

**CHAMPAIGN-URBANA CABLE TELEVISION AND  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

**DATE:** April 20, 2005  
4:30 PM

**PLACE:** Urbana City Hall – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
400 S. Vine, Urbana, IL

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>CHAMPAIGN</b>	<b>URBANA</b>
	Richard Atterberry	Barb Gladney
	Karen Walker	Jim Hayes
	Giraldo Rosales	Peter Resnick
	<b>PARKLAND</b>	<b>U OF I</b>
		Stan Yagi

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Brian Silverman, Tom McDonnell

**STAFF PRESENT:** Chris Foster - City of Urbana  
Jeff Hamilton - City of Champaign

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Melody Brucker, Insight Communications  
Art Svymbersky - Insight Communications  
Jim Lee – Insight Communications  
Carl Caldwell – UI-7  
Randall Cotton

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Atterberry called the regular meeting of the Champaign-Urbana Cable Television and Telecommunications Commission to order at 4:32 PM.

**MODIFICATIONS TO AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

No changes were brought forward.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Gladney requested 2 small modifications to the January 12, 2005 minutes. Changes were accepted by the Commission. The following minutes were approved by the Commission, as amended.

- A. January 12, 2005 - Study Session
- B. January 19, 2005 - Regular Quarterly Meeting
- C. March 29, 2005 – Special Meeting

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Jeff Hamilton presented the quarter's cable complaints to the Commission. Commissioner Yagi asked if the City of Urbana took written cable complaints like the City of Champaign. Chris Foster responded that Urbana takes written complaint when necessary. Commissioner Gladney requested that Urbana's complaints also be presented to the Commission quarterly.

Mr. Hamilton shared a note he had sent to Insight, thanking Melody Brucker and Art Svymbersky for their efforts in getting Channel 5's listings on the TV Guide Channel.

Chairman Atterberry also noted that a letter from Insight was included in the packet. The letter informed them that Insight Communications may soon become a private (as opposed to a publicly traded) company.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Political Content on PEG Channels**

Chris Foster presented the Commission with a draft of a new policy statement that the UPTV Commission will consider at their next meeting. As currently written, the draft policy states that UPTV's governmental component wouldn't be used to promote political candidates or ballot issues. No content-based restrictions would be imposed on the public access component, however. Chairman Atterberry tabled discussion until the Commission's next quarterly meeting.

### **B. Champaign Cable Compliance Report**

Jeff Hamilton informed the Commission that staff from the City of Champaign and Insight Communications had met and reviewed the non-compliance items the City had reviewed with the Commission at their January 19, 2005 meeting. Mr. Hamilton explained that City staff had vigorously reviewed Insight's response and found their explanation, documentation, and subsequent change of the telephone statistics to be valid and allowable. He stated that the City now finds Insight was in compliance with their telephone customer service standard requirements. Mr. Hamilton also explained that the City had received the requested independent audit of the franchise fee payments. Mr. Hamilton further stated that Insight had successfully passed every part of the compliance check.

Commissioner Gladney inquired if the City of Urbana intended to complete a compliance check as well. Mr. Foster explained that staff changes at the City of Urbana have left some things up in the air at this time.

## **REPORTS**

### **A. Committee Reports**

There were no PEG Advisory or Technical Committee reports. Chairman Atterberry shared that the newly formed Public Access Study Committee had met and that

Commission Gladney was appointed Chair. Commissioner Gladney explained that some appointees hadn't attended, but that overall turnout was very good. She requested that the Committee be allowed to prepare and present its report to the Cable Commission at its October Study Session, rather than in July. The Commission agreed. Commissioner Gladney stated that she would like to see Champaign Council members on the Committee, as Urbana has two Council representatives on the Committee. Commissioner Rosales agreed to join the Committee and to speak with the Champaign Mayor about her request.

Commissioner Gladney moved that the Commission allocate funds for Committee business and research. Commissioner Resnick seconded, and suggested that money could be used from the current fiscal year to pay travel expenses for an expert to speak with the Commission and the Public Access Committee at its July meeting. Chairman Atterberry suggested a friendly amendment to the motion to allocate up to \$700 on Public Access Committee expenditures. Friendly amendment accepted and seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **B. Staff Reports**

1. **Urbana:** Mr. Foster informed the Commission that UPTV has hired a part time Outreach Coordinator – Kali Boyden. Mr. Foster explained he is waiting on City staff to setup equipment so the UPTV studio can be completed.
2. **Champaign:** Mr. Hamilton shared that in addition to getting Channel 5's listings on the TV Guide Channel, that the City had produced and began inserting a thirty second Channel 5 promo on the Insight system. He shared that the City would now refer to Channel 5 as "CGTV" or "Champaign Government Television" and would begin station branding efforts later this year. Mr. Hamilton also explained that a great deal of time had been spent drafting Council and Administrative Policies pertaining to the use and operation of CGTV.

