

CITY OF CORTLAND CABLE COMMISSION
Third Floor, City Hall, Mayor's conference room
Monday, March 11, 2013

Present: Richard Menapace, Chair; Mike Berry, James Forshee, Aaron Hamid, Lisa Kahle, and Kevin Williams, Commissioners; and Barbara Bergeron, Secretary

Quorum was present.

Chair Menapace opened the meeting at 7:00 PM and thanked all for being here.

There were no guests or public comments submitted.

Commissioner Kahle made a motion to adopt the February 4, 2013 minutes. Commissioner Forshee seconded the motion and the minutes were adopted.

Old Business:

Attendance Policy:

Commissioner Hamid made a motion that 75% attendance qualifies a Cable Commission member to be in good standing. A one-week notice is required before a scheduled meeting when unable to attend. Mitigating circumstances will be considered by individual basis. A member's standing should be reviewed at the end of each year. If a member is considered not in good standing, they will have no vote but can attend a meeting. Meetings will be held quarterly with the year starting March 2013.

Commissioner Forshee asked, "What is our term of office?" Chair Menapace advised the term is for three years and added they should be integrated as noted in the bylaws.

Commissioner Berry stated he has an elected Village of Homer position that is two years. Mayor Tobin will be contacted about this situation.

Commissioner Hamid made a motion to adopt the Cortland Cable Commission attendance policy. Commissioner Forshee seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Chair Menapace in regard to the issue of CCC not receiving notices, he advised it was now resolved. TWC submitted them to the City Clerk's office, but wasn't aware that they should be forwarded to the Mayor and CCC. The Mayor's office and CCC will now be also receiving these TWC notices.

Chair Menapace restated meetings would now be held quarterly with the next meeting scheduled for June 3, 2013 (the first Monday in June).

Commissioner Hamid asked what would happen if there was anything that needed to be voted upon before the next scheduled meeting. Chair Menapace replied a "special meeting" would be called.

Commissioner Williams said the Town of Homer has an separate contract and his understanding of his position to the CCC was to negotiate a newer contract with TWC. His commission is up in January and he stated he would not re-up. He also advised the Town of Homer elected to go on its own.

Chair Menapace reviewed that the TWC contract was with the CCC and municipalities did have the right to make special amendments. If the Town of Homer is going on their own, it needs to advise TWC and the Commission. Chair Menapace asked that Supervisor Fred Forbes send a copy of the minutes stating the Town of Homer wishes not to be a part of the CCC.

Commissioner Berry asked Commissioner Williams if the Town could get a better deal? Commissioner Williams responded that the Town of Homer is not interested in PEG which has been a sticky point in contract negotiations and suggests this might open up more avenues. Chair Menapace asked if the people of the Town of Homer know where to send complaints. Commissioner Williams advised they go to the Town of Homer or PSC. Effective now, Commissioner Williams stated the Town of Homer is no longer a part of the CCC.

New business:

Chair Menapace made a motion to put a meeting notice in the "Cortland Standard" one week prior to our next meeting, June 3rd to solicit any problems or comments from the public. Commissioner Forshee seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ruth Grunberg communicated to Chair Menapace a request to look into Chattanooga Tennessee's fiber optic systems and a possibility of a municipal cable system in Cortland like what Syracuse is exploring. CT has been established over a period of time. They have spent a lot of money and are close to having fiber in every home. Chair Menapace did not believe it would work here. There is no money to create a municipal system and buy out TWC.

Commissioner Williams advised the Town of Homer have had conversations with Hafley regarding band width that goes from Virgil to Spencer VanEtten. It's a small operation. Commissioner Forshee advised the problem is the "head end"

where signals come in and are sent out to other locations; standard definition to high definition is expensive. Hafley uses several dishes (spore of 16 dishes). Commissioner Hamid advised fiber optics would be ideal and perhaps Verizon would be a competitor, but they don't have a head end. Non-exclusive items allowed in each municipal contract. There is no PEG with Verizon.

Commissioner Williams again stated Town of Homer is not interested in PEG. He has been a long time TWC customer who switched to dish (same services cable and TV). He noted there are choices but doesn't include PEG. He has seen a significant savings. Commissioner Kahle has DSL phone with Verizon and a dish as TWC does not cover her area. Commissioner Forshee advised SUNY Cortland is looking into streaming. Commissioner Kahle confirmed as the current contract is up within the year. Apogee is currently being used as the internet provider for resident students; only geared for education field; and SUNY has their own cable plant. TWC cable is responsible for the jack and any problems with the cable plan so if anything goes wrong, TWC needs to fix it.

Digital adapter boxes: Commissioner Forshee stated customers could get these for free (good to 2014) with no additional monthly fee for now. Free for all household TV's. Chair Menapace mentioned Commissioner Hamid's e-mail sent before this meeting where he found different costs and terms for obtaining the digital boxes: 1) Free to 2013 and/or 2) free to end of 2014, then 99cents per month fee per box. Commissioner Hamid noted Commissioner Stevans has been charged \$6.46 for additional adapters.

Regarding EWTN, the Catholic channel that was removed, Chair Menapace checked with Melanie (Arnold) to see about putting it over PEG but was advised TWC probably would not do it due to the advertising.

In Commissioner Hamid's e-mail he referred also to Section 19 of the current contract stating municipalities have authority over rates and charges. Chair Menapace advised CCC has control over the basic package, and the \$15.95 per month fee was raised to \$19.95 this year. He will call Carol (McTague) and check on this.

Commissioner Williams advised the Town of Homer requested an audit; interest to go to customers-395 modem/373 franchise. He suggested the Town of Homer may consider returning the franchise fee to the customers. The Village of Homer did not take the franchise fee? CCC franchise fees designed to develop PEG with CCC recouping some of that for the purchase of the new equipment.

Chair Menapace advised these items will be reviewed again at next meeting. He thanked Commissioner Hamid for doing over and above research on these subjects.

Chair Menapace adjourned the meeting at 7:52 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 3, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Bergeron