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Bill Hakkinen, Secretary

CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COUNCIL OF SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT MEETING MINUTES

March 9, 2006, Regular Meeting, 5:31 p.m.
Groton Public Library, 52 Newtown Road, Route 117, Groton, CT 06340

IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Kelley, Art Barton, Marie Crompton, Jerry Tobias, Allen Palmer, Anne Ingraham, and Bill Hakkinen.
EXCUSED: Patricia Ostrout, Jeanne Robbins, Shawn Greeley, Clint Kennedy.
ABSENT: Frank Facchini (Southeastern Connecticut Television Representative)
COMCAST REPRESENTATIVES: John Bairos, Brian Ferney, Marketing Manager, and Bob Kogelis, Technical Supervisor
THAMES VALLEY COMMUNICATION: Carl Andersen and David Lee
Stenographer: Moreene Nahornick.

I. Recognition of members of the public - Jim Loughlin, 35 West Mystic Avenue, Mystic

II. Reports

A. The minutes of the January 12, 2006 meeting were approved unanimously, with a couple of corrections suggested by Jerry Tobias.

B. Treasurer's Report:

Previous balance as of December 31, 2005 \$19,289.50

CREDITS	
Interest-January, 2006	\$1.81
February, 2006	1.75
Annual Funding from Franchises:	
Comcast	2,000.00
Thames Valley Communications	<u>2,500.00</u>
TOTAL ACCUMULATED CREDITS	\$ 4,503.56

EXPENSES

Jim Kelley – Postage \$15.65/Mail Box rent \$38.00/Office supplies \$66.92	120.57
Jeanne Robbins – Meeting Refreshments	87.37
Moreene Nahornick – Steno services	75.00
William Hakkinen – Mailing minutes (postage, copy charges)	<u>42.24</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$325.18

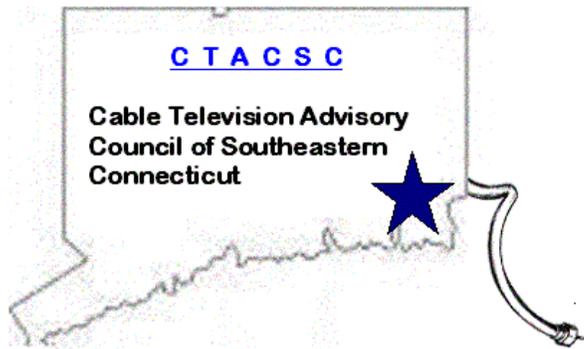
Current Checking Account Balance \$23,467.88

C. Thames Valley Communication Report – Retransmission consent issues were dominant during the period from the last meeting in January. Through contractual retransmission consent agreements TVC announced the moves of the following channels:
a. WCTX from 13 to 9, b. WTXX 20 from 9 to 11, c. Home Shopping Network from 11 to 13, d. EWTN from 23 to 20,
e. Will be adding Superstation WGN to channel 23.

WCTX, WTXX and Home Shopping Network moves will take place on March 17th, EWTN and Superstation WGN will happen on April 15th.

Since January 16.36 miles of plant has been added and over 1500 new homes passed, all in the Town of Groton. The average telephone answering time remains at 23 seconds. TVC is in the early stages of preparing their annual customer survey and invite the Advisory Council to provide feedback on types of question the Council would like to see asked. Dr. Crompton suggested a question on overall satisfaction, using something like a 0-10 scale. She also suggested Comcast undertake a survey. Brian Ferney said he would pursue it.

D. Comcast Report – Report later in the meeting.



III. Old Business

A. Status of the third party public access provider – Franck Faccini’s Southeastern Connecticut Television application has been withdrawn. The application has been dismissed without prejudice by the DPUC. Kelley stated that someone from Adelphia might be interested, but he hasn’t heard from them. Kelley will contact Frank Faccini and report back the status of SECT.

B. Report on Web page progress (CTACSC.org) – Due to the absences of Pat Ostrout and Jeanne Robbins there wasn’t a report.

IV. New Business

A. Shall the Advisory Council meetings be recorded? – Discussion tabled for next meeting when Clint Kennedy is in attendance.

B. Comcast Marketing Manager, Brian Ferney’s presentation and question – Ferney showed a slide presentation on Comcast’s Products and Services. Tobias asked why are we getting YES and why couldn’t it be used for another channel? Kelley asked about the lost analog channels. Analog value has diminished while prices have increased. Suggested to replace Comcast Channel with another channel, possibly the TV Guide Channel.

