

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

DATE: January 12, 2011
4:00 PM

PLACE: Champaign City Council Chambers
102 N Neil Street, Champaign, IL

MEMBERS PRESENT: **CHAMPAIGN** **URBANA**
Rick Atterberry Barbara Gladney
Giraldo Rosales Peter Folk

UNIVERSITY of ILLINOIS
Kate Brickman

PARKLAND COLLEGE
Chris Foster

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kyle Harrison, Karen Walker

STAFF PRESENT: Jeff Hamilton – City of Champaign
Jake Schumacher, Ron O’Neal – City of Urbana

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Atterberry asked Jeff Hamilton to note the attendance. He also noted that David Gehrig resigned from the Urbana City Council last fall, and in doing so also left the Commission. He thanked him for his service and noted that Urbana is now short two Commissioners.

3. MODIFICATIONS TO AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Hamilton requested that item 8B (2011 NATOA Conference) be taken before item 8A (PEG Marketing). The agenda was approved as modified.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the October 13, 2010 and October 20, 2010, meetings were approved as presented.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Hamilton noted the inclusion in the packet of correspondence from AT&T concerning various programming changes on U-Verse.

Commissioner Folk asked that the change notices be posted on the City's website as they are received. Mr. Hamilton agreed to post them with the Cable Commission's documents.

Mr. Hamilton also reported on several channel lineup changes Comcast is making, probably as a result of their digital conversion last fall. He reported that Champaign received 14 formal cable complaints last quarter, and Urbana received 9.

Commissioner Folk noted that the number of complaints in Urbana was down, which was a pleasant surprise in light of the digital conversion. Jake Schumacher noted that while the number of complaints was down, the number of calls staff received was very high. Mr. Hamilton pointed out that staff tries to help the customers when a formal complaint isn't necessary.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Champaign Cable Franchise Renewal Update

Mr. Hamilton reminded the Commission that the Champaign City Council had declined to accept the proposed franchise agreement last fall. Staff has continued informal negotiations with Comcast but no progress has been made.

Commissioner Gladney asked if Champaign is in formal negotiations now. Mr. Hamilton reported that Champaign is in both formal and informal negotiations.

B. Urbana Cable Franchise Renewal Update

Ron O'Neal informed the Commission that Urbana just completed their renewal and are now operating under a new franchise agreement. He reviewed Urbana's renewal process and some of the more difficult parts of the negotiations. Some of the Cable Commission's suggested revisions were incorporated into the final agreement.

Commissioner Gladney asked about how Urbana and Champaign would coordinate the use of a 5th channel. Mr. O'Neal said that after Champaign completes its renewal, the Cities will discuss the issue. Staff from both Cities have discussed the issue and he doesn't anticipate any problems working out the details.

Chair Atterberry asked about the franchise requirements regarding placement of the PEG channels. Mr. O'Neal reported that Comcast was unwilling to promise the PEG channels would not be moved.

Chair Atterberry asked whether Urbana's franchise would permit PCTV and UI-7 to be moved to digital before the other PEG channels. Mr. O'Neal reported that that removed from the Urbana agreement and all the PEG channels will be treated equally.

Commissioner Folk asked if the PEG channels are required to be carried on the lowest tier (Basic). Mr. O'Neal and Chair Atterberry responded that this is required by the FCC.

7. REPORTS

A. Committee Reports

Broadband Access Committee (BAC): Commissioner Folk reported that the BAC has been slowed down because of member commitments to the UC2B project. He wants the BAC to complete its report soon so that it can help the UC2B project as it evolves.

B. Staff Reports

Urbana

Mr. Schumacher reported that UPTV recently held its annual membership meeting. The group recorded some ID spots. They hope to have another membership meeting in March. He also reported that he forwarded Commissioner Gladney's inquiry about filling Urbana's open Commission seats to the Mayor.

Champaign

Mr. Hamilton reported that CGTV has produced two new episodes of Champaign Connection, two 60-second PSAs for the City's 150th Celebration, and a 1-hour documentary on the 150th Exhibit is almost done. Staff from Champaign and Urbana also worked jointly on the C-U International Humanitarian Awards program and will do the same on the upcoming MLK Celebration. Mr. Hamilton also reported that the NATOA and IL-NATOA memberships were renewed for 2011.

Mr. Hamilton reported that staff from both Cities were concerned about recent changes to the cable complaint process. Formal complaints are no longer handled by the local office and take longer to be resolved. He was also concerned that citizens were reporting that sometimes the Comcast resolution weren't accurate or complete. Staff from both Cities met with Chair Atterberry and Comcast management on these issues and were told Comcast was going to hire a person to handle the Central Illinois region in the hopes of making the process better.

Chair Atterberry reported that in some cases Comcast had resolved the complaints, but failed to file that resolution with the Cities.

Commissioner Folk asked that staff update the Commission on the process at the next meeting.

Commissioner Folk also said that in his NATOA Conference report last fall he failed to mention that CGTV had won an award and offered his congratulations to staff. Mr. Hamilton reported the City received an honorable mention award for a video on the Fire Department.

Commissioner Gladney asked if the Cities place copies of their videos in the public libraries or otherwise archive them. Both Mr. Schumacher and Mr. Hamilton reported that they'd look into the suggestion.

Commissioner Folk said he is pleased with the amount of video content both Cities are putting online.

C. System Operator Reports

Chair Atterberry noted that neither AT&T nor Comcast had a representative at the meeting. He indicated that this was likely because the Commission moved their quarterly meeting forward by a week.

8. NEW BUSINESS

B. 2011 NATOA Conference

Mr. Hamilton informed the Commission that their remaining budget is approximately \$2400. He reported the 2011 NATOA Conference is in San Francisco September 20-23. He reported the estimated cost of sending a member to the conference is \$2300. He reminded the Commission that in the past, the Commission has tried to send two members to the NATOA conference if funding was available.

Commissioner Folk asked if the conference expenses are paid during the same fiscal year as the conference. Mr. Hamilton reported that normally they are, but the Commission can also allocate funds from this fiscal year to pay for conference expenses next fiscal year.

A. PEG Marketing

Mr. Hamilton reported that the Commission earmarks \$1000/year for PEG marketing. He asked the Commission if they had thoughts on how to market the PEG channels this year. He also reported that Champaign's Webmaster won't be able to assist with the redesign of the Commission's website.

Commissioner Folk offered that with the new franchise agreement, we no longer get free spots on Comcast, so perhaps that might be something to consider. Mr. Hamilton pointed out that Champaign is still operating under an old franchise agreement and continues to receive free PEG promotional spots. Mr. Schumacher reported that he spoke with Comcast management about this and that Comcast considers running free spots on a case-by-case basis. He will follow up with Comcast on that.

Chair Atterberry offered that the City probably gets a pretty good advertising rate from the News-Gazette for running the agendas and public notices.

Chair Atterberry suggested that Commissioner Walker reconvene the PEG Marketing Committee and develop a recommendation for the April meeting. Commissioner Folk asked that the Committee develop some goals and a marketing plan.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

10. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

None.

11. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hamilton reported that the next Study Session meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2011, and the next quarterly meeting for April 20, 2011.

Chair Atterberry asked if there were any suggestions for Study Session topics.

Commissioner Gladney suggested that the Commission hold a study session on what Urbana's plans are for establishing the 5th PEG channel.

Chair Atterberry adjourned the meeting at 4:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Hamilton

J:\IT\Cable Commission\Cable Minutes\2011\1-12-11 Minutes.doc