



COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION RULES AND PROCEDURES

RULE 1: AUTHORITY

These rules are adopted by the Meridian Township Communications Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Commission) pursuant to Title XV, Chapter 115 of the Meridian Township Code of Ordinances.

RULE 2: MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Members. The Commission shall consist of five regular members and two alternate members appointed by the Meridian Township Board. The Commission may recommend names of suggested appointees to the Township Supervisor. Members must be residents of the Township with an interest in telecommunications, communications and/or marketing of the Township. Conflicts of interest that would inhibit a person's ability to serve on the Commission includes employment by a video/internet service provider or communications company.

2.2 Alternate Members.

1. An alternate member shall be called to serve in place of a regular member by the chairperson or vice chairperson if:
 - a) a regular member is absent from or will be unable to attend two or more consecutive meetings of the Commission; or,
 - b) a regular member is absent from or will be unable to attend meetings for a period of more than thirty consecutive days; or,
 - c) a regular member will be abstaining from participating in consideration of a case in which the regular member has a conflict of interest.
 - d) When called to serve, an alternate member has the same voting rights as a regular member.
 - e) Alternate members may be called in any order.

2.3 Conflict of Interest. A regular member or alternate member shall disqualify themselves from the discussion and decision in any case where the member has a conflict of interest due to financial considerations or other issues of significance. Failure of a member to disqualify themselves shall constitute misconduct in office.

2.4 Attendance. Members of the Commission who are absent from more than three consecutive, regularly scheduled Commission meetings and work sessions or more than thirty percent of the regularly scheduled Commission meetings and work sessions in a calendar year, shall be subject to review and possible recommendation for removal by the Township Board. Exceptions may be made if absences are due to the conduct of other business as authorized by the Commission.

RULE 3: TERMS OF OFFICE

3.1 Terms of Service. Terms of service for Commission members shall be three years or until a successor is appointed.

3.2 Vacancies. A successor shall be recommended to the Township Board for appointment not more than thirty days after the term of the previous member has expired.

3.3 Removal from Office. Members of the Commission can be subject to removal from office by the Township Board for nonperformance of duty or misconduct in office.

RULE 4: OFFICERS

4.1 Selection. At the last or first regular meeting in a calendar year, the Commission shall select from its members a chairperson and vice chairperson.

4.2 Terms. Term of office shall commence from the date of selection for a period of one year, or until a successor has been selected. Officers shall be eligible for re-election, but shall not serve more than three successive full terms in one office.

4.3 Duties of the Chairperson. The chairperson shall preside at all meetings, appoint committees and official representatives to other groups with concurrence from the Commission, authorize calls for special meetings and perform such other duties as may be specified by the Commission.

4.4 Duties of the Vice Chairperson. The vice chairperson shall act in the capacity of the chairperson in the chairperson's absence. In the event the office of the chairperson becomes vacant, the vice chairperson shall succeed to that office for the unexpired term and the Commission shall select a successor to the office of vice chairperson for the unexpired term.

RULE 5: RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY

The Commission shall assume the following responsibilities and authority pursuant to the Meridian Township Code of Ordinances, Title XV, Chapter 115, Section 115-20, subsection (a), numbers 1-12:

1. Discuss franchises and franchise applications.
2. Advise the Township Board on franchise applications.
3. Advise the Township Board on revocation of franchises.
4. Make recommendations to the Township Board on resolution of disputes between

franchisees, subscribers and access users.

5. Advise the Township Board on rate regulation for municipal owned broadband, when applicable.
6. Make recommendations to the Township Board on operational policies of local access channels.
7. Encourage the use of access channels.
8. Encourage and supervise the interconnection of systems.
9. Review and report to the Township Board on franchise compliance.
10. Make recommendations to the Township Board for video equipment and maintenance purchases from PEG fee funds.
11. Conduct system evaluations and make recommendations to the Township Board regarding franchise amendments and ordinance amendments.
12. Evaluate, research and advise the Township Board in the implementation, and expansion of, broadband and internet connectivity in Meridian Township.

