

Cable Television Committee

Minutes

March 28, 2000

The following are the minutes for the Cable Commission meeting of March 28, 2000 that met at Town Hall beginning at 7:30 P.M. In Attendance were Hal Barnett, Mike Daitzman, Marty Greenstein, Peggy Frederickson, Jeff Winston, and Town ex-officio members Bob Kavanaugh and Mark Thompson.

In Executive session Jeff informed us of the state of the negotiations on the renewal with Cablevision.

The number of subscribers to Cablevision is 3838. This is approximately 75% of the households in the town.

A motion was presented and passed four to nothing with one abstention to provide Cablevision with a 90-day license extension to allow our negotiations to continue past the end of the current license. Our lawyer Peter Epstein supports this and we expect that Cablevision will also agree.

Marty suggested that we request that Cablevision provide us a full time Local Access person as a condition to the extension but this was turned down by the committee which believes that Michael, our current coordinator, does not want to be full-time. So for now we will let the issue rest.

Mark Thompson has been in contact with Cablevision engineers and provided us with a map showing the logical routing and connectivity of the I-net along with data on the termination equipment needed. It is currently planned that the I-net mate with the current Town fiber optic network at the Flynn Building. Firewalls will separate the Town from the School networks as well as providing protection to the police station and library. These latter firewalls are to separate the I-net from other outside networks that the police and librarians use.

There was some discussion over the I-net technology. It turns out that the I-net will require cable modems acting in the same way that home subscribers will receive Internet. However, the I-net will consist of fibers that are dedicated to the Town. The Town government data will be carried by one light frequency carrier wave(channel) while the School data will be on another, thereby providing positive isolation. The technology that is being used is satisfactory to the committee. We believe that it can be upgraded economically in the future to provide additional services such as telephony.

The committee has not yet been informed of some details of the actual implementation including the physical routing. There was some question as to whether Cablevision was actually going to implement a STAR network as Mark's diagram shows.

We expect to brief the Selectmen on these issues and on the installation of video equipment into Town Hall once Town Meeting is completed.

Peggy showed us a brochure for a streaming video server that is implemented on a Windows NT laptop. The existence of such equipment is relevant since we may want to

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transmit our Local Access materials digitally from the Town Hall to the Local Access station in the high school. Alternatives include analog broadcast via the I-net fiber. There is ample capacity to do this on a spare channel separate from the I-net data transmission frequencies.

It was noted that the Town Election results were on the Local Access station by the end of Election Day. Good job, Michael!

There is no news of Cablevision's progress in selling their MA cable systems as they announced late last year.

We adjourned at 9 PM and plan to meet again the second Tuesday of April.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marty Greenstein