

P.O. Box 323
Groton, CT 06340-0323

Email;
CTACSC@northstonington.k12.ct.us

Bill Hakkinen, Secretary

CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COUNCIL OF SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT MEETING MINUTES

September 8, 2005, regular Meeting, 5:32 p.m.

Groton Public Library, 52 Newtown Road, Route 117, Groton, CT 06340

IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Kelley, Anne Ingraham, Allen Palmer, Jerry Tobias, Art Barton, Marie Crompton, Shawn Greeley, and Bill Hakkinen

ABSENT: Jim Griffith, Patricia Ostrout, Tim Chokas

COMCAST REPRESENTATIVES: John Bairos

THAMES VALLEY COMMUNICATION: Russell Dipallina, Carl Andersen

SOUTHEASTEN CONNECTICUT TELEVISION: Frank Facchini

I. Recognition of members of the public - No members of the public present.

II. Reports

Councilor Palmer moved to approve the May 12, 2005 meeting minutes, Greeley seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor. Following the vote, Councilor Ingraham noted that the May 12 Treasurer's report should have stated "\$2,000 was budgeted for expenses, \$1000 for Communications and \$1,000 for Council Meeting Expenses. Also, Carl Andersen noted that the statement "TVC hopes to add Turner Classic Movies to its channel lineup" really applies to the Comcast report. Secretary Hakkinen will make these changes.

Hakkinen moved and Crompton seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the August 19 Special Meeting – the approval vote was unanimous.

B. Treasurer's Report – through August 23, 2005.

\$1,000.00 budgeted for Communications

Expenses \$52.80 – Postage & Mailings

400.00 – Custom Website

Balance in Communications Budget = \$512.00

\$1,000.00 budgeted for Council Meeting Expenses

Expenses \$12.95 – Postage & Mailings

82.69 – May Meeting Refreshments

11.10 – Postage Stamps

Balance in Council Meeting Expenses Budget = \$569.19

Income \$ 6.63 – Interest for May – August

Checking Account Balance as of August 23, 2005 = \$19,737.22

C. Comcast Report – Bairos stated that the Council's PSA required approval in Philadelphia to be run on the commercial channels – it has been approved and is being broadcast.

A Comcast channel realignment had expected to be launched around September 27th, although the DPUC rejected Comcast's request for a waiver of the 30-day notice period – therefore the revised target launch date is October 6th. Kelley asked how Comcast could be assured that everyone receives the notice; Councilors Ingraham and Tobias indicated they had not seen the notice. Bairos stated that a second notice will be mailed out around 10 days before the switch.

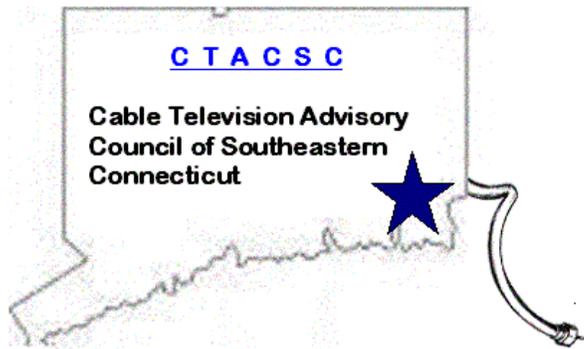
Comcast will be sponsoring Groton Family Day this weekend.

Bairos asked for an updated e-mail listing, which Councilor Hakkinen agreed to provide to everyone.

Councilor Hakkinen asked if Bairos's commitment to Chairman Kelly in the May 12th meeting, to provide within two weeks Comcast's strategy to support narrow-casting, had been completed. Kelley replied he had not received official notification.

Bairos stated that e-mails had been copied to the Chairman, and that narrow-casting support will be sought in Comcast's 2006 budget.

D. Thames Valley Communication Report – Sales budget has been exceeded. TVC is still only available in the City of Groton. TVC has asked the City for a second round of financing at \$10 million. Next area targeted for service is Groton Town. Zero new strand miles have been installed; most time has been spent in planning, and working on underground service to building complexes. In response to a question, Dipallina stated that the late summer, 3-6 PM, is normally the time when viewers may see some interference in their reception, as the satellite(s) as directly inline with the sun. Also, Councilor Palmer asked about



variable volume from channel to channel. Dipallina replied that he has little control over most of this, but he has ordered a Dolby meter to obtain some actual volume level measurements.

