FIVE TOWN CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Representing the Towns of Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Sheffield and Stockbridge

Minutes

June 11, 2019

6:30pm

Sheffield Town Hall

21 Depot Square

Sheffield, MA

Members Present: Linda Miller –Lenox

Tom Hatch - Great Barrington

Jim Brown – Great Barrington

Michael Kernan – Great Barrington

Nadine Hawver – Sheffield

David Parker - Lee

Others Present: John Maher - Charter

George Doin - Charter

Leo Mahoney – CTSB

Denise Curtin – Recording Secretary

Vytas Barsauskas – Lenox Resident – Lenox Finance Committee

6:30pm Linda Miller called the meeting to order.

Quorum was met. A quorum constitutes 3 towns represented.

**MINUTES:** Tom Hatch moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes of March 11, 2019. Motion was seconded by Michael Kernan.

Tom Hatch made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**CTSB REPORT:**

Leo Mahoney was present to give the report.

* Annual Meeting
  + The 2019 CTSB annual meeting was held on May 14, 2019. The executive committee remains the same for the coming year.
  + Meeting was focused on 2020 and how the organization will change when a new Executive Director is hired in the fall.
  + Since the fibers between schools are in place, the board of director’s wants to see the schools use the technology for distance learning. There will be a good amount of work ahead to prepare for this.
  + Chris Graham, CTSB Operations Manager, has taken on the task for all schools in the Southern Berkshires to actively participate in the school information program, The Buzz.
* Membership needs
  + Membership is currently in the 150 range.
  + We are finding that fewer members are taking advantage of what we have to offer and members are not staying engaged.
  + We will be sending out a survey to our membership and ask for sincere responses as to what the station should be offering.
* Executive Director Interviews
  + First rounds of interviews are upcoming.
  + The CAC will be introduced to the new Director at the December meeting.

**SPECTRUM REPORT:**

* John Maher was present to give the report.
* CTSB Guide listings-
  + CTSB is correct, however, the north county still is seeing our call letters.
  + Input in search doesn’t come up as CTSB.
  + CTSB not listed in channel line-up.
* PSA schedule –
  + Aired August 23 through November 30, 2018. Linda stated that at the last meeting a listing of the channels and times the PSAs ran was requested. John said he didn’t know.
* Billing Due Date Change -
  + John stated that customers were notified between February – March 2019 that their billing due date would be changing beginning with the May bills.
  + Statements will now be generated and mailed on the same day.
  + No late charges will assessed until 30 days after the bill due date.
  + The committee disagreed and stated that notification was not in their March bills. They have requested a second notice announcement be put in the next billing cycle to re-iterate the change and explain it better how these changes will work.
* Peg pass through –
  + As of June 2019, $113,745 remaining to be recouped by Charter of the initial $212k grant.
* WCVB and WWLP –
* There are no plans to bring these out of market stations back onto the Berkshire channel lineup.
* John stated he had no further comment on this issue.
* Complaints/issues –
  + Linda stated that the committee was told that Charter promised that they were bringing call centers back to United States. We continually get overseas call centers when calling. John asked who told the committee that. When given the answer he questioned the veracity of the answer.
  + Request to change the zip code for Great Barrington on the bills – now states 01262 and the Great Barrington zip code is 01230.
  + If you are experiencing technical issues please call Spectrum.
  + The committee has asked several times for a list of which channels are “must carry” and what channels are broadcast channels. Linda told John to provide this list within 30 days.
  + David Parker asked if there are seasonal rates. He states that it used to be around $13.00 and now is around $44.00. George Doin said that even though it is a seasonal subscription, signal is still transmitting to the house because the account is still active.
  + David also asked if he could program his DVR remotely? He can do this while in his house, but 50 miles away he can’t. George said he would be happy to go to David’s house and take a look and help him out.
  + Lenox construction – have not heard of any major issues. George indicated that they are sending techs right away when called if they have 2 or more households out.
* Subscriber Questionnaire Scheduled for 2019:
  + Melinda sent a copy.
  + Linda questioned why it is only one sided. What will be on the other side? Will it be a single page, or a trifold? John said, “What’s the difference?”
  + John could not answer these questions and will get back to the committee.

**OLD BUSINESS –**

* New York State and Charter issues have been settled.

**NEW BUSINESS –**

* Tom told the committee about a June 5th meeting of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.
  + Senator Markey spoke about Berkshire County not getting regular broadcasts from Springfield and Boston. He also spoke about the FCC and peg channel issue.
* Election of Chairman –
  + Jim Brown nominated Linda Miller and Tom Hatch seconded.
  + Vote was unanimous and Linda Miller has been re-elected as The Five Town Cable Advisory Committee Chairman.

**OTHER BUSINESS** –

* The entire committee present discussed its extreme disappointment and outrage in the way John Maher conducted himself at this meeting tonight. He was unprepared, exhibited disgraceful behavior and was very disrespectful to the committee.
* Linda will make Melinda aware of this.

Motion to adjourn made by Michael Kernan. Motion seconded by Tom Hatch and Nadine Hawver. Motion carried unanimously.

* Meeting adjourned 7:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Curtin

Recording Secretary

**NEXT MEETING:**

Tuesday, September 10, 2019 in Lenox at 6:30pm