

Montague Cable Advisory Committee
2nd Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall
Meeting Minutes for September 16, 2019.

Meeting convened 9/16/2019 5:35 pm. This meeting is taped.

Members present: Jason Burbank , Richard Kuklewicz. Richard Widmer

Also present: Steve Ellis, Deirdre Pleasant taping. Elizabeth Janas, Linda Norman, Nancy Welch, Winona Chevier, Elizabeth Zucker-Lyons are all here from Sunrise Terrace, a Housing Authority owned senior housing complex in town.

Richard Widmer moves to approve meeting minutes from August 5, 2019, Rich Kuklewicz seconds, they are approved by unanimous vote.

Cable service pricing structures for seniors. We have a number of residents at the meeting from senior housing in town. They have a universal complaint that prices have been rising drastically for cable service, and that Comcast pricing for Montague residents seems significantly more than for other towns with different providers. Elizabeth notes that in 2012 she paid \$12./month for basic cable TV service, channels 1-20, with extra cost for internet. Once upgrading she could not return to that service and the minimum service now is \$65. Our visitors wrote a letter which they read. It included stories of residents. There are stories of 30% increases per year. Athol has Spectrum offers \$18./month basic for seniors in senior housing there. Greenfield has GCET, which has cut their bills in half. Steve notes basic rate structures are not able to be negotiated with individual communities according to DTE. Richard Widmer notes that it may be possible for senior residential facilities to subsidize group cable connections. Elizabeth notes that there are ways to obtain TV programming without cable. Rich K. notes the senior

Lilly Wallace, from representative Blais' office joins our meeting, and notes that in Worthington a senior housing facility was changing to Comcast, and they were apparently able to negotiate reduced rates for residents of the housing facility with the help of political support.

Steve Ellis indicates he will investigate options with representative Blais' office.

Rich K notes there are many seniors around town, including Park Villa, Highland School, and downtown Turners, as well as many seniors in their own homes.

Steve Ellis has edited and corrected our evaluation memorandum, now two sheets, a summary sheet and

Rich K moves we submit the Jason's memorandum, Rich W. seconds, all are in favor.

Rich K moves we forward the document from Steve Ellis entitled, MCCI evaluation findings calendar 2018, to the MCCI board for their review. Rich W. seconds. Steve Ellis notes the MCCI board has asked for this feedback and will be expected to consider it. All are in favor.

Steve suggests we could meet the first week of February to accommodate the next year end report. Also, the Comcast rate negotiations, although we likely have no authority

Suggested meeting December 9. 5:30 is suggested as a meeting time.

Meeting adjourns Jason moves, Rich K seconds, all in favor, 6:15 pm.