III. Old Business

A. Status of the third party public access provider – SECTV Report – Facchini reported that the docket has been opened by the DPUC for the third party PEG provider, and he has responded to DPUC interrogatories. He expects a local public hearing, and then two hearings in New Britain. His target is to be up and running in early 2006. Councilor Greeley reviewed several questions in the interrogatories, wherein he thought that Facchini could add more detail to the responses. These include: background of the vice president and secretary; who is in charge of day-to-day activities; who is responsible for the transmission equipment at the different schools and government buildings; what assistance (dollars and training) will be provided to towns and schools which are new to broadcasting; the three-year budget plan, and specifically where is the accounting for the capital equipment budget in the annual budget; access rules; the towns are responsible for their own programming; which must be in compliance with all state and federal rules. Chairman Kelley suggested that Facchini reply with a supplemental filing to clarify these issues; Facchini agreed to respond within two weeks. Facchini indicated he would announce his location after the DPUC hearings, though Councilor Greeley cautioned that it would probably be a part of the DPUC hearing, since the location needs to ensure good accessibility. Councilor Crompton asked if there is an alternative plan for needed equipment; Facchini expects to receive the equipment currently being used by Comcast, and add to it from his equipment budget; Chairman Kelley suggested that the process be allowed to unfold, with the Council interceding if and when necessary.

Councilor Barton moved, Tobias seconded, that the Chairman of the Council write a letter to the DPUC requesting the DPUC to make certain that SECTV has the appropriate equipment and maintenance plans to ensure an adequately-equipped PEG facility. Hakkinen stated that the timing of this may be premature, and we should allow the process to proceed further without Council input. All Councilors voted in favor of the motion except Councilor Hakkinen, who voted nay.

Tobias questioned whether SECTV has adequate coverage for interest and insurance expenses; Facchini responded in the affirmative.

[Facchini, and Councilor Greeley, left the meeting at this point – 6:45 PM.]

B Report on Web page progress – Chairman Kelley reported that Councilor Jim Griffith will be out for about a year. The subcommittee meeting over the summer had not been held.

C. Review of Council Goals – Due to time constraints, no discussion on these points was conducted.

IV. New Business

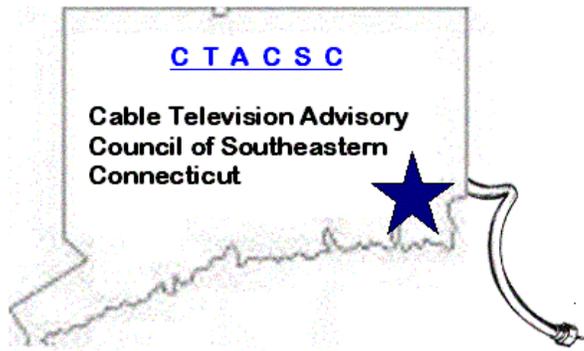
A. Comcast failure to observe 30 day notification requirement and request for a waiver – Chairman Kelley stated he is “profoundly and extremely disappointed” with Comcast. The Council has on numerous occasions been assured by Comcast that they will adhere to the 30-day notification period. Chairman Kelley asked Bairos if the Council can take him at his word in the future – Bairos concurred.

Councilor Tobias asked why Comcast would delete two channels from the Extended Basic package, yet offer no reduced rate to viewers; Bairos replied that no rate change had yet been discussed within Comcast – he stated that he will not discuss rates in front of a competitor, and will take the Council’s concerns back to Comcast. Councilor Ingraham asked why when HBO was supposed to be a preview channel on Comcast channel 63, an Encore channel was run instead. Chairman Kelley asked for a written reply to these questions, and Bairos agreed.

B. Shall we consider sponsoring a state-wide meeting of Cable Advisory Councils? – Chairman Kelley reported that he had not been able to conduct the subcommittee meeting over the summer months, and will coordinate that meeting shortly.

C. Council surveyed regarding comments, observations etc. – Councilor Ingraham expects Comcast to continue with their channel realignment plan until the federally-mandated switch to all-digital occurs.

Councilor Crompton stated that if we do conduct a state-wide meeting of Cable Councils, that we share these Comcast concerns with other Councils; Councilor Ingraham agreed.



Councilor Palmer stated that TVC is great, and if one is not satisfied with Comcast service, that switching to the Basic Comcast tier, plus using a satellite provider, might be a viable alternative.

Councilor Tobias indicated that one could subscribe to a satellite service with local channels for as little as \$39 per month. He had seen a Comcast advertisement for Extended Basic for \$19.99 per month to the end of this year, and called to try to subscribe. He was told the offer was for new subscribers only, a condition which was not specified in the advertisement.

VI. Adjournment – Tobias moved to adjourn the meeting, Ingraham seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Hakkinen