

Good morning and welcome to the Cable Television Advisory Board, Comcast Franchise Renewal Subcommittee Meeting on Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 8:00 AM via Zoom teleconference.

I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by other electronic means:

We are utilizing Zoom, through the City's IT Department for this electronic meeting. All members of CTAB and the public has access to contemporaneously listen in to this meeting through dialing the following number:

1-929-205-6099 - Meeting ID: 889 5700 4886 Passcode: 749118

We are providing public access of the necessary information for accessing the meeting. We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, through public postings.

Instructions have also been provided on the City of Nashua's website at www.nashuanh.gov and publicly noticed at Nashua City Hall and the Nashua Public Library.

If anybody has a problem accessing the meeting via phone, please call 603-821-2049 and they will help you connect. In the event the public is unable to access the meeting via the methods mentioned above, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that all the votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Let's start the meeting.

Call to order:

The roll call was taken with 7 members of the Cable Television Advisory Board Subcommittee present: Chairman Andrew Cernota, Alderman Ernest Jette, Kimberly Kleiner, Director of Administrative Services; Jeff Poehnert, PEG Program Manager; Cheryl Lindner, Chief of Staff; Nick Miseirvitch, Deputy Director IT, and Corporation Counsel, Steve Bolton.

Also in Attendance: Sarah Marchant, Director of Community Development
Sue Lovering, City Clerk
Brian Rhodes, Fire Chief
Jennifer McCormack, Library Director
John Griffin, CFO
Justin Kates, Emergency Management Director
Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health & Community Services

ROLL CALL

Chairman Andrew Cernota

Andrew Cernota is here. Jeff Poehnert.

Jeff Poehnert, PEG Program Manager

Jeff Poehnert is here, I am home, I am alone and I can hear everyone.

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

Yes I am here and I am alone and I am maintaining social distance.

Chairman Cernota

I should add that I am also alone and maintaining social distance.

Cheryl Lindner, Chief of Staff

I am here, I am in my office alone and I am social distancing and I can hear everything.

Kim Kleiner, Director of Administrative Services

Good Morning. I am here, I am maintaining social distancing, I am alone in my office and can hear the proceedings.

Nick Miseirvitch, Deputy Director IT

I am here, I can hear the meeting, I am alone and I am maintaining social distancing.

Alderman Ernest Jette

I am here alone, and I can hear the proceedings.

Chairman Cernota

Alright, thank you. Also joining us, we have a number of Department Heads; Ms. Marchant.

Sarah Marchant, Director of Community Development

Good Morning. Sarah Marchant, Community Development Division Director.

Sue Lovering, City Clerk

Good Morning, Sue Lovering, City Clerk and I can hear everyone.

Brian Rhodes, Fire Chief

Good Morning, I am here in my office.

Jennifer McCormack, Library Director

Good Morning, I am here in my office.

John Griffin, CFO

Good Morning. John Griffin, CFO, alone and can hear the proceedings. Thank you.

Chairman Cernota

And I see someone from Public Health but I apologize that I don't recognize you by name, so could you state your name and if you're alone?

Bobbie Bagley, Director of Public Health & Community Services

Yes, Good Morning. Bobbie Bagley, Director for the Division of Public Health & Community Services. I don't see the option to be able to change the name; I've been trying to do that. But I am here in my office. I am alone and I can hear everything.

Chairman Cernota

Excellent, thank you. And Mr. Kates.

Justin Kates, Director of Emergency Management

Justin Kates, Director of Emergency Management.

Chairman Cernota

Alright, thank you. Thank you all for joining the meeting. As far as the reason behind the meeting, I am sure at this point probably or many of you already know but the City is a Franchise Authority for Comcast for the Cable Television service that's provided in the City. As part of that, we are operating under a Franchise Agreement which is currently up for renewal. The Cable Television Advisory Board has been tasked with the renewal process and the first part in that process is to ascertain the City's needs regarding Cable Television, both from the subscriber standpoint but also that of City Government. The City Government side of things is why we've convened this meeting.

