

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA JOINT CABLE AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

MINUTES

DATE: July 19, 2000
Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Urbana City Building
400 S. Vine
Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: CITY OF CHAMPAIGN CITY OF URBANA

Tom Bruno
Jeff Newnam
Tom O'Rourke
Brian Silverman

Barbara Gladney
Carolyn Kearns
John Peterson
Joe Wiedman

PARKLAND

UI

Tom McDonnell

George Badger

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Teri Legner Steve Holz

OTHERS PRESENT: Charlie Heflin, AT&T

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Peterson called the regular Champaign-Urbana Joint Cable & Telecommunications Commission Meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the April 26, 2000 and July 6, 2000 meetings were moved and approved.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

Vice Chairman Silverman noted that he received some calls regarding the @Home speeds. He said this problem has been corrected by TCI. He also received an e-mail from someone complaining about the costs for commercial cable accounts. Chairman Peterson noted that he has

received inquiries about high speed internet access and is planning to schedule another forum on this topic.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Eric Chamberlain, Urbana, spoke about Ameritech's offering of DSL service. Ameritech has its own DSL service which will be offered in the future. In the near future, Ameritech will offer their DSL service 12,000 feet from their Central Offices. In time, with fiber, they will offer it community-wide.

Commissioner O'Rourke suggested that the Commission prepare a grid identifying high speed internet access vendors and their services. Commissioner Bruno raised questions about doing this and suggested that the media do this so that the Commission does not get involved with any issues of bias or favoritism.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

Programming Committee

There was no report.

Technical Committee

There was no report.

PEG Advisory Committee

Commissioner Gladney reported that the PEG channel annual reports were in the packets (attached). The Commission discussed producing PEG channel commercials (ads promoting Channels 5,6,7 and 9) on the other cable channels. The Commission approved a motion that Parkland would produce these commercials until other channels are able to do their own. The franchise agreement requires the cable company to air up to 300 spots per quarter, if requested.

COMMISSION STUDY SESSION

Business reviewed later on the agenda.

REPORT FROM CITY STAFF

Teri Legner reported on cable company compliance relative to ID badges, franchise fee payments and permits. TCI/AT&T submitted a copy of their ID badges. They are provided to all employees and contractors. A report on franchise fee payments received by the City of Champaign was submitted and is attached. A total of \$280,000 was collected in FY99-00. She reported that two permits were issued to AT&T over the last year. Maps have also been submitted as required. It is the City's position that TCI is in compliance with these issues.

REPORT FROM CATV SYSTEM OPERATOR

Charlie Heflin reviewed the attached quarterly operator's report. Vice Chairman Silverman inquired about TCI's commercial service rates that are based upon the occupancy limits for the subscribing business. He asked how those numbers are determined for cable service. Is it only for the area where cable can be seen within the premise or for the entire business regardless of whether or not it can be seen throughout the premise? He gave an example of a restaurant with a small bar where viewing is excluded from the rest of the premise. Mr. Heflin did not know but said he would take it back to the General Manager to get an answer.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. NATOA – It was suggested that Commissioner O'Rourke or Commissioner Newnam go this year.
- B. Emergency Alert System – Mr. Heflin reviewed the attached minutes of a meeting which occurred with local public safety officials regarding a request to drop the requirement for the company to carry an EAS signal on all stations. He noted specifically that the WCIA request to opt out of this is technically possible if WCIA will pay for the equipment. This particular piece of equipment will still interrupt viewing for METCAD override messages; it will drop EAS messages for WCIA and other local channels opting out.

Kearns requested that the Commission receive a written request from WCIA and a clear explanation of the consequences/results of such action.

- C. Cable System Transfer – Mr. Holz noted that there has not been any progress to date with this matter. The Cities have not received the relevant Form's 394 from TCI. Chairman Peterson asked for information about INSIGHT from TCI.

Commissioner O'Rourke noted that the need for a consultant to assist the Cities with the impending transfer is really only to address legal or technical issues since there appear to be fewer or no compliance issues to address.

- D. Petition for Special Relief Filed by AT&T with FCC Regarding "Hybrid" Converter Boxes – Mr. Holz asked Mr. Heflin to address the issue. Mr. Heflin explained that the 1996 Cable Act required manufacturers to provide converter boxes for digital cable (available at retail) and cable companies to provide compatible smart cards for these converters. Neither the cable system nor the manufacturers have these products ready, so they have petitioned the FCC for a deadline waiver for 12 months.

No action is required from the Commission.

- E. Internet Access Forum – Chairman Peterson noted that DSL service is slow to be deployed in Champaign-Urbana. Because of this, Commissioner Wiedman encouraged the Commission to cover only cable modem security in the upcoming forum. Chairman Peterson and Commissioner Wiedman will work on this forum planning next week. The goal is to have a forum in September.
- F. PEG Stuffer – Commissioner Gladney reminded Commissioners that Parkland produces a

camera-ready copy of the PEG insert. The inserts are copied by a local business (\$696). There have been 40,500 made. Most are sent to TCI for insertion into subscribers' bills; the rest are distributed by PEG channel operators. Commissioner Newnam suggested that this project be 'bid' out in the future (he would help with that) in order to get the best price.

- G. Election of Officers – Commissioner Kearns nominated Commissioner Gladney for Secretary and it was seconded by Vice Chairman Silverman. There were no other nominations. There was unanimous support for Commissioner Gladney (10-0).

Commissioner Bruno nominated and Commissioner Kearns seconded, Commissioner O'Rourke for Vice Chairman. Commissioner Gladney nominated Vice Chairman Silverman and Commissioner Newnam seconded the nomination. The vote was 5-4-1 (Wiedman abstained) in favor of Vice Chairman Silverman. Vice Chairman Silverman stated that he will not stand for re-election as Vice Chairman next year.

Vice Chairman Silverman nominated John Peterson for Chairman and Commissioner Gladney seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations. There was unanimous (10-0) support for Chairman Peterson.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting date will be October 18, 2000 at 7:00 P.M. in Urbana and the Study Session is scheduled for October 5, 2000 at 7:30 A.M. at the Original Pancake House in Champaign.

Meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Submitted by:

Teri L. Legner
Assistant to the City Manager

TLL/pw

j:\cmo\adm\corr\tll\cable\minutes-july 19 2000