

Montague Cable Advisory Committee
2nd Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall
Meeting Minutes for December 10, 2018.

Meeting convened 5:15 PM 12/10/2018. This meeting is taped.

Members present: Jason Burbank , John McNamara, Rich Kuklewicz

Also present: Dean Garvin of MCCI, filming, Kathy Lynch, Rob Steinberg, Steve Ellis, Chris Collilns.

We review and approve minutes of 10/2/2017. Accepted unanimously.

Rich K. suggests we should meet at least quarterly. He notes that various Comcast communications come to the selectboard. For example, changing of channel positions. He suggests these could be forwarded to the CAC committee chair.

To solicit new members it was suggested MCCI put a public service announcement looking for new members.

Rob Steinberg is recognized, and speaks suggesting that the Broadband committee be disbanded and any willing members be folded into the Cable Advisory Committee. He describes his own adversarial relationship with Comcast, and notes his own drive quote went from \$5,000 to \$260, but that others still have quotes of \$12,000 for their Comcast connection. Rich K. agreed with the disbanding notion.

Kathy Lynch departs before we have an opportunity to recognize her.

John McNamara will be leaving the committee and will send a letter of resignation.

We are in the third year of a ten year Comcast contract, and on March 28 the present MCCI contract will expire.

Chris Collins who runs the Deerfield/Whately/Sunderland cable access station notes that a colleague of his had been to a briefing on proposed FCC rule changes that would allow cable providers to charge the towns for the channel space provided to community access. The concern was that cable providers could name the price and thereby gut the existing budgets of the community access stations. Rob noted that cable providers such as Comcast could be looking to make up for the loss of revenue from people "cutting the cord". Chris noted that his budget was \$160k from four towns, and suggested this was the gravest threat to public access ever seen. He notes that public access stations are how people find out about their government, particularly in rural areas. Advocacy groups are just now mobilizing. The comment period had been extended to this Friday. MCCI had written a letter on this topic, and we vote to recommend it to the selectboard, with the addition of our concerns for towns maintaining their existing jurisdiction over cable rights of way in town infrastructure.

We accept MCCI's request for contract renewal and will take it up at our next meeting.

We adjourn at 6:11 PM 12/10/2018.