer issues in Meridian Township. She stated that she would take care of that this year.

2. Video Service Provider(s):

Leslie Brogan, Comcast Sr. Director Government Affairs provided a hand out describing a new program for Comcast. Comcast is creating an additional 5,500 jobs with a customer experience transformation. She also stated that this new program is not a result of the failed transaction. Commissioner Seipel commented that Ford did a similar program developing the campaign, "Have you driven a Ford lately?"

Director Guthrie asked about the Reimagining the Retail Experience stores. Brogan commented that these stores began rolling out about 4 years ago. Chair Benenson suggested the commission take a field trip to the store.

Commissioner Crowley mentioned the Internet Essentials Program, stating that it is a good program. He is a foster parent and works with other foster parents and he is concerned that people are not aware of this great program. He would like to see more awareness within the Human Services Departments within the county. Leslie Brogan commented that she would discuss with John Gardner and see how they could increase the awareness of the program. Director Guthrie commented that the Township needed more pamphlets.

3. Communications Director's Report:

Director Guthrie submitted the Communications Departmental Quarterly Report and Goals Update. She added that the department experienced issues, a failed drive, with FibreJet.

4. Chair's Report: Nothing to Report.

5. Township Information:

Commissioner Styka commented that the Township is selecting new legal counsel with 9 applicants. All improvements were discussed last meeting. Commissioner Kiyak asked about the restaurants in the Township not having bike racks. Commissioner Styka commented that it only impacts new build. The other restaurants are grandfathered.

6. Programming:

Director Guthrie commented on the interview done by Brandie Yates, Internship Coordinator, with the Wharton Center on the upcoming season. Programming is beginning to build up again; HOMTV videotaped MSU student presentations. Director Guthrie commented that the new formats or varying formats of Township meetings is very challenging. She described the setup and changes that would need to take place in order to broadcast the meetings. Commissioner Styka commented on perhaps switching to stationary cameras, etc. Director Guthrie

replied that it would take away from the HOMTV Internship program and the ability to have live On-Air experience.

7. Viewership/Promotions: No discussion

8. Finance: No discussion

Other Business & Announcements:

Chair Benenson asked about the Intern Appreciation Ice-Cream Social. Director Guthrie announced that the Ice-cream Social is from 12-2 on Thursday, May 7 in the Township Pavilion. The Ice-cream is being donated by Culver's and all the Commissioners are invited to attend.

Future Agenda Items:

Final RFP, Information on Legislative Agenda/Packet Management and the Cable Communications Commission Bylaws

Public Remarks: No Public Present

Commissioner Crowley moved **TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**. Seconded by Commissioner Kiyak.

Hearing no objections, Chair Benenson **ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 7:02 pm.**

NEXT MEETING:

The next scheduled meeting is **June 3, 2015 in the Administrative Conference Room.**