## **C. Report by the CATV System Operator**

Melody Brucker introduced Jim Lee as the district's new plant manager. Mr. Lee shared that he has been in the industry for 30 years. Art Svymbersky presented the Commission with Insight's quarterly statistics. He shared that Insight had launched Fox HD just in time for the Super Bowl, and had also recently changed digital music services.

Commissioner Resnick asked about progress on adding other local HD channels. Ms. Brucker explained that they are still negotiating with local broadcasters. Carl Caldwell (station manager of WILL-TV) shared that they will launch a digital broadcast in May, after extensive delays due to tower issues.

In response to a question from Commissioner Resnick, Mr. Svymbersky explained that subscribers often join and cancel premium channels based on the season and programming (i.e. The Soprano's on HBO).

On behalf of Commissioner McDonnell (absent), Chairman Atterberry inquired if Insight was having internet problems in the Timberline area of Champaign. Through a note, Mr. McDonnell said an Insight technician had told him there was a trunk problem in the area.

Mr. Lee shared that there were no trunk problems he was aware of. Ms. Brucker asked for a service address so testing could be done.

Chairman Atterberry also inquired why Fox Sports Midwest and Fox Sports Chicago were both carried on some Insight systems, but not Champaign-Urbana's. Ms. Brucker explained that they are currently negotiating with both channels.

Chairman Atterberry also pointed out that a recent Insight bill staffer promoted the Travel Channel – which isn't available locally. Ms. Brucker said they are also negotiating with that channel.

Chairman Atterberry then informed Insight that the second half of commercial breaks on their digital channels are much louder than the program audio. Mr. Lee explained that Insight doesn't locally insert commercials on those digital channels, but that he would contact the channel operators to see if the problem can be corrected.

Commissioner Yagi inquired if existing customers were complaining about the lower internet service rate being offered to new customers. Mr. Svymbersky explained that some complaints had been received, and that Insight is handling them on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Yagi inquired if customers could both rent and buy cable modems through Insight. Mr. Svymbersky explained that the modems are \$10 a month to lease, or \$39.95 to purchase. Commissioner Walker explained that she too had heard complaints from long-time internet customers about not being eligible for the special rate.

Commissioner Walker also inquired about the availability of Cable Cards. Mr. Svymbersky explained that cable cards had been discussed at the January meeting, and they are available for \$1.99 per month. In response to a follow-up question from Commissioner Walker, Mr. Lee explained that the cable cards provide most of the same services as a cable box, except the program guide.

Commissioner Walker asked about signal degradation on some channels in her neighborhood. Mr. Lee explained that these problems are usually isolated to single homes, not neighborhoods. He further explained that consumer-grade cabling or cable damage could lead to the problem. Mr. Svymbersky volunteered to have a technician look into the problem if Ms. Walker provided a service address.

Randall Cotton inquired about the Insight letter pertaining to the company possibly becoming private. Ms. Brucker explained that this is a possibility some high-ranking members of the company are looking into. Ms. Brucker also explained that if this went through, it would not be considered a change of ownership and would not require a Franchise Transfer Agreement. Mr. Hamilton stated that the City of Champaign is closely monitoring this development and may seek further information to determine if a Transfer Agreement is necessary or not.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Election of Vice-Chair**

Chairman Atterberry reminded the Commission that with the resignation of Kevin Maxson, the Commission had lost its Vice-Chair. Commissioner Gladney nominated Commissioner Walker for the position. Commissioner Rosales nominated Stan Yagi for the position. After a brief discussion, Chairman Atterberry tabled the discussion to the July meeting, when all annual officer appointments will be made.

**B. Commission Committee Appointments**

Chairman Atterberry read through the current Committee appointments and stated that people were needed to fill many committee vacancies. He requested that each Commission member consider a committee they would be interested in joining. Chairman Atterberry tabled the discussion to the July meeting.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Carl Caldwell shared information about UI-7 and that he would like to keep the Commission better informed about its activities going forward. He shared that the majority of UI-7 programming consists of SCOLA international news, a valuable service to a small but important audience. He also shared that he thought other improvements could be made to the channel and that he believes the University of Illinois is moving towards making those improvements.

**COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

Commissioner Rosales thanked Art Svymbersky for his assistance transferring his cable service for a temporary housing situation. He also shared that he would like to see Carl Caldwell become a member of the Commission and inquired how appointments were made. Chairman Atterberry explained that each City's Mayor makes the appointments, as does Parkland and the University of Illinois.

Chairman Atterberry thanked Commissioner Hayes for his service and participation. Mr. Hayes is a member of the Urbana City Council and did not run for re-election this year.

Commissioner Walker sent well wishes to Commissioner Silverman who was in the hospital.

**NEXT MEETING DATES AND ADJOURNMENT**

Next meeting dates were set for July 13, 2005 (Study Session) and July 20, 2005 (Regular Quarterly Meeting).

The meeting was adjourned at 5:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Hamilton  
Telecommunications/AV Technician  
City of Champaign