The Commission shall assume the following responsibilities and authority pursuant to the Uniform Franchise Agreement:

1. To hear informal complaints by subscribers and advise them to contact the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) for pursuing the informal or formal complaint process. (Exhibit F)
2. To designate the use of Public, Education and Government (PEG) Access Channels by franchisees.
3. To approve rules for usage of PEG channels and review content for usage compliance, as outlined in channel operational policies.
4. To direct franchisees to construct or repair parts of the cable system.
5. To review financial reports of the franchisees.
6. To recommend the percentage of franchise fees and PEG fees on new services or non-subscriber revenues.

The Commission shall assume the following responsibilities and authority pursuant to the Operating Policies of HOMTV:

1. To advise the Township Manager when carrying out aspects of the Township Personnel Policy with Communications Department/HOMTV staff.
2. To recommend to the Township Board expansion or limitation of the meeting coverage responsibilities of HOMTV.
3. To hear appeals of program decisions made by the Communications Manager.

RULE 6: COMMISSION MEETINGS

6.1 Procedures. The chairperson shall preside over all meetings of the Commission. Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised, shall govern all questions of procedure not otherwise provided for in these rules or by state or federal law.

6.2 Quorum. Three members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings of the Commission. In the event a quorum is not present at any meeting, a majority of the Commissioners in attendance may reschedule the meeting providing proper advance notice is given to the public.

6.3 Motions. All motions of a substantive nature shall be made in writing. The name of the originator and seconder of the motion, the findings of fact and the rationale for action shall be recorded in the minutes.

6.4 Voting. Voting shall be by voice except that a roll call vote will be taken and recorded for all proposals requiring a public hearing or when requested by a member of the Commission. When a question is put by the chairperson, every Commissioner present shall vote either "yes" or "no", except that a Commissioner may abstain from voting if excused by unanimous consent of the other Commissioners present.

6.5 Decisions. Providing a quorum is present, a simple majority of those present and voting shall be required for Commission action.

6.6 Meeting Schedule. The Commission shall meet in regular session according to a schedule adopted at the beginning of the calendar year or as subsequently revised. Special meetings shall be called by the chairperson or shall be called at the request of three members of the Commission.

6.7 Meeting Locations. Meetings shall usually be held at the Township Municipal Building. Meetings shall be open to the public, except where closed sessions are permitted by the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

6.8 Notice of Meetings. Notice of meetings and the agenda for business shall be posted according to existing Township procedure. Commission members shall be notified as soon as possible

6.9 Meeting Agenda. An agenda shall be established for each meeting of the Commission by designated Township staff and/or the chairperson, and shall be made available to Commission members and the public in advance of the meeting (Exhibit A). The designated Township staff and/or chairperson shall determine the order of business, subject to amendment by the Commission.

6.10 Public Participation. A member of the public may speak at public meetings of the Commission in accordance with the following procedures:

- a. Time for public comment shall be provided at the beginning of a regular Commission meeting. Additional time shall be scheduled at the end of such meeting. Time limits for comments or presentations at Commission meetings by persons in the audience may be established by the Commission in accordance with the number of requests to speak, providing such limits shall not be less than three minutes per speaker.
- b. Persons shall be recognized by the chairperson before speaking.
- c. Persons addressing the topic of a scheduled public hearing are encouraged to present their remarks during the public hearing portion of the meeting.
- d. During a public hearing, the following order shall be used:
 1. Township staff review;
 2. Comments by the public or other interested parties;
 3. Discussion and action by the Commission.
- e. A member of the public may speak at public meetings of the Commission during the public remarks session of the meeting or at other appropriate times if allowed by a majority of the Commissioners present.

RULE 7: RECORDS

7.1 Meeting Records. The Communications Manager (or designee) shall be responsible for minutes of each meeting of the Commission and for maintaining the official record, including all Commission actions. An audio recording device shall be used whenever possible to improve the accuracy of meeting minutes.

7.2 Meeting Minutes. Minutes shall include all motions made, the names of the mover and seconder,

the method and outcome of votes taken. Comments by a Commissioner may be placed in the official record upon the members' request. Minutes and records of the Commission meetings shall be made available to the public in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Open Meetings Act.

7.3 Closed Sessions. Minutes of closed session shall be maintained separately by the Meridian Township Clerk's Office and not disclosed to the public except upon court order. Minutes of closed sessions may be destroyed one year and one day following their approval.

