

Portsmouth Cable and Communications Commission Meeting
3:30 p.m. City Hall/City Manager's Conference Room
May 12, 2011

Present: Commissioners Nancy Beach, John Gregg, Brian Gregg, and Kathy Pearce. Joel Look, a member of the public, was in attendance as a visitor.

Absent: Commissioner Bill Southworth, Assistant City Attorney Suzanne Woodland and Alan Brady.

- I. Motion made by Brian Gregg and seconded by Nancy Beach to express the Commission's appreciation to Elaine Boucas for her many years of cheerful support in recording the minutes of Commission meetings. Motion passed unanimously.
- II. Minutes of the meeting of September 9, 2010 were unanimously approved. Motion made by Kathy Pearce and seconded by Brian Gregg.
- III. Brian Gregg reported on the status of the High Speed Telecommunications Committee, a joint committee of the Economic Development Commission and the Cable Commission. He reported that the committee appears to have little momentum.
- IV. The Commission also discussed the current and future workload of the Cable Commission and whether there was merit in clarifying/broadening the commission charter. Potential agenda topics discussed were becoming more directly involved in the high speed telecommunications investigation (discussed above), critiquing the status of the government channel with an eye toward some updating, reopening discussions with the department of education regarding their plans, and visiting the subject of Comcast pricing of the basic cable package.

It was agreed that Chairman Gregg would seek the advice of the City Manager regarding these options and report back to the Commission. Brian Gregg asked to be included in the conversation. Motion made by Kathy Pearce and seconded by Nancy Beach, all approved.

- V. John Gregg alerted commission members to the request by the city of Boston to the FCC for permission to regulate the rate their residents pay for the basic tier package of Comcast. Boston officials believe the rate is too high (\$15.80/month with a \$5.00 discount for senior citizens) and higher than the rate Comcast charges in some surrounding communities. The rate in Portsmouth is \$21.15. There was some discussion about the ability of a community to regulate this basic tier rate. Chairman Gregg agreed to review the matter with the Assistant City Attorney. A motion was made by Nancy Beach and seconded by Brian Gregg to ask the city to send a letter to Comcast requesting information regarding the number of Portsmouth basic tier subscribers. The motion passed unanimously.
- VI. John Gregg updated commission members regarding the status of Portsmouth Public Media. No action was taken. Commissioners were pleased with the progress reported.
- VII. A discussion of future meeting dates for the commission concluded that members should keep the previously published list of dates on their calendars, a notice of cancellation or meeting with a week's lead time would be appreciated, and the next scheduled meeting date is June 9.

VIII. Joel Look expressed interest in becoming a member of the commission. He is taking steps to do so. There was discussion regarding the service being received by residents of Margeson apartments. Mr. Look was advised to pursue the matter directly with the city if he cares to do so as the problem appears to be more related to the wiring of the building than Comcast service per se.

The meeting was then adjourned. Motion by Kathy Pearce and second by Brian Gregg, all approved.

Minutes submitted by John Gregg