

Minutes, Cable commission meeting, February 5, 2018

Meeting came to order at 5:30

Attendees

Lee Beckerman

Michael Esolda

Cory Spillar

Joe Turant

Bruno Martins

Ryan L. Michelson

Lee Beckerman went over the situation concerning refranchising the Cable Contract with Comcast Cable

We have until August 2018 to write a Municipal Ascertainment report concerning the performance of Comcast cable during previous contract. The cable company must then apply to renew the contract by November 2018, and then negotiate with the Township by the end of the current contract in August 2019.

The Ascertainment report should include a Municipal survey, Public Hearings, an overview of complaints concerning Comcast cable as reported to the Cable hotline, the BPU and to Comcast cable if possible.

Bringing other cable systems into the town was discussed. It was thought that it is unlikely that a competing cable company would be willing to come in but it was decided that the commission would reach out to other cable companies in the state to see if it would be feasible to have a competing company come to Woodbridge. Ryan Michelson agreed to reach out to NJ Cable companies on behalf of the commission.

The current status of Verizon FIOS was discussed. Michael Esolda said he does not believe that Verizon is building out anywhere new in the state. He has been in touch with Verizon since they agreed that they were going to serve Woodbridge but has seen no movement to date except for small areas around Hopelawn which was overbuilding from Perth Amboy as Verizon did not know exactly where the boundaries were. Michael will reach out to Verizon and try and get a current status.

Bruno Martins Volunteered to look at the cable complaints taken by the township. Lee Beckerman noted that older complaints were taken by former commission member Jane Girard who has since passed away so these complaints may not be available. Le Beckerman will contact the BPU and see if they have complaints concerning Woodbridge available.

Discussion on what we wanted from a new cable contract was had. Different options for cable/internet services at public buildings were discussed. Donations to summer concert series, senior discounts affecting PAAD recipients were discussed. HD Channels for The Woodbridge Channels as well as updating Video Equipment for the stations was discussed. Keeping the Lord Street facility for the length of the contract was discussed. Cory Spillar brought up that a new Quick Check is going up at the former

parking lot for Lord Street and wondered where people paying their bills were going to park. Joe Turant brought up new Comcast X-1 stores with many services and the ability to pay Cable bills in as an alternative to lord St. as a possibility for negotiation (he had visited one in Florida)

Cable survey was disused. Lee Beckerman will reach out to other towns for copies of other surveys and look at previous Woodbridge questions and send out list of possible questions for a new Woodbridge Survey. He will share sample questions with the group via Email and have members choose what works best. The survey should go out in the next newsletter depending on dates. Other ways of distributing surveys at public events was discussed.

Joe Turant will help put together survey results and complaints as soon as they have been organized.

Cory Spillar will take charge of arranging the public Meeting when a timeframe is agreed on.

Who will represent us leally was discussed. Michael Esolda and Lee Beckerman will reach out to Eric Lange in the Woodbridge legal Department and get clarification. Previous contract was negotiated using Eric Bernstein.

Who will write the final report based on our findings was discussed. Neither Lee nor Michael was aware of who wrote the previous final report. They will look into the matter going forward.

It was decided that Lee Beckerman would serve as Chairman of the committee.

Committee will decide on next Commission meeting date via E-mail