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Cable Advisory Minutes 03/30/2005

Selectmen's Cable Television Advisory Committee
Minutes of Meeting of March 30, 2005

Meeting began @ 7:48 p.m. in the Selectmen's Hearing Room, 2nd floor, Town Hall
Members present- Phil McCarthy, Bob Chebator, Paul Berg, Jim Walsh and Mike Quinn
Also present- Chuck Sherwood, Glenn Koenig and Dan O'Connol

Mr. McCarthy opened the meeting and commented that he was extremely disappointed that the committee, along with another were again locked out of Town Hall and the Chambers despite his having forcefully brought this continuing problem to the attention of the T.M.

The draft minutes of the meeting of March 9, 2005 were VOTED (5-0) approved on motion of Mr. Berg, seconded by Mr. Quinn.

The committee discussed the Needs Assessment report from Chuck Sherwood of TDI. Mr. Walsh commented that he felt that the report contained a lot of material for the committee's use. The committee unanimously disagreed with the reports finding that Comcast was in compliance with section 5.1(d) of the license. Based on the testimony received at the November 10, 2004 public hearing and other reports from Glenn Koenig, Cathy Colwell and others at committee meetings, the committee finds that the staffing at the public access studio was and is inadequate in that evening and weekend hours for access are either non-existent or extremely limited due to insufficient staff. The committee also believes that the studio equipment evaluation provided by Comcast (Appendix 7 of TDI report) is inaccurate based on the testimony received at the public hearing wherein speakers asserted that 75 to 80 percent of the equipment was old, outdated analog not digital, and in the words of some simply junk. Mr. McCarthy pointed out that the technical audit found serious deficiencies with signal quality on the educational channel. It is his experience that the same problems exist on the government/public access channel and both should be corrected. It was agreed that these items would be discussed with counsel.

Chuck Sherwood spent a lot of time explaining various segments of the report and answering questions.

Mr. McCarthy passed out a preliminary listing of items he felt should be included in the RFP and asked members to look it over and e-mail any additions that they might have. Further discussion of elements to be included in the RFP was continued until the next meeting.

Mr. Koenig reported that ACMI was preparing a new draft business plan and asked that further discussion of that agenda item also be continued to the meeting of April 13, 2005, which was agreed to.

The committee set the next meeting date for Wednesday, April 13, 2005 @ 7:30p.m. The meeting adjourned @ 10:05 p.m.