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Minutes 03/14/2007

Selectmen's Cable Television Advisory Committee
 Minutes of Meeting Of March 14, 2007

Meeting began @ 7:10pm in the Hearing Room, 2nd floor, Town Hall.
 Members present – Phil McCarthy, Jim Walsh and Mike Quinn.
 Also present – Bill Solomon, John Maher and Norm McLeod.

The draft minutes of the meeting of October 25, 2006 were VOTED (3-0) approved on motion of Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Quinn.

Mr. McCarthy briefed on the license agreement tentatively reached by the Town's negotiating team with Verizon's representatives. The total package fairly equates to the terms of the Comcast renewal last July, 2006. A franchise fee of 5% of gross cable television revenue, broadly defined to include not only subscriber revenues but also advertising and home shopping revenue; PEG capital support of \$400,000.00 to be paid in equal annual installments of \$40,000.00; I-Net support funds of \$91,000.00 to be paid in equal annual installments of \$9,100.00; 3 PEG channels; up to \$3,500.00 in reimbursement for PEG channel relocation expenses incurred as a result of a channel move, to be effective after three years; cable drops and free basic cable to all municipal buildings; a build out plan that calls for service to be available right away in the 65% of the town served by overhead wires and within 3 years to areas served underground and multiple dwelling(4 or more units) which make up the remaining 35% of town; an agreement that the terms will survive to extent allowed any future changes to state and/or federal licensing laws; and the usual, insurance, indemnification and customer service provisions.

Mr. Solomon spoke to the negotiations on the finer points being worked out, mostly terminology regarding final text of license. Both Mr. Maher and Mr. McCarthy commented on the willingness of Verizon to negotiate amiably and quickly to reach terms that support a level playing field with other providers and contrasted the negotiations with the long and painful Comcast renewal process.

Following discussion it was VOTED (3-0), on motion of Mr. Quinn, seconded by Mr. Walsh, that the Cable Advisory Committee report to the Board of Selectmen that upon a review of Verizon's submissions they find the applicant to be legally, financially and technically qualified to operate a cable television system in Arlington and that the Selectmen accept the terms of the license agreement reached by the Town's negotiating team and Verizon's representatives and issue the applied for license.

Norm McLeod, Exec. Dir of ACMI informed the committee that they were now broadcasting over 3 channels on both Comcast (8, 9, and 10) and RCN (3, 13, and 15). He outlined current staffing. In addition to himself, they have Jeff Munroe, station manager; Walter Locke, outreach coordinator working time; Lakis Thrasivoulos, access production coordinator; and Jim Akimchuck, IT engineer. He said they would soon be hiring an educational access coordinator and later a governmental access coordinator. He provided copies of their latest newsletter detailing their activities and spoke of an upcoming producers gathering that he hoped all could attend. He also provided members a copy of their proposed capital plan.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

