

**Belmont Cable Television Advisory Committee (CTAC)
Meeting Minutes**

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Date: June 7, 2016
Location: Town Hall, Conference Room 1
Attendees
Committee: Mark Carthy, Committee Member, Chairman
Chet Messer, Committee Member, Acting Secretary
Others: Phyllis Marshall, Assistant Town Administrator
Peter Epstein, Epstein & August
Joshua Grubman, Attorney, Kerbey Harrington Pinkard LLP, for Verizon

Meeting called to order at 3:05 pm.

Action on the minutes from May 10, 2016 meeting is deferred to next meeting.

Attorney Grubman opened the meeting explaining and apologizing for the fact that with the end of the Verizon work stoppage by union employees which occurred only a few days before this meeting Verizon management was winding down emergency operations and could not be present and Attorney Harrington was not available due to travel to Washington, DC.

Grubman continued that he had the authority to accept comments and concerns about the proposed agreement but could not bind Verizon. He indicated that some of the suggested changes might be incorporated in a new draft document to be submitted in about 10 days after the conclusion of the meeting. He expressed hope that some of the issues discussed in the prior meeting may be addressed in the new draft agreement.

Attorney Epstein reviewed the timing of negotiations that have occurred to date and subsequent negotiations necessary to meet the deadline of the expiring agreement on September 27, 2016. The March 31, 2016 proposals submitted by Verizon began a 120 day negotiating window that will end on July 31, 2016. However this date can be extended to finish the negotiations but it is important to note the Selectmen need to be presented with the recommendation of the CTAC by September 1, 2016. Grubman expressed a belief that agreement could be completed by September 1, 2016.

Atty. Epstein explained that the town wishes to have a consistent template for its cable TV franchise agreements for ease of administration. Grubman indicated that Verizon wishes to use its current template. Epstein responded that the template is important to the town and an issue for further discussion.

Discussions then ensued about numerous items in the Verizon proposal that are unacceptable to the town, such as, the unilateral right to cancel the franchise agreement, a five-year agreement as well as the description of normal business hours which would govern the timing of delivery of customer services under the agreement. Town representatives called attention to numerous proposals contained in the new agreement that Verizon needs to explain the

reasoning for their inclusion and/or overly broad language of proposed new and/or existing terms.

Other items the town wishes included in the agreement is the ability to the cablecast in HD, have its programs included in the program guide and a discount program for senior citizens.

It was also a substantial discussion about the amount and timing of payments for capital expenditures required to maintain facilities and equipment to enable quality PEG access services in the Town.

The parties agreed that the next meeting would be held on June 23, 2016.

Meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm.