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Cable Advisory Minutes 07/19/2005

Selectmen's Cable Television Advisory Committee Minutes of Meeting of July 19, 2005

Meeting began @ 7:25pm in the Selectmen's Hearing Room, Town Hall

Members present- Phil McCarthy, Paul Berg and Bob Chebator

Also present- John Maher, Bill Solomon, John Leone, Paul West, Kathy Colwell, Glenn Koenig, Steve Galeotalanza, Barbara Costa, Steve Gilligan, and Julie Kuhn

The draft minutes of the meeting of May 17, 2005 were VOTED (3-0) approved on motion of Mr. Berg, seconded by Mr. Chebator.

Kathy Colwell presented a draft ACMI interim budget request for the committee's review. Following discussion Town Counsel stated that he needed more specific information before taking it to BOS. He had questions regarding the insurance funding and requested more detail. He stated that he'd really like their tax exemption status ruled on by IRS before releasing any funds. The committee and Town Counsel said they'd also like to see a draft contract between ACMI and the Town in the near future.

The committee then discussed the formal Comcast proposal. Special counsel Bill Solomon walked the committee through the Town's RFP request and Comcast's formal response thereto which as was demonstrated failed in almost every single instance to meet or even come close to reasonably meeting the community's cable related needs and interests both for the present and future as identified in the lengthy and thorough Community Needs Assessment conducted by the Town in 2004 with the assistance of Chuck Sherwood and others as part of the Comcast renewal ascertainment process.

The overall consensus of all those in attendance, including the committee, was that the Comcast Proposal was an outrageous response to the Town's RFP which failed miserably to reasonably meet the future cable related community needs and interests, taking into account the cost of meeting such needs and interests.

Mr. McCarthy stated that a negotiating team made up of himself, Paul Berg, Town Counsel, John Maher and Special Cable Counsel, Bill Solomon would begin meeting with Comcast's representatives to explore reaching an informal agreement outside of the formal process.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.