

Cable Television Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes – March 3, 2014

In Attendance (Absent member marked by “X”)

Victory Chase
Amanda Johnson
Bruce McCracken
X Jon MacIvor
Lisa Stevens
Councilman James Vassanella (arrived 7:10 p.m.)
Joyce S. Miller, Secretary

- The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. Roll was called.
- The minutes of the January 6, 2014 meeting were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

- The Committee welcomed Lisa Stevens, the new Library representative.
- The Board of Education has not yet named a representative to the Committee.
- Victory Chase was re-elected Chair of the Committee.
- Ascertainment period
 - ✓ There was no news to report.
- Volunteer videographer pilot program
 - ✓ The draft of the Status Report #4 was distributed to the members via e-mail. There were no comments. Victory will finalize so it can be distributed to the Township Council. [This was done on March 5, 2014].
 - ✓ Victory reported that the first part of the raising of the Rockingham barn taping is being prepared for broadcast at a future date.
 - ✓ The volunteer program ended January 26. Victory will draft a preliminary evaluation of the program, for committee discussion at its April meeting. The committee as a whole will prepare the final required evaluation and recommendations report, to be finalized and approved at its meeting of July 7, 2014. This report will then be sent to the Township Council.
- JAG
 - ✓ While the Jersey Access Group (JAG) invited Franklin to send a representative to attend their monthly meetings in January and February, no one was able to attend.
 - ✓ The Committee voted to join JAG. Funding will come from the Township Manager’s budget. Joyce will initiate the paperwork.

NEW BUSINESS

- In 2011 the Committee reviewed the 2005 policy on the Township’s access channels. They proposed a revision that included the Township website, which they were later advised should not have been done. In February, 2012, the Committee was advised that they should concentrate their efforts on the Comcast franchise renewal. In doing that, the revision of policy was put aside and not discussed any further. Victory had requested that the policy be posted on the Township website, but Joyce questioned if it was appropriate to post the 2005 policy. Copies of the 2005 policy and the proposed (not adopted) 2012 revision

were distributed to the Committee members for their review and discussion at a future meeting.

- Joyce received an e-mail from the Township's new Verizon representative, William Freshwater. He stated that "...there are no plans to expand FiOS in Franklin Township at the present time."
- Joyce received several complaints from residents. If they had not already done so, it was suggested that they forward their complaint to the Office on Cable Television (OCTV). All complaints were forwarded to Nancy Kist, attorney representing the Township in the franchise renewal. For any complaint in which there appears to be a 'bait and switch' on advertised rates, the Committee thought there might be some value for the resident reaching out to the Department of Community Affairs, as well as the OCTV.
 - One resident was offered a price by a Comcast representative in December that Comcast would not honor in January.
 - One resident complained about the increased charges for Comcast service and receiving a quote that wasn't honored the following month. Nancy Kist noted that "... the regulatory regime hasn't caught up with times. The franchise agreement and renewal process covers only the television portion of the service that now comes through the same lines as internet service and telephone lines."
 - One resident, temporarily living in Florida, had been trying for several months to get a refund from Comcast for his returned equipment.
 - One resident was losing connection on a regular basis. Comcast came out and replaced the lines in the house for \$300, saying the lines were old and not capable of serving the newer games and programs. After the house lines were replaced, the resident lost connection again. Comcast said the problem was probably outside the house and possibly affecting other homeowners as well. They were sending a technician.
- Kirk Frost, a Franklin resident, submitted his resume and application to become a member of the Committee. The Committee set time aside to have a discussion with Mr. Frost. After the meeting ended, the Committee voted on whether to recommend to Councilman Vassanella that he submit Mr. Frost's name to the Township Council for appointment to the Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

- The next meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Monday, April 7, 2014.