

Good morning and welcome to the Cable Television Advisory Board, Comcast Franchise Renewal Subcommittee Meeting on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 8:00 AM via Zoom teleconference.

As Chairman of the Cable Television Advisory Board 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:

To access Zoom please refer to the Agenda or the City website for the meeting link. To join by phone the number is 1-929-205-6099 - Meeting ID: 849 5727 8864 Passcode: 022855. The Public may also view this meeting on Comcast Channel 16.

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 or Channel 16, 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 by taking roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, the reason they are not able to attend the meeting in person, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting as it is required by the Right to Know Law. Also if you could announce your name before you begin speaking, it will help the transcriptionist with the transcribing the minutes.

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; Pete Johnson, PEG; Cheryl Lindner, Chief of Staff; Nick Miseirvitch, Deputy Director IT, and Corporation Counsel, Steve Bolton.

ROLL CALL

Kim Kleiner, Director of Administrative Services

Good Morning. Kim Kleiner, I am in my office and I am alone and I am social distancing.

Chairman Andrew Cernota

Andrew Cernota, I am here, I am in my office alone and I am social distancing.

Cheryl Lindner, Chief of Staff

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

Steve Bolton, Corporation Counsel

Present, I am by myself, I can see and hear everything going on.

Jeff Poehnert, PEG Program Manager

Jeff Poehnert, I am in my home office alone and I am social distancing. My record dec had the mic on, sorry about that. I am home alone and social distancing.

Pete Johnson

Pete Johnson here, I am home, I am alone, I can hear the proceedings and I am social distancing as the Governor suggests.

Alderman Jette

I am here alone and I can hear the proceedings.

Chairman Cernota

Mr. Miseirvitch do we have your audio working now? I can see your lips moving but I can't hear you.

Attorney Bolton

High tech people have the most trouble.

Chairman Cernota

Alright for the record, Mr. Miseirvitch is here and please shake your head if you can confirm you are alone.

Mr. Johnson

He says he is going to call in.

Chairman Cernota

OK we look forward to hearing from him shortly. In the meantime, Ms. Kleiner, would you like to start us off?

Director Kleiner

I am happy to. Kim Kleiner. Good Morning everyone. So I did send out a notification that the survey was posted to the City Website last Friday. The graphic designer that works for the City who is very talented, also established and created a social media promotion as well as a promo to run on the PEG Channels. And so Mr. Poehnert can confirm that has been posted to the PEG Channels and included in the rotation.

Mr. Poehnert

Pete, we are on with that, correct.

Mr. Johnson

We are on with one that I created. I have not heard anything from Rich on anything that he may have created. So whatever he has done is not on.

Mr. Poehnert

But ours is on.

Mr. Johnson

It is running on all three channels during the bullet board right now.

Director Kleiner

Kim Kleiner. So thank you. It was attached to the notification that I sent out. So if you don't have it, I will certainly have Rich send you over a clean copy and more information is not a bad thing. We could certainly have both the promos you created and the promos that Mr. Berube created running at the same time.

Mr. Johnson

Correct.

Director Kleiner

So we will get that going. We have created a Comcast renewal page and we've put some information up. We are working on information about the Committee. I have spoken to Mr. Christianson from Comcast. He is collecting the information that we need but expects it to be a couple weeks out. The Mayor received notification from Comcast about a channel that will be cancelled from the Comcast line up and that's for those may know it, I don't – Newsie Informed Comcast – which is a news channel; highlights of news stories each day. So that channel is being cancelled but will still be available by app. And that's all the update that I have.

Chairman Cernota

Alderman Jette, I saw that you had a question?

Alderman Jette

So is this information or this notice they had made, can I share that on Facebook. Does the City have a Facebook Page that that's on that I can could then share on my Facebook page.

Director Kleiner

Good Morning. The City's Facebook Page is run out of the Mayor's Office. So Ms. Lindner would be better to speak to that.

Ms. Lindner

Yes we can post it if it hasn't already been posted. We did send out a press release last week that made it into the newspaper, I believe for the weekend editions. And we also are hosting an event with the Mayor tonight and then tomorrow morning Coffee with the Mayor where we will speak to the Comcast renewal and point people to the survey. So we can have that done today if it hasn't already been done.

Chairman Cernota

And you can also just drop that Comcast Franchise social media .jpg file that was in the meeting notice right into a post and that would allow you to share it directly, other than creating a new post yourself.

Alderman Jette

OK can you just say that again.

Chairman Cernota

So the file that Ms. Kleiner sent out is entitled "Comcast Franchise Social Media.jpg. And from say your desktop you can actually just drag that and drop it into the window when you create a new post. So if you have a blank post, drop that and it will upload and that will be the image in the post.

Alderman Jette

OK thank you. If I could....

Chairman Cernota

Certainly.

Alderman Jette

So I did notice a few people have already alerted me to their impression of what is going on. And despite our best efforts to make it clear that is not the case, they are talking about the price of Comcast, they are talking about internet access and proving competitive internet providers. So they are missing or under the impression that we can do a lot more than we can that it's not limited to just the Cable TV and we have no control over the price other than up to 5% the City can charge. So we've got a lot of work to do to try to educate people on those issues.

Chairman Cernota

Yes that seems to a perennial issue when we come to these renewals. Tomorrow we will be on the Coffee with the Mayor Meeting so for anyone that is going to be watching that, we will have discussions of that as well. Now is tonight's thing that is on the calendar, is that something that is public as well.

Ms. Lindner

Tonight will not be shown live on Channel 16 but will be shown afterwards and Mr. Poehnert can correct me if I am incorrect with that when we spoke yesterday. Tomorrow will be live but the Zoom links are out there, you can sign up for both events on the Mayor's page as well.

Chairman Cernota

Mr. Poehnert?

Mr. Poehnert

Yes I confirmed that. It will be recorded tonight for replay and then tomorrow will be live.

Chairman Cernota

Certainly if people have other ideas as to how to spread the word as far as exactly what the process is related to we will certainly make every effort to spread the word so that people have clear expectations as far as what we can and cannot do in this process.

Mr. Johnson

I know on a couple of the posts on the Nashua Civic Sounding Board I've gotten into the comments and tried to reiterate that we only can deal with certain things and pricing and channels and internet are not part of that. There seemed to be several other mentions that are talking about internet only or different things that we have no control over. And should we all, when we see it, try to post in the comments what and why the survey is being taken for, what reason.

Chairman Cernota

I'd say every person that you can explain the situation to is one less person that is going to be disappointed when their particular issue isn't addressed.

Mr. Johnson

It's funny, they all say people should take the survey when if they had taken it themselves they would realize and read the information prior to the survey what was actually going on. So people say, OH there's a survey go out and take it, but obviously they haven't yet.

Director Kleiner

While I have had a few people contact me directly and it is difficult but if you take the time I think they understand. I have had some people that have mentioned, well the Cable Television Advisory Board so by the very nature of the title of CTAB it throws them off and tends to make them think that we have some advisory over all aspects of cable television. And when we sit and explain that I think they understand. Alderman Dowd mentioned last evening at the Budget Meeting the work that has been done the Chamber in order to prepare it for both Zoom meetings and in-person meetings, and how impressive that was. And I think if we can focus somewhat on some of the positives that the City has received as a result of these funds and what these funds are used for, that may be helpful.

Chairman Cernota

It certainly goes to justify having the expense there for folks although it is certainly the smallest part of their bill. Alright.

Alderman Jette

So Mr. Chairman, this is not really part of our discussion this morning and forgive me for taking up any time but the 4% that we charge that money is goes into a dedicated fund does it not?

Chairman Cernota

Well part of it does, part of it doesn't. So to give a little historical background, back prior to the previous renewal the City Franchise fee was 3% and all of that went to the General Fund. Out of that the City allotted a budget for basically operating Channel 16. At the time we had no particular permanent staff it was just run with ad hoc videographers. After that renewal took place, that was when the big discussion about whether we would be adding education and public access. At that point, the fee was raised from 3% to 4%. The original 3% still went to the General Fund and that 1% went to a dedicated fund for the operation of the Education and Government Channels.

There was no specific provision provided in that one for the Public Access. So the Public Access was still funded by the City on a separate budget that was regular City funds which obviously once it is in the General Fund it is sort of fungible so it probably was part of that 3% but with the most recent renewal that public funding was that little additional fractional percentage that was an increase over the 4%. Now that went to a dedicated fund, or at least that's my understanding, that also is in the dedicated fund.

Mr. Johnson

So if I may, currently in the dedicated fund goes 1.3% and 2.7% is going to the General Fund, so that's how it has been since 2015. And that the Public Access Budget Line Item has gone into the PEG Television Fund. So that .3% basically is paying for the Public Access channel.

Alderman Jette

Thank you for that clarification.

Chairman Cernota

Alright. Before the meeting the issue was raised about while we are in these sort of holding patterns, waiting for some responses from Comcast and we are in the process of setting up public events to educate the public as far as what we are doing in this process and sort of providing greater public engagement, the question was whether we needed to continue to have these meetings on a weekly basis. I'd be interested in hearing people's thoughts on that.

Mr. Johnson

I would think that they may be needed to be called as needed. There may be times when things are a little slower and a weekly meeting isn't or is too much and I don't ever foresee a time where meeting more than once a week would be there. But I think "as needed" may be the best bet. We can sort of determine at the end of the meeting whether anything will happen before the next week is out, if that makes sense.

Chairman Cernota

It does. Any other discussion? Alderman Jette.

Alderman Jette

Yes thank you Mr. Chairman. I agree. I don't think anybody wants to meet unnecessarily you know just for the sake of meeting. So as you, Mr. Chairman, determine a need I think that seems like the better way of operating. We should meet at the call of the Chairman.

Mr. Poehnert

Maybe we just go tentatively for two weeks from now based on the idea that Comcast, within 2 weeks is going to have some information for us.

Chairman Cernota

OK. I don't know if that requires a motion? If someone wanted to make one we could certainly do that.

**MOTION BY MS. LINDNER THAT THE COMMITTEE TENTATIVELY SCHEDULE TO MEET
IN TWO WEEKS FROM TODAY BASED ON THE GATHERING OF INFORMATION FROM
COMCAST
MOTION SECCONED BY JEFF POEHNERT**

Mr. Poehnert

And it would be June 1st that we are looking at to meet.

Chairman Cernota

If there is no further discussion we will proceed to a vote.

Mr. Johnson

Make an amendment Mr. Chairman? I would just add and will meet after that as needed. Does that make sense?

Chairman Cernota

I think it does.

Ms. Lindner

Would you like me to amend my motion or do I need to withdraw it and make a new motion? I am happy to do whatever.

Chairman Cernota

To be honest, I don't know off the top of my head.

Mr. Johnson

I think it can be added as a friendly amendment.

Chairman Cernota

Yeah I think we will just add it.

MOTION TO AMEND BY ADDING AFTER MEETING JUNE 1st TO THEN MEET AS NEEDED

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

Yea:	Director Kleiner, Chairman Cernota, Ms. Lindner, Attorney Bolton, Mr. Poehnert, Mr. Johnson, Alderman Jette, Mr. Miseirvitch	8
Nay:		0

MOTION CARRIED

Chairman Cernota

Alright, any other discussion? Ms. Lindner?

Ms. Lindner

I just wanted to let you all know that we have posted onto the City’s Web Site a link to the survey so it is up there now if anybody would like to share it.

Chairman Cernota

Excellent. Thank you.

Ms. Lindner

You’re welcome.

Mr. Poehnert

This is a little off the subject, but tonight we will be, for the first time since March of last year, broadcasting from City Hall, tonight’s meeting. Now it will be Zoom, I mean it is not going to be in the Chamber, but that’s our first move towards normalcy again so that will start tonight.

Chairman Cernota

Very nice. Anything else? Alright is there a final motion?

MOTION BY MS. LINDNER 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:	Director Kleiner, Chairman Cernota, Ms. Lindner, Attorney Bolton, Mr. Poehnert, Mr. Johnson, Alderman Jette, Mr. Miseirvitch	8
Nay:		0

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:28 a.m.

Jeff Poehnert, Clerk