RULE 8: COMMITTEES

8.1 Standing Committees. Standing committees of the Commission shall be appointed by the chairperson and approved by the Commission to assist in the ongoing responsibilities of the Commission and the operation of the Township government. The Standing Committee members will elect their own chairperson. Standing committees shall serve to review, study and propose Commission actions related to operations which are the responsibility of the Commission. Committees shall be assigned specific areas of concern and shall work with the Communications Manager.

8.2 Special Committees. The Commission may establish and appoint special committees to meet the needs and objective of the Commission. The Commission may authorize the chairperson to appoint members to these committees, including the chairperson. Permission may be granted to a special committee to designate its own chairperson.

8.3 Quorum. A majority of committee members shall constitute a quorum for committee meetings. A Standing or Special Committee shall open its meetings to the public in compliance with the Open Meetings Act if it has more than two commissioners present.

8.4 Notice of Meetings. Notice of meetings shall be made available for the public at least eighteen hours in advance of such meetings as required by state law to be considered an official committee meeting. Each committee shall provide a written record of its meetings to the Communications Manager which shall constitute its public record. A separate file shall be kept in the Communications Department for each committee. Minutes of committee meetings shall be sent to all Commissioners.

8.5 Reports. Standing Committees will report their recommendations to the Commission during the committee report portion of Commission meetings. Minority reports may be offered at that time.

8.6 Dissolution. The Commission may discharge a committee from further consideration of any matter upon approval of a majority of the Commission.

RULE 9: APPEALS OF PROGRAMMING DECISIONS

9.1 Filing. Appeals may be filed with the Commission by any person aggrieved by a programming decision made by the Communications Manager.

9.2 Procedures. Appeals shall be filed in accordance with the following procedures, deadlines and regulations:

- a. Application: An appeal of a programming decision made by the Communications Manager shall be filed within thirty days of the date of the decision being appealed.
- b. Hearing: A hearing on said appeal shall be held at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission.
- c. Presentation: The order of presentation during the appeal is included as "Exhibit E" in the appendix of this document.

9.3 Decisions. The Commission shall issue a decision within a reasonable time from the filing of an appeal.

9.4 Reconsideration. The Commission may consider a petition for reconsideration if substantial new information warrants such reconsideration and if such petition is made prior to the Commission's next regularly scheduled meeting following the meeting at which the decision was made.

RULE 10: PUBLIC HEARINGS

10.1 Purpose. Public hearings shall be held prior to recommending approval by the Township Board of any amendment to the Township Cable Ordinances or for other matters as required by statute, federal law, or Township Ordinance. Public hearings may also be held for informational purposes. (Exhibit C)

10.2 Notice. Notice of public hearings, including time, place and purpose shall be made in conformance with requirements of P.A. 285 (1931, as amended) and the Township Code of Ordinances, and such other procedures as may be adopted by the Commission or Township Board.

10.3 Format. Public hearings shall be part of regular Commission meetings and shall be conducted according to established written procedures.

10.4 Complaint Hearings. The Commission will hear informal and formal complaints of municipally owned systems.

RULE 11: RESCISSION

A motion to rescind or amend something previously adopted may be brought pursuant to Section 34 of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

RULE 12: SUSPENSION OF RULES

A motion to suspend these rules may be brought pursuant to Section 25 of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

RULE 13: AMENDMENTS

These Rules may be amended or repealed by a majority of the members of the Commission at any regular meeting or at any properly called meeting provided that a copy of the proposed changes shall be filed with the chairperson at least ten days prior to the meeting at which action therein is to be taken and copies of the proposed changes are provided to each Commissioner at least five days prior to said meeting, together with written notice of the time and place of such meetings.

RULE 14: ANNUAL REPORT

The Commission shall, on or before March 1 of every year, submit a written report to the Township Board, which report shall contain a statement of the activities of the Commission during the preceding calendar year.

