



Committee Members

Jeffrey Levering, Chair
Sergio Bacelis
Phillip Lwasa
John Keough
Stephen Quist
William Nay

Contacting the Committee

Cable Services
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CITY OF WORCESTER

Meeting Minutes

Cable Television Advisory Committee

Approved November 8, 2023

Tuesday, September 19, 2023, 6:00PM
Meeting Room A, DPW&P Building, 50 Manny Familia Way

*This meeting will be held in-person
with an option to also join remotely (see the bottom of the agenda for details)*

Call To Order

1. Roll Call

Present: William Nay, Sergio Bacelis, Phillip Lwasa, John Keough, Jeffrey Levering. Judith Warren (Director, Cable Services)

Absent: Stephen Quist

2. Approval of Minutes – August 2, 2023

Moved: Levering; Seconded: Nay; Roll Call (5 Yes, 0 No)

3. Ascertainment Consultant Update (Buske)

Buske: Explained that community Needs Assessment and Compliance Review drafts have been completed, but will remain in draft form until review is completed, until parties reach agreement on franchise or if after formal negotiations an agreement cannot be reached. Emphasized that this is because during negotiation process information may be presented that necessitates update of these documents. Also informed board that the City has obtained outside legal counsel for negotiations, who will be briefed soon on the current status of this process. Explained that the working documents can be viewed by CTAC members at City Hall.

Keough: Raised concerns about security of drafts being circulated via email for working purposes, and questioned reasoning behind committee members only being able to access documents in person.

Buske: Explained that this was the process recommended by the City Solicitor.

Keough: Emphasized concerns over this process, including the undue burden on the board to access these documents. Questioned City Solicitor's commitment to this process and the Administration's handling of these negotiations. Reiterated security concerns with email transmission of documents.

Levering: Suggested that Buske and Warren could bring these concerns to the attention of the Solicitor.

Keough: Requested that Buske and Warren do not address this for him, and expressed ethical concerns with the handling of these documents.

Bacelis: Asked why board members cannot receive copies of the documents via email.

Warren: Explained that this is a way to allow CTAC members to do their job in reviewing documents without making them fully accessible to the public.

Keough: Requested City Solicitor explain this decision. Emphasized concerns over board members being able to take time to visit City Hall in person to review this document.

Bacelis: Echoed Keough's concerns about time constraints.

Levering: Expressed agreement that this process is burdensome, but also recognized confidentiality concerns. Requested City release documents to individual committee members, either in printed or email form. Suggested confidentiality agreements as a way to protect the privacy of these documents.

Buske: Offered to ask legal counsel for negotiation process what his opinion on this matter is in upcoming meeting.

Levering: Asked Buske if in her experience committees are not given draft copies of her report.

Buske: Replied that this is not typical.

Lwasa: Asked why this strategy is being employed. Expressed concerns that committee was tasked with recommending changes without easy access to the document.

Buske: Emphasized that this process was advised by the City Solicitor, and offered to find a solution to the board's concerns, such as providing the board with a presentation on contents of the report that would not compromise security of details which could be used by other side in negotiations.

Keough: Clarified that, based on his research as an investigative reporter, the past leak of information to Charter during last negotiation process came from the City, not from any members of the CTAC. Asked if committee was supposed to have a say in selection of negotiations attorney and gave the opinion that board should be voting on recommendations of this nature.

4. Progress on open Spectrum questions (Warren)

Warren: Explained that board should have received a copy of correspondence from City Manager to Charter regarding rates/fees, and informed board that a response from Charter will be provided at the next meeting.

- a. *What stations are city residents paying for the "broadcast fee"?*

- b. *Is there a broadcast fee for "Spectrum Choice", and is it based on the channels selected?*
- c. *Does Spectrum still believe they are following the contract re: downgrading PEG channels during transmission?*
- d. *Other?*

5. PEG Channel Expenses Review (Quist)

Levering: Explained that Quist expressed intentions to request information about city's expenses on PEG channels through FOIA. This is pending a response from the City.

6. Committee Progress (Levering)

Levering: Announced intention to step down as chair and retire from board at next meeting.

7. Adjournment

Moved: Levering; Seconded: Nay; Roll Call (5 Yes, 0 No)

2023 Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, October 4 (Location TBD)

Virtual Meeting Information

This meeting will be held in-person at the date, time and location listed above. Meeting attendees will have the option to participate remotely by joining online or by phone. Note: If technological problems interrupt the virtual meeting, the meeting will continue.

Web: Use the following link to join the meeting via Microsoft Teams on the computer [Click here to join the meeting](#)

or

Meeting ID: 222 395 616 631

Access Code: MrZwAA