



DRAFT

**Portsmouth
Cable Commission Meeting
3:30 p.m. – July 5, 2007
City Hall/City Manager's Conference Room**

The Portsmouth Cable Commission met on Thursday, July 5, 2007 at 3:30 p.m.

The following were present:

Cindy Hayden, Deputy City Manager
John Gregg, Chairman
Brian Gregg, Commissioner
Nancy Beach, Commissioner
Gary Lowe, Alternate Commissioner

Also present were Alan Brady, City of Portsmouth Webmaster and Ben Pottier, UMass Student, journalism.

- I. Call to Order** - Chairman John Gregg called the meeting to order at approximately 3:35 p.m.
- II. Approval of Minutes – June 7, 2007** - Voted to approve and accept the minutes of the April 5, 2007 meeting. Motion passed.
- III.** The Chair referred the Commission's June discussion of arranging to have political candidates' personal statements of their qualifications for elected office produced and shown on Channel 22 prior to this fall's city wide elections. The conclusion of the prior discussion was to ask that he, Nancy Beach and Brian Gregg draft a "how to" plan for discussion at today's meeting. The Chair stated that the committee worked on a policy and the practical solution for doing so. He indicated he felt the policy part of the task was not difficult, but felt the practical would be and was not sure that it is an idea that can or should go forward this year.

He gave the members a draft of "Televising Political Candidate Statements on Channel 22." (*Attached*)

He then identified that the practical issues for carrying out the plan would be finding the place and equipment for allowing candidates to record their personal statements, and scheduling all candidates to do so. Several ideas for resolving these issues had been explored but were judged less than ideal.

He reported that he had discussed this concept with the City Manager who stated that he has made a strong distinction that City employees are not really involved in the politics of the City and would want to assure that the effort was seen in that light i.e. preferably not involving city employees and not confusing sponsorship by running the candidate statements on the government channel. The City Manager also indicated he felt it important that the system be fair to all the candidates - not biased in any way.

Nancy Beach and Brian Gregg then outlined ways that had been considered for doing this e.g. working with the high school (students in media production), New Heights, the Portsmouth Herald and/or a local video production company. Pros and cons of each were identified.

Gary Lowe pointed out that this idea would work well if the city had a Public Access channel with equipment and staff in place to support it. This is an example of the benefit of having a Public Access channel. Nancy Beach also stated this adds to our narrative as to another important reason for the need of a public access station.

The Chair pointed out that if the Commission chose not to pursue the idea at the moment, this discussion becomes a part of our public record and part of the minutes.

MOTION made by Gary Lowe to table this for a time uncertain and include it in our reasons for going forward for asking the City Council for a Public Access and Educational Access channels at a later date. Seconded by Brian Gregg. Motion passed.

IV. Adjournment - MOTION made by Nancy Beach. Seconded by Gary Lowe. Motion passed.

Next meeting is scheduled for August 2, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine E. Boucas, Recording Secretary