Tobias stated a number of years ago a petition was presented to Comcast for TCM to be added in the standard package, but was never added. Tobias also mentioned the deletion of the TV Channel Guide for analog customers. With the changes to the channel line up it is impossible to find programs. To find correct channels consumers have to buy other products. For the last two months TVGuide.Com channel line up has been wrong.

Barrios stated this is the first time he has heard of the TV Guide inaccuracies.

Cable Advisory Board members were polled and the consensus was the TV Guide inaccuracies have been mentioned at past meetings.

Crompton asked why TV Guide channel was removed?

Barrios explained that, per state mandate, CTN had to be added to the basic tier and it takes up a lot of bandwidth.

Crompton asked why didn’t Comcast poll customers before removing the TV Guide Channel and adding CTN.

Ferney replied when CTN was added Comcast had only 30 days just enough time to inform consumers not poll them.

Kelley asked Barrios to obtain an answer to the question for the TV Guide Channel to be added to the analog basic tier 1. When it will be added or not? 2. If not added, why?

Kelley said he will talk to other Cable Councils in the state regarding the TV Guide Channel.

C. Kelley reported that Comcast has again refused to spend extra money for narrow casting.

Barrios stated that Comcast does not feel there is a significant need in the area for narrow casting.

Kelley stated that towns and schools want to put shows on for each town.

Crompton reported that each town should have their own channel.

Kelley read an excerpt from a letter sent to the Advisory Council by Comcast: “Therefore Comcast cannot consider investing in the infrastructure at this time.”

Kelley requested the Comcast Representative bring requests from the Advisory Council back to Comcast and bring the answers to requests back to the Advisory Council.

Kelley reported that all towns except Voluntown are ready to broadcast Education content. Ledyard expressed intent when he addressed them. The Council will meet with the other town Government officials. Bairos asked if the Ledyard meeting was taped. Jim Kelley replied that it had been.

Kelley suggested the Comcast Representative go back to Comcast and report our request that each jurisdiction be able to broadcast on its own channel.

Kelley asked the Advisory council for suggestions on how to proceed on the narrow casting issue. Suggestions were:

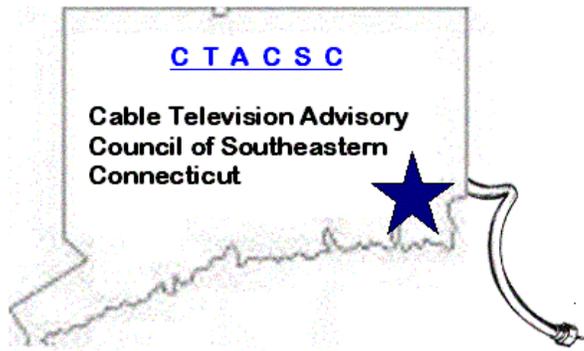
Contact Rob Simmons, Chris Dodd and Joe Lieberman and the FCC. Kelley will write a letter to the state office of the Consumer Council. Another suggestion was to send a registered letter to the Comcast home office.

Hakkinen reported that in the minutes of a November 4, 2004 the TV Guide problem was mentioned, and that Mr. Ferney was at that meeting.

Hakkinen stated that two years ago a la carte pricing was discussed and CTACSC was told it was not possible because of contracts – will ala carte pricing become available?

Ferney reported at this time there wouldn’t any savings brought on by ala carte pricing.

Ingraham reported that hearings are being held congressionally on cable companies providing a la carte services.



D. Nominating committee for annual election of Officers. – Art Barton accepted a request to chair the nominating committee and will prepare a slate of offices to vote on at the May meeting.

E. Communications: Kelley reported a number of complaints about TV Guide Channel

Ingraham – Last year \$2,000.00 was allocated for expenses. Approximately \$1,700.00 was spent so \$2,000.00 should be allocated again this year.

Palmer – expressed his happiness with TVC in his own home.

Hakkinen – Would like a report from the Comcast Representative regarding if CBS rebroadcasts are available at \$.99 per show.

Thanks to Ingraham and Kelley for the annual report. Commented to Comcast representatives that in his recent experience, trying to determine what package to subscribe to receive NESN HD has been difficult, although the folks at the Groton office were very helpful in advising on which “box” to get. He also suggested the CTACSC not lose track of an earlier intent to host a State meeting of all the Cable Councils.

Tobias – Has been asking for TCM forever and still don’t have it on analog.

VI. Adjournment –The meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Hakkinen