

**Cable Television Committee  
Minutes  
January 23, 2001**

These are the minutes of the Sudbury Cable Commission meeting that took place at the Firehouse on January 23, 2001. In attendance were Jeff Winston, Peggy Fredricksen, Hal Barnett, Michael Daitzman, Mark Thompson, Michael Pincus, Bob Kavanagh and special guest Rob Travers, Director of Community Relations (MA) for AT&T and formerly of Cablevision.

Rob showed us a street map of the Town of Sudbury with the roads highlighted via felt marker with colors indicating their state of installation vis-a-vis the new fiber optic based cable. Most roads (greater than 90%) were pink indicating that they were fully upgraded. Not pink were a few private roads, most notably Willis Hills, Wyman Drive, and Cudworth Lane, (which are part of the "Lions" development), plus a section of Old Lancaster which would be ready to go except for a bad power supply. When the private roads become public roads, they will be cabled.

The power supplies, Rob said, would have a 4 to 6 hour battery back-up. Michael pointed out that if telephone service were offered, a longer back-up might be preferable. Rob said that Media One has put telephone over cable into a few communities but AT&T has not (so far).

The cable system, as always, is connected to the Maynard Head End. The equipment in the Head End has been upgraded and is now capable of digital service. However, the new service which Rob will send us more details on as it becomes available (By next meeting he promises a channel listing for a typical town that is in operation, such as Acton). Because of 5 to 1 data compression, our system has a capacity of 180 separate channels over 30 (math?) digital frequencies. However, some of these digital channels will be audio only.

HDTV will not be soon. They have no requirement to transmit received HDTV.

Bob Kavanaugh was concerned about per classroom charges. A rumor of a charge of \$30 per classroom per month was squelched by Rob Travers who said that there will be a free drop to every school and so long as no extra boxes are needed, there should be no charges.

Jeff related our concern from last meeting that the new high school would need cabling in a couple of years. Rob did not think that we should be charged on the basis of similar situations in other towns.

AT&T is converting their RoadRunner service to At Home. This is not necessarily wonderful since At Home throttles bandwidth, does not allow home servers, and does not support static IP addresses. There was some concern at the meeting that At Home might not support Virtual Private Networks which is a way that some companies support stay-at-home work, etc. We urged Rob to relate that this is an important feature. We also told Rob that Sudbury businesses were very interested in using cable high speed Internet. (I noticed that all of Route 20 was wired – that is pink on the map).

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AT&T has a pilot program, here and in Colorado, where 6 to 8 ISPs are allowed to provide service over their cables.

We went over the letter (e-mail) that Jeff sent to Rob. This e-mail highlighted some of AT&T's obligations under the license.

Peggy pointed out that the crosstalk between channels 54 and 61 is still occurring.

Rob offered to attend the school/studio subcommittee this coming Friday at 11 AM at the high school studio.

Rob's e-mail is rktravers@broadband.att.net.

No new boxes will be needed by current subscribers due to the new cable installation. However, the reception of digital broadcast will require replacements. Boxes are leased by AT&T at cost (due to regulation).

A discussion of studio equipment was held. A concern of the committee was that Mike Morrissey had told us that other AT&T studios use DVCPRO equipment. These cameras were not budgeted by us when we asked for an equipment budget as part of our license. We requested from Rob a feeling as to whether we could go slightly beyond budget to allow AT&T to have this equipment at our studio too. He hedged on this topic. DVCPRO apparently provides better signal quality, partially at least, due to advanced digital compression algorithms.

We discussed a three-tier equipment purchase for the studio: consumer equipment (cameras) for the novice user, mid-range equipment for Mike and other accomplished users on site, plus very good studio equipment. The budget would be spent in three segments: miscellaneous expenses, studio equipment, and town hall equipment.

The subcommittee told Rob that they wanted one piece of equipment now: an Apple G4 733 MHz computer (price \$3239 if bought from the Apple Store) that can write DVDs (?) and CDs. The reasons for this are that the school already has equipment of this design and power (Note: this computer is state of the art, and, my comment, not even yet available for several more weeks) and there is a real need for high speed processing, particularly for the high school students doing video work. Apparently the video-editing program used by the 20 or so A-V students in the high school is Apple's Final Cut Pro. A formal request for this computer will be made in the near future.

Sean McEnroe has decided to be on call to the committee when his networking expertise is in need but will not, at least for now, attend our regular meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Marty Greenstein