Basically the Cable Television Advisory Board is looking for input from the City Departments as far as what their needs are regarding Cable Television going forward. There is one change that has been made to the environment that we are operating in since the last contract and that is that the cable services that Comcast has been providing to the City through its or under the current contract are now more directly charged to the City. So kind of keeping that in mind, the reason that we are having the meeting basically is to ask you what the needs of your Departments are as far as both access to cable television for your Department to basically be able to observe or watch television within your Department's operations and also those things on the PEG side of things, Public Education & Government Access Television can better serve your Departments and improve your ability to serve the citizens.

I don't know if anyone from the subcommittee has anything that they'd like to add to that introduction? Ms. Kleiner?

Director Kleiner

Good Morning, Kim Kleiner. There has been a number of discussions with some Directors as to needs due to being remote and having remote meetings. I think that Jeff and Pete and their teams have done a lot of work to address those; some are still in process. I would ask Mr. Poehnert to elaborate on that but they working very hard, as you know, the Chamber to make meetings both in person and available by Zoom and now in the City Auditorium. So I'd Mr. Poehnert to elaborate on that.

Mr. Poehnert

Thank you, Director Kleiner. So this week we just tested again the chamber. The chamber is all done and we wanted to make sure that everything was working in there. But one thing we will have to do in the chamber as we come close to the point where we want to start going live, we've got to get in all of the Aldermen to fill the room because that's the one thing that has never happened since the upgrades because they were done during COVID just to make sure the feedback isn't there and things like that. But the Chamber is set up as hybrid now completely so we have a Zoom element.

I just received a quote from Access AB who designed the Auditorium and I will be presenting that quote to the CTAB Meeting on the 11th of June. They are ready to immediately get work and they should be OK because the work is going to be in the control room up in the Auditorium, not in the Auditorium. So the Clerk's people, we won't disturb you. Anyway so that should be done by the end of June so you have a Zoom element up there and can conduct meetings in the hybrid fashion and also Room 208 is now ready for broadcast and we have got a couple of adjustments and a little piece of equipment and then that will also be capable of Zoom Meetings as well as regular meetings and can go live. So those are the three locations for remote that we've got a hybrid version.

Chairman Cernota

Alright. I guess at this point it would probably good to open it up and see if anyone from the Departments has specific requests, observations, comments with regards to any interactions they've had with CTAB but also with Comcast.

Director Kates

Justin Kates with a question.

Chairman Cernota

Sure.

Director Kates

Am I right to assume this is still just focused on cable television and not internet services?

Chairman Cernota

Correct. The contract only relates to the television side of things, not to the internet.

Director Kates

Perfect. Thank you.

Chairman Cernota

That said, if you have internet related issues we can certainly pass them on to Comcast. It is just that is not specifically within our area of authority.

Director Marchant

I have something that probably isn't part of this contract either. But I just want to throw it out there if you are taking those.

Chairman Cernota

Certainly.

Director Marchant

So we are having more and more issues or concerns about the location of 5G and that is directly related to where fiber exists in the City and Comcast won't share where their private fiber is. I know that is probably outside of the scope of this contract. But any ask for sharing that data, even as a private share so that we can better anticipate where 5G Infrastructure is going to be would be greatly appreciated, because that would help us plan for it instead of random.

Chairman Cernota

OK.

Director Marchant

And I guess I just appreciate Jeff and all the work you guys have done to allow us to be able to continue with the hybrid meetings. It has made a massive difference I think for our land use board and participation of the public with being able to use Zoom so it's important to us to be able to continue that aspect going forward. So thank you so much for the investments.

Chairman Cernota

I should also add as part of this contract there is discussion with Comcast about capital improvements as well with regard to television. If there are specific departmental needs that capital investments would help with connecting them to the City's population or would somehow improve your ability to provide service for the citizens, this is probably the time to pass that sort of thing along to us as well so that we can include that request.

Director (unidentified)

We need free Wi-Fi downtown, we need Wi-Fi downtown. I know it doesn't help with cable.

Director Kates

This is Justin Kates ... Go ahead Sue.

