

APPROVED

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

MINUTES

DATE: July 12, 2001
Thursday, 7:30 a.m.

PLACE: Original House of Pancakes
1909 West Springfield Avenue
Champaign, IL 61820

MEMBERS PRESENT:

CITY OF CHAMPAIGN

Tom Bruno
Brian Silverman
Rick Atterberry

CITY OF URBANA

John Peterson
Danielle Chynoweth
Kevin Maxon

PARKLAND COLLEGE

Tom McDonell

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

George Badger

MEMBERS ABSENT:

CITY OF CHAMPAIGN

Brian Silverman

CITY OF URBANA

Barbara Gladney

STAFF PRESENT:

Trisha Crowley, City of Champaign

OTHERS PRESENT:

Melody Brucker, Insight

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Peterson called the Study Session of the Champaign-Urbana Joint Cable & Telecommunications Commission to order at 7:30 a.m.

1. OLD BUSINESS

A. Radio Format Change. Melody Brucker indicated that they had provided FM splitters for customers who wanted to continue WFMT, WMBL, and PBS. The signal comes through the headend and comes through the stereo, not the cable box. Insight will either provide a kit or will install. Approximately ten people have requested this. This is not an advertised service, but will be handed on a request basis.

8. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

John Peterson indicated that Barb Gladney is circulating the PEG insert for the September cable bills.

Urbana has hired a new staff person, Chris Foster, to handle the Urbana PEG Channel. He is at a conference today, and will be introduced at the regular July meeting.

10. REPORTS BY OPERATOR

A question was raised about the published news reports concerning a hostile takeover of AT&T broadband by Comcast. Melody Brucker was asked the local ramifications. She was unclear at this time, but indicated the Insight holding company would expect to continue to be the cable franchisee, but there could be a change in the membership of the joint venture. Clearly, it is too early to say. Ms. Brucker also indicated, in response to a question from George Badger, that she did not believe that there would be any impact on the franchises as a result of the changes in the Illinois Telecommunications Act because the franchises are not in the telephone business.

Ms. Brucker reported on the new digital channel lineup which will be offered starting August 12th. Also, starting in September and officially launched in October, will be a video on demand with 400 to 500 movies available from 99 cents to \$3.95. The digital services will be offered in addition to the present analog services. Official notice will be in the newspaper today, July 12th.

Ms. Brucker also reported on the billing conversion in June. There were some major problems in the billing conversion from the AT&T system to Insight. Some of the problems were software glitches which did not pick up payments which had been made, and therefore, indicated overdue amounts. There were other problems as well: reoccurring credit card payments were stopped, so that service needs to be reinstated. There were also problems with electronic fund transfers in that the payment was transferred, but not indicated on the bill. The glitch occurred in the first batch of bills that went out. There were many, many phone calls to Insight. Further bills were held up until they could be corrected. Late fees would not be assessed in this situation, and would be corrected automatically and if brought to the attention of Insight.

In response to all of the calls which were also going to the Cities because they each had a number on the respective bills, Ms. Brucker has attempted to staff up to 21 customer service representatives and installed a temporary in the Champaign City Building to handle the calls

concerning the cable company. Ms. Brucker and Trisha Crowley will work on the language on the bill which refers people to the franchising authority. During the June billing conversion, the call volume was up to 17,479 calls. This was up 30%. There was a 7% abandonment rate, up 5% because of the billing problems. Ms. Brucker expected that this would be under control soon. Ms. Brucker indicated that the C-Span bus would be in Champaign on August 16th. Tom Bruno volunteered to work with her for a location for the bus which would be accessible to the public.

11. NEW BUSINESS

D. There was a brief discussion about the NATOA Conference September 9th through 12th, 2001. Funding is available for two conference registrants from the Cable Commission. Danielle Chynoweth and Rick Atterberry indicated interest and would check further.

The meeting was adjourned until July 25, 2001, at 7:00 p.m. in the Champaign City Building.

Submitted by:

Trisha Crowley
Deputy City Attorney

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