

APPROVED

**CHAMPAIGN-URBANA JOINT CABLE AND
TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

MINUTES

DATE: April 18, 2001
Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Champaign City Building
102 North Neil
Champaign, IL 61820

MEMBERS PRESENT:	<u>CITY OF CHAMPAIGN</u>	<u>CITY OF URBANA</u>
	Tom Bruno Brian Silverman Tom O'Rourke (arrives 7:30 p.m.)	Carolyn Kearns John Peterson Joe Wiedman

PARKLAND COLLEGE

Tom McDonell

MEMBERS ABSENT:	<u>CITY OF CHAMPAIGN</u>	<u>CITY OF URBANA</u>
	Jeff Newnam	Barbara Gladney

UI

George Badger

STAFF PRESENT: Trisha Crowley

OTHERS PRESENT: Melody Brucker, Insight
Mike Smetzer, McLeod Communications

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Peterson called the regular Champaign-Urbana Joint Cable & Telecommunications Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 24, 2001 regular quarterly meeting and the April 5, 2001 study session meeting were moved and approved.

The minutes of October 18, 2000, and November 24, 2000, will be presented at the July regular meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was received.

OLD BUSINESS

A. High-Speed Internet Access Report. Mike Smetzer of McLeod reported on the digital subscriber line service that McLeod was implementing in the community. Smetzer described the DSL technology which depends on copper wire linking the customer to the central office. DSL technology is distance sensitive, and can only be utilized up to 18,000 feet of cable. These two factors mean that the service would not be available in many areas of Champaign and Urbana. When a customer orders the service, McLeod's first step is to work with Ameritech, the local exchange carrier, to determine if the service can be made available. In some cases, a loading coil may need to be removed from the line in order for the service to work. The service requires, essentially, a copper loop between the central office and the home. Because of these technical difficulties, it is difficult to estimate what percentage of customers could be served with the service. There is roughly the area between Mattis, Windsor, Vine, and (north?). DSL may be a service that could be utilized by most of the business areas in the community. ADSL (asynchronous digital subscriber line) can provide more bandwidth "down" and can split the frequency so as to exclude voice frequency; therefore, one line can be utilized at the same time for both ADSL and phone. VDSL will work with fiber in the loop and can be available up to 40,000 feet, but the maximum rate is only approximately three times faster than a modem, but you can use the phone and the modem at the same time. A cable modem service may be faster under some conditions. SDSL (symmetrical digital subscriber lines) are being provided by McLeod at three different rates depending on speed and added services. The rates range between \$69.95 a month and \$195.95 a month. This is basically designed for a small business with one to three servers. McLeod is installing this service now. The back side equipment needs include a router and an internet hub/switch. This can handle multiple computers. Installation is extra and approximately \$300.00. Installation is approximately four to six weeks because Ameritech has to come out and tag a line, and sometimes a visual inspection is necessary before installation. ADSL is not an official product in Champaign-Urbana, although McLeod is doing some testing. The DSL service requires the cooperation of SBC (Ameritech) with McLeod in order to install and provide. McLeod pays SBC for its services, and therefore, there is some market incentive for SBC to cooperate with installation, etc..

B. NATOA Conference. Commission members were reminded that funding is available to attend the NATOA Conference on September 9 through 12. John Peterson asked that anyone interested contact him.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was no audience participation.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

Programming Committee

There was no report.

Technical Committee

There was no report.

PEG Advisory Committee

Carolyn Kearns noted that Urbana had made a job offer to fill the staff position which supported the PEG channel. No final acceptance yet was made.

COMMISSION STUDY SESSION

There was no report.

REPORT BY CITY STAFF

Trisha Crowley, Deputy City Attorney for the City of Champaign, introduced herself and indicated that she would be staffing the Commission for Champaign until the Administrative Assistant for the City Manager had been hired and was on board.

REPORT BY CATV SYSTEM OPERATOR

Melody Brucker, Insight, presented the CATV Operator's Quarterly Report. There was some increase in the first quarter. There is likely to be the normal annual decrease at the end of the second quarter when students leave town. The Fox News channel had been added to the lineup. There will be some lineup changes in the next few months, at which time they will attempt to put the news channels together. A billing conversion occurs on June 4th. She anticipates no problems and hopes to have staffing available to answer any questions. The cable company also offers an automatic deduction option where the monthly bill can be taken automatically from a checking account or charged automatically against a credit card. If you call the company, they will send a form to have this authorized. In June, Insight will start taking @ HOME orders locally, but service issues will still go the 1-800 number. Ms. Brucker indicated that there had been a delay in the delivery of the franchise checks and that no franchise fees had been paid since the transfer of the franchise. The checks would be delivered personally by Friday.

The operator will be dropping the Music Choice from the FM radio lineup. That service has approximately 200 customers. They had started notifying the customers. There were some complaints about losing the programming on that particular channel. Ms. Brucker was asked if there would be a rate increase by July. She indicated that there would be, but there were no specifics at this time. In response to questions about how the operator evaluates what channels to add, Ms. Brucker indicated that the decisions were by number of customer requests and by the convenience of national contracts. It also noted that a second pipe had been installed for cable modem service and that a third and fourth pipe had been ordered. Delivery was expected by August. Even with the two pipes, the operator experienced 70% capacity peaks. The average capacity was 45% over the 24-hour day.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Compliance Report. A Compliance Report will be presented in July.

B. Board Commission Membership. Joe Wiedman will resign effective April 20th because of his acceptance to the University of California at Berkeley Law School. Brian Silverman and John Peterson, other members, recognized Joe for the good work that he had done on the Commission. A resolution thanking Joe would be prepared. Carolyn Kearns noted that her term ended as she was the official Urbana City Council representative. She has enjoyed her work on the Commission and has learned a great deal about this area. Joe Wiedman noted that, given the vacancies on the Commission, he wanted to encourage people to apply. Application is easy as it simply involves a call to the Mayor of the appropriate city.

REPORTS BY OTHER GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

There were no reports.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Brian Silverman noted that it was appreciated that Insight called those who had requested channel changes.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting dates were set for July 12 for the study session, breakfast at the Original House of Pancakes, and July 25 for the regular session at the Urbana City Building.

Submitted by:

Trisha Crowley
Deputy City Attorney

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