City Clerk Lovering

Thank you Justin. I just wanted to share what I am envisioning and it sort of came out of this whole pandemic and that is with the hybrid and also training of election officials and also just communicating better to the public. Bobbie and I had spoken during this, going on to her television program and speaking about like the PPE that was set up at the following locations and had just more educational component of it on how to fill out an absentee ballot and just the different things that we are serving remotely now. In addition to that aspect in-house providing that, I would like to be able to somehow televise the results as they come in. We used to just do the election results and put them outside and TV and public would come to City Hall. And I don't really see how we are going to continue that with the set up that we have. So I would like to be able to, I was thinking, using the Chamber with the monitors. But we are now going to have the capability in a conference, small area in the City Hall Clerk's Office to be able to televise those as they come out, just the municipal and other ones. So that's where I envision being able to utilize this more going forward with the climate that we are in.

Chairman Cernota

Mr. Poehnert?

Mr. Poehnert

Yes, we can definitely set up, certainly Room 208 now for anything that would fulfill your needs.

City Clerk Loving

There's a lot that I would like to be able to put and be able to share with the public and would be tapping into those resources Jeff. I think it is important more than ever for that transparency as opposed to – just the testing of the ballots should be open to the public and we did post that, we made it open to 208. Thankfully there wasn't enough interest to go beyond putting too many people in there and having to reschedule. So it is just that type of thinking that I hope to plan and have discussions with.

Mr. Poehnert

Alright, sounds good.

City Clerk Lovering

Thank you.

Director Kates

This is Justin Kates. One of the things that we had mentioned infrastructure improvements. We did have cable access in one of our previous offices and it was helpful during an incident to be able to pull up a local channel or weather channel or something like that. Now we are remote but also just because of changes in TV technology, you can stream everything from a mobile device now. So one of the things that might be worth including is a request for maybe so many licenses or credentials for the Comcast mobile app so that people

within the City who might need to gather information from wherever they are at, they would be able to access that without having to have a physical cable connection within their office or their building.

Chairman Cernota

Excellent, good idea. Ms. Bagley, I see your name is now appearing on the screen.

Director Bagley

Yes. Thank you. I'd like to – just a couple of the comments that were made by Justin and also by Sue Lovering as far as the invaluable use that we have had as public health for the Nashua Cable and working with Jeff and his crew for communication and to the public. It is essential for us in public health because a big part of the work that we do is through health promotion and communication. A lot of the educational components that we do are done through the Cable Access and so we have been very fortunate to have the opportunity to do so. I am just wondering the reach, does this reach through the Greater Nashua area, so does it extend throughout the 12 surroundings towns as well?

Chairman Cernota

No. Well, yes and no. Our cable system and in our contract and our PEG, Public Education Government Access Channels, are provided only within the City's territory through Comcast. That said, we also have streaming capabilities that the City provides that are accessible wherever you are.

Director Bagley

So that would be something that will definitely need to continue for our reach and also the ability to continue to have the Cable Television show that we have. We have gained a lot of ground by pushing that information that way. So thank you Jeff, and too your team has been phenomenal. The Zoom meetings, as you know, we host a lot of them. So all of those things are really going to be important to continue for all the work we are doing for the City and for the public.

Chairman Cernota

Mr. Poehnert you had something?

Mr. Poehnert

I was just going to add that anybody with Roku and I think Apple TV, wherever they are can get our stations. The menu will have us on there.

Director Kates

This is Justin Kates. Another recommendation, I don't have this one fully flushed out yet, so this would have to require a follow up. But one of the resources that Comcast provides us for Emergency Management is the ability to do a cable override during an emergency. The current process is sort of an antiquated process of a phone number and a secret code and all this other stuff, not very easy or intuitive in the middle of a crisis. I wonder with some of the changes that have been made in alert and warning systems in the past decade, there might be some physical infrastructure, enhancements that could be made there where it could be tied into our existing Code Red Systems that way it just as simple as selecting another option as we send out some sort of a

notification to cell phones. We can just include that as an option as well. I don't have the answers or even feasibility on that but certainly something that could be considered.

