

Newport News Cable Television Advisory Commission

Minutes of September 28, 2009 Meeting

Present:

Judith Amdal
Gerry DeForge
Charles Harper
Michael Korb
Courtney Sickafoose

Paul Miller
Alan Jackson
Jerri Wilson
Steve Goad (by phone)

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM
- II. Introductions were made to new Commissioner, Charles Harper
- III. The minutes of the June 22, 2009 NNCTAC meeting were corrected to reflect the accurate spelling of Commissioner Amdal's name. The corrected minutes were approved.
- IV. Comments:
 - a. COX – Steve Goad told the Commission that they would continue to see channel moves and changes for the next few years.
 - b. VERIZON - Paul Miller reported 2 franchise notifications
 - i. Changes to the Korean and Chinese International package
 - ii. TV Guide Channel – channel 48 – has been purchased by another company; it is moving towards a documentary format
 1. Commissioner DeForge asked what would take the place of the former TV Guide service. He feels that it provides valuable information and is used as a channel guide. Mr. Miller suggested using the cable box guide, which can be accessed by pressing “Guide” on the remote control device.
- V. The public requested no audiences.
- VI. Member Comments/Announcement:
 - a. Commissioner DeForge expressed concern that the public does not know that the Commission is meeting so the odds of someone showing up and requesting an audience are relatively small.
 - i. How can the Commission publicize its meetings?
 - ii. Is there a “hit counter” on the website?
 - iii. Can meetings be advertised in the Daily Press or on the City Channel?

VII. New Business

a. Customer Satisfaction:

Commissioner DeForge noted that Cox is running advertisements to entice customers to switch from Verizon to Cox saying that Verizon customer service is poor. Isle of Wight County did a customer service survey to explore including performance standards in future franchise agreements. He asked if there is a way to conduct a survey among City residents to determine satisfaction and to include performance standards in the City's future franchise agreements. A survey was discussed extensively. There was some discussion about the latitude that the City has (legally) to impose standards on the cable provider. Deputy City Attorney Alan Jackson responded that, because of State and Federal regulations, he believes there are many constraints on what localities can impose on companies. The City can respond to complaints, attempt to resolve complaints, but has no power to enforce recommendations. The City Attorney's office will come back to the Commission in January with more information for the group regarding whether or not (or to what extent) the City can impose standards on companies. Other issues included: 1) what technologies are available – how would a survey be administered, 2) cost – the cable commission does not have a budget, and 3) who should actually administer such a project. Steve Goad stated that with Cox, the formal process provides an opportunity to solicit comments from Citizens, but it is up to the City what format that opportunity should take. He warned that any feedback is a "snapshot in time." There are different types of data gathering allowed by the FCC and the cost can be passed on to constituents. There are many technologies available (Twitter, FaceBook, etc.) to gather feedback and determine citizen satisfaction with cable.

b. Election of New Officers:

The nominating committee recommended keeping the current slate of officers – Michael Korb, Chair, and Judith Amdal, Vice-Chair. The motion to accept the report of the nominating committee passed unanimously.

VIII. The next meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2010. The group agreed to change the time of the meeting to 5:00 PM in order to be able to meet in the York Room at City Center.

IX. The meeting was adjourned at 6:24 PM