

FIVE TOWN CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Representing the Towns of Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Sheffield and Stockbridge
Minutes
September 13, 2022
6:30pm
Stockbridge Town Hall – Stockbridge, MA

PUBLIC HEARING FOR UPCOMING CABLE FRANCHISE RENEWAL

Members Present: Linda Miller –Lenox
Tom Hatch – Great Barrington
Rene Wood – Sheffield
Anita Schwerner – Stockbridge
Michael Canales – Stockbridge
Patrick White - Stockbridge

Others Present: John Maher – Charter
Rich Frederick – CTSB
Ed Abrahams – Great Barrington Selectboard member

6:31pm Linda Miller, Chair of the Cable Advisory Committee called the meeting to order.

The purpose of this hearing is for the public to see what the committee has determined are the needs of the community of cable service and community television for the renewal of the cable television franchise contract.

OVERVIEW: We have done an extensive study, which the state calls the Ascertainment. Linda Miller and Rene Wood worked along with Dennis Arseneau, Vice-Chair of the committee to put together the Ascertainment Report. Dennis has been very instrumental in putting the presentation together for tonight's hearing. He has done a massive amount of work, research, statistics, new state rules and much more for this presentation, and we would like to publicly thank him.

Linda Miller turned the meeting over to Rene Wood.
The Five Town Cable Advisory Committee represents the towns of Sheffield, Great Barrington, Stockbridge, Lee and Lenox.

The contract between Charter/Spectrum and the five towns is up for renewal in February 2023.

There is a state mandated process from the Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and cable that we have followed through on.

The work we have presented to Charter/Spectrum, as well as to the state and to each of the five towns, is referred to as the Ascertainment Report.

It should be on the websites of the respective five towns soon.

There was a survey done back in March which we received about 500 responses too and 298 separate comments. This was done to give us information as to how we can best suit the needs of the towns.

Rene Wood stated a disclaimer that the Ascertainment Report is not the opinion of the 5 towns, their selectboards, or their administrators, but the 3 opinions of Linda Miller, Rene Wood and Dennis Arseneau.

There are 2 phases of this formal, and very methodical timeline for renewal of the cable license from the state.

PHASE 1 – is the Ascertainment which protects the municipalities and the community needs.

PHASE 2 – is the Negotiation of the license for another 10 years.

Phase 1 – The Ascertainment

- The report needs to be in the hands of everyone by September 1st, which we have complied with.

Phase 2 – The Negotiation

- Charter has 30 days to respond to the Ascertainment report, however, due to the holiday, start of school, etc. they have requested a 30 day extension, which this committee has granted.
- Charter has until October 31, 2022 to get back to us to begin the negotiations.
- All of the language is standard that we are asking for and nothing we are asking for is cutting edge questions.
- If by February 23, 2023 we are not in agreement, the current license will continue and we can get extensions.

Rene Wood continued to give a synopsis of the slide presentation. As stated earlier, this presentation will be on your town websites to review the entire presentation and we encourage you to do so. You can also logon to the CTSB website to view the entire meeting. Go to [CTSBTV.org](https://www.ctsbvtv.org)/click on Public Channel 1301/in the Search bar type in Five Town Cable Advisory/Click on September 13, 2022 meeting.

Motion made to adjourn by Rene Wood, seconded by Tom Hatch.
Public hearing was adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Denise Curtin
Recording Secretary

CAC Hearing Attendance – September 13th, 2022

Name:

Town of Residence:

Email address: (optional)

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Hanover

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