EXHIBIT A:



AGENDA
MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP
COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
August 25, 2021 6:00 PM

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. PUBLIC REMARKS
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - A. June 2, 2021 Regular Meeting DRAFT Minutes
6. COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER REPORT
 - A. Department Goals & Project Update Report – August 2021
7. COMMISSION MEMBERS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
 - A. Chair’s Report
 - B. Township Board Liaison’s Report
 - C. Commissioner Reports
8. ACTION ITEMS
 - A. Disposal of Surplus Equipment
 - B. Communications Commission Rules & Procedures Revisions
9. DISCUSSION ITEMS
10. COMMUNICATIONS
 - A. Compliments/Complaints
 - B. Correspondences
11. REPORTS
 - A. Video Service Provider(s)
 - B. Programming
 - i. Program Totals and Video On-Demand Analytics
 - C. Website & Social Media
 - i. Website Analytics
 - ii. Social Media Analytics
 - D. Promotions/Publications
 - E. Finance
 - F. HOMTV Internship/Alumni
12. PUBLIC REMARKS
13. 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 Manager, Brandie Yates, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4208 - Ten Day Notice is Required.
Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 Administrative Conference Room

EXHIBIT B: EXAMPLES OF PURPOSES FOR INFORMATIONAL HEARINGS

1. To provide additional time to give all interested parties an adequate chance to present evidence.
2. To provide additional discussion or presentation time because of the complexity of the proposal or issues.
3. To provide for public comment as a result of making major changes in a proposal following an initial hearing.
4. To introduce and discuss new evidence, external to changes in a proposal, not available at the time of the initial hearing.
5. To seek citizen input on any appropriate subject.
6. To educate the public on selected issues or proposed actions and enhance public understanding or acceptance.

EXHIBIT C: GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. When scheduling meetings, the Commission may limit the number of hearings to be placed on the agenda of any meeting. Each hearing shall be identified on the agenda.
2. Unless otherwise indicated, the following format will be used:
 - a. Introduction by the chairperson (announcement of procedures, time limits and protocols for public participation, applicants and defendants.)
 - b. Summary of subject matter.
 - c. Presentation by interested members of the public.
 - d. Discussion and questioning by Commission members.
 - e. Final remarks by applicant.
 - f. Adjournment.

EXHIBIT D: PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

1. The number of persons admitted to a meeting room will be in keeping with public safety requirements and availability of space. Efforts will be made to provide adequate room to accommodate those in attendance.
2. Established protocols for public participation will be announced at the beginning of the meeting.
3. Opportunity to speak will be granted either under Public Remarks, during old business or during a public hearing, as most appropriate.
4. Reasonable time limits may be allotted for public comments, in keeping with other business which must be considered at a particular meeting.
5. A member of the public will be provided no less than three minutes to speak.
6. Those completing a request form in writing shall be called upon first to speak.
7. Members of the public will identify themselves by name and address prior to presenting their comments.
8. Written communications will be read into the record during a meeting when requested by the author. All written communications will become part of the Commission record.
9. The chairperson, without objections from the Commission, may invite members of the public to participate in informal discussion on all or selected agenda items during Commission work sessions.

EXHIBIT E: FORMAT FOR PROGRAM APPEALS

1. Presentation by the Communications Manager.
2. Presentation by appellant.
3. Questions from the Commission to the Communications Manager.
4. Questions from the Commission to the appellant.

5. Closing comment by the Communications Manager.
6. Closing comment by the appellant.
7. Discussion by members of the Commission.
8. Decision by vote of the Commission.

EXHIBIT F: FILING A TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND VIDEO COMPLAINTS TO THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (MPSC)

All informal electric, natural gas, telecommunications and video complaints received at the MPSC will be processed in accordance with the appropriate rules and laws.

When you contact the MPSC with a complaint, it will be sent to the company for an investigation. The company has up to 10 business days (2 weeks) to investigate and work towards a resolution. During this time the company may be in touch with you. At the conclusion of the company's investigation, they will provide the MPSC with a thorough and detailed response at which time the MPSC will conduct a review to ensure that it is in accordance with all enforceable rules and regulations. The MPSC will then communicate the findings of the informal complaint with you.

Filing Complaints Online:

www.michigan.gov/mpsc

Filing Complaints by Phone:

1.800.292.9555

Filing Complaints by Mail:

MPSC Customer Assistance
P.O. Box 30221
Lansing, MI 48909