Director Bagley

So this is Bobbie again. I just wanted to check in with Nick and Jeff as far as our cable access over 18 Mulberry? Do we have cable access.

Mr. Miseirvitch

Yes, Bobbie you do.

Director Bagley

OK thanks.

Chairman Cernota

Ms. Kleiner, I think you had a list of all the locations that are currently provided with cable access?

Director Kleiner

Yes I do. I have a list by building so it's not specific as to the Departments within City Hall. It just lists City Hall, Arlington Street Community Center, Nashua Public Health. Certainly that is one of the areas that we were looking for feedback on is if there were additional locations that did not have access or required more access that would be important and we'd like that information.

Chairman Cernota

I'd also the inverse is also true. If there's a place that's listed that no longer needs it, now would be a good time to identify that since we are already being charged for it. I know it is a small line item on people's budgets but when you see it in aggregate it does add up. Mr. Poehnert?

Mr. Poehnert

That is one thing, yes, that I'd like to gather is the information, whose got the what we call, three drops. There was a time, what happened when Comcast went to the black box the necessity of a black box on each television they gave three black boxes per building that were on the list for drops and I am not really sure which ones are active and which ones aren't at this point. I have a list of which buildings that we put the black boxes in but I don't really know if they are still active. So that's something I want to pursue.

Chairman Cernota

I'm wondering actually since Comcast probably has that information whether we can even ask them which of those boxes are still receiving signal.

Mr. Poehnert

That is one thing we asked for.

Chairman Cernota

Ms. Kleiner, I think you had something?

Director Kleiner

I just wanted to note that if there are any locations that are having trouble with service, that would be important to know and if they could note if it seems to be a specific point of the day or a specific location within their building so that we can back to Comcast and have that investigated as well.

Chairman Cernota

Mr. Miseirvitch?

Mr. Miseirvitch

Nick Miseirvitch. I just want to reiterate what Mr. Poehnert said that a long time ago, Comcast agreed to provide 3 of these free boxes per location. They are no longer free with the recent FCC change. So we will be charged for them going forward. So especially keep that in mind if you think you need more than 3 per location; as said before this will add up quickly and it's money that comes out of the franchise fees that the City receives.

Chairman Cernota

Alright. I don't necessarily want to take more of people's precious than absolutely necessary but I do want to make sure that we hear from anyone that has any ideas now and certainly want to invite you to send us an email or even give us a call to let us know if you have any specific needs that you want us to include. We haven't actually brought it up but if there are any sort of Comcast service issues beyond just interruptions of service, but if you had any, I don't know if this would probably be more of an IT Department issue. But if there was a problem with Comcast not servicing something we would certainly want to hear about that. But again, I realize we are kind of putting people on the spot, not asking them now, but that is all helpful information if you can pass it along to us. Ms. Kleiner?

Director Kleiner

Just too, I am not sure that everyone is aware, I know the survey was included on the meeting link. The survey is currently being worked on and will be posted to the City website on Friday. So we would appreciate any help in passing along that survey to our residents. I just wanted to make sure that everyone was aware of that.

Chairman Cernota

Alright. Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Hearing what Director Kleiner said, I think I asked for this before. So as far as getting the survey out to our people, I know a lot of the Aldermen have Facebook pages. Whatever information you want us to provide to the public to encourage them to participate, if that could be put in some kind of a form that we could easily share that on our Facebook page. I know I, and I am sure all the Aldermen who have Facebook pages would be happy to do that.

Chairman Cernota

Excellent. Alright, I think we need to probably wrap up. Is there a motion?

MOTION BY MR. POEHNERT THAT THE TELEVISION ADVISORY BOARD, COMCAST FRANCHISE RENEWAL SUBCOMMITTEE BE ADJOURNED, BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken to adjourn the Cable Television Advisory Committee meeting which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Chairman Cernota, Mr. Poehnert, Attorney Bolton, Ms. Lindner, Director Kleiner, Mr. Miseirvitch, Alderman Jette	7
Nay:		0

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared adjourned at 9:32 a.m.

Jeff Poehnert, Clerk