

# Cable Television Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes – December 7, 2015

### In Attendance (Absent member marked by “X”)

Bruce McCracken  
Jon MacIvor, left at 7:35 p.m.  
Kirkman Frost  
Patricia Stanley  
Joyce S. Miller, Secretary

- The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. Roll was called.
- The minutes of the March 2, 2015 meeting were approved by Bruce, Jon and Joyce who were at the meeting.

### OLD BUSINESS

- Membership:
  - ✓ We are still waiting for a Township Council liaison to be named.
  - ✓ Jon’s and Kirk’s memberships will end December 31, 2015. Kirk agreed to another term, Jon did not (though he was encouraged by the Committee to reconsider).
- Ascertainment Period
  - ✓ Ordinance No. 4118-15, which became effective 10/19/15, granted the renewal of the municipal consent to Comcast of New Jersey to construct, connect, operate and maintain a cable television and communications system in Franklin Township.
  - ✓ The agreement has not yet been signed. The separate letter of agreement is pending. Details of the letter are not available and are still being discussed between the Township attorney and Comcast.
  - ✓ Committee questions about the Ordinance and answers:
    1. Who is the Official complaint officer? The New Jersey BPU Office on Cable Television, not anyone in the Township. The Township provides information and assistance when residents call and tracks complaints.
    2. The language regarding the location of the local Comcast office did not change from the last agreement, and there were no specifics provided.
    3. Comcast is to provide service to schools and public buildings. It is important that Comcast be informed of any new schools or public buildings; but the exact procedure on notification was not determined.
    4. Comcast agreed to a \$125,000 technology grant to the Township. The use of the money by the Township has not yet been determined.
    5. The ordinance mentions a separate letter of agreement. As noted above, the details of the letter and discussions between the Township attorney and Comcast have not been made public.
    6. The ordinance mentions under-utilized channels. The Township uses both of the two channels provided by Comcast—the schools and Township.

- Volunteer Videographer Pilot Program
  - ✓ The pilot program ended, but the Committee discussed the value of broadcasting special programs. Suggestions included programs by the local Chamber of Commerce, special programs offered by the school, and talks with Township Historian Robert Mettler. The access channel would be a good place to promote the Township; i.e. benefits of living here, why the Township received the honor of being named on *Money Magazine's* Best Places to Live three separate years, economic development, etc.
  - ✓ It was recognized that programs broadcast during the pilot program were very time consuming and required expertise to program. The Township pays an outside vendor to record the Council and Board meetings.
  - ✓ The original videographer program was approved by the Township Council. Joyce was going to inquire as to the steps that would be needed in order to again have programs broadcast.
- The Committee looked at the Cable TV webpage, as well as the access channels' schedule on the Township's website.
  - ✓ It was suggested that the schedule be posted in the *Franklin Times* newsletter, though Joyce explained that space was an issue.
  - ✓ The Committee members were going to come up with a list of questions which would be most helpful to residents. These would take the place of the questions which are currently on the webpage.
  - ✓ Joyce was going to find out the source of the music used during the showing of the Bulletin Board, as well as the possibility of using music produced by local bands.

#### NEW BUSINESS

- The Township decided not to rejoin the Jersey Access Group. Despite the one free year of membership, the Township did not take advantage of the membership. Many of the JAG members have private studios and offer many privately-produced programs, and the organization offers assistance and publicity with this. The Township does not have these same needs.
- Joyce was going to request the most recent list of the cable companies' complaints, as well as the complaint list from the Office on Cable Television.
- Comcast said previously that it did not know the number of people who watch the access channels.
- The Committee asked how many customers each of the cable companies had in the Township. Joyce was going to see if that information was available.
- The 2016 meeting dates: the Committee will continue to meet on the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m. with the exception of the months when the first Monday is a holiday (July and September of 2016).

#### RESIDENT COMPLAINTS

- There were the following resident complaints
  - Resident had on-going problems with Comcast, including service, as well as poor service from the representatives. Joyce notified the Comcast representative and recommended the resident contact the Office on Cable Television.
  - Resident said Comcast did repairs but left the wires exposed, creating a dangerous situation for the grandchildren playing in the yard. Joyce

contacted Comcast, who came out to assist and apologized for the problems.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

- The next meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Monday, January 4, 2016