



Cable Television Advisory Committee Agenda  
January 12, 2022 Reschedule from 1/5/2022  
VIRTUAL ONLY via Webex

To join meeting online using WebEx platform:

1. go to [www.webex.com](http://www.webex.com)
2. click the "join" button on the top right side of the screen
3. enter the meeting ID, 160 794 8474

To attend via phone:

1. call 1-415-655-0001
  2. enter the access code: 160 794 8474
- 
1. Call meeting to order – Roll Call
  2. Public comment pertaining to items on the agenda
  3. Chief Financial Officer response to funding (All)
  4. Councilman Rosen's Motion (Warren)
  5. Update regarding additional members (Warren)
  6. Timeline – Plan of Action for Ascertainment
    - a. Status, Review, Modify draft Timeline (Quist)
  7. Survey / Public Feedback meetings, what does the Committee want to know? (Levering)
  8. Next Meeting: February 2, 2022
  9. Adjournment



The City of  
**WORCESTER**

Administration & Finance  
**Timothy J. McGourthy, Chief Financial Officer**  
City Hall, 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608  
P | 508-799-1225 F | 508-799-1097  
treasurer@worcesterma.gov

December 2, 2021

To: Members of the Cable Television Advisory Committee  
From: Timothy J. McGourthy, Chief Financial Officer  
Re: Ascertainment & Cable Funding

I write to offer a brief formal response to the Cable Television Advisory Committee's (CAC) request for information related to cable funding and Ascertainment. I apologize as I understand there was some initial confusion around the request and response.

The question originally posed to me was whether a budget existed for Ascertainment. My response was that a budget does not exist, but if the CAC is looking for resources to complete its work it should identify the specific tasks/costs and put forward a proposed budget. (This is the same guidance given to any City department or board.) As required under the Charter, this proposal would be submitted to the City Manager for consideration, and depending on the outcome of his review, he could submit a request to City Council to appropriate the necessary funds. Under the Charter, only the City Manager may submit a budget and make a recommendation for funding to the City Council.

I later understood that you are really requesting information on how much funding is available for Ascertainment. To be clear, there is no dedicated Ascertainment fund. Instead, funding for this purpose would come from the general administration account for Cable. Each year, 15%<sup>1</sup> of the cable license fee goes into the PEG – Cable Administration account. This account provides support for activities related to the management of the cable contract and is generally used for a portion of staff costs in the Cable and Law departments. As of December 1, 2021, the PEG-Cable Admin reserve had \$304,497.75 available. We assume an annual draw of approximately \$200K on the fund for the above listed purposes. Approximately \$100K has been drawn this fiscal year to date, so we can assume approximately \$100K more will be drawn down prior to June 30, 2022. Therefore, the PEG-Cable Admin reserve has approximately \$204K remaining that could potentially be used for Ascertainment purposes. I will caution, though, that doing so would eliminate the reserve and leave the fund unprepared for future challenges. (In the last ten years, the 15% License Fee contribution hit a high of \$280K in FY16, but has been steadily decreasing ever since and totaled just over \$240K in FY21.)

I hope this provides the information requested and, again, my apologies for any confusion.

---

<sup>1</sup> Please note, this number is a correction from an email exchange that erroneously listed the administration fee as 10% of the cable license fees. The fee was changed from 10% to 15% in FY10.

cm2021oct14125139

## CITY OF WORCESTER

Pursuant to a vote of the Committee on Public Service and Transportation, be it

### **ORDERED: That**

That City Council does hereby recommend that the Cable Television Advisory Committee incorporate in its contract renewal negotiation with Charter/Spectrum the following needs of City Cable TV subscribers: 1) Instead of paying a monthly rental fee per cable box, cable TV subscribers be allowed to make a one-time payment to purchase cable boxes either from Charter/Spectrum or private vendors; 2) All cable TV subscribers over the age of 60 be given a seniors-specific discount plan; 3) Long-time cable TV subscribers be given the same discount offers as new customers are given; 4) Customer service and efficiency be greatly improved at Charter/Spectrum Grafton St. store front; 5) The next contract between City of Worcester and Charter/Spectrum be 5-year contract.

In City Council

December 21, 2021

Order adopted by a yea and nay vote of Ten Yeas and No Nays

A Copy. Attest:



**Nikolin Vangjeli**  
City Clerk