



**Portsmouth
Cable Commission Meeting
3:30 p.m. – October 4, 2007
City Hall/City Manager's Conference Room**

The Portsmouth Cable Commission met on Thursday October 4, 2007 at 3:30 p.m.

The following were present:

John Gregg, Chairman
John Bohenko, City Manager
Louis Vinciguerra, Commissioner
Brian Gregg, Commissioner
Kathy Pearce, Commissioner
Nancy Beach
Gary Lowe, Alternate Commissioner

Also present were Alan Brady, City of Portsmouth Webmaster and Suzanne Woodland, Assistant City Attorney.

- I. Call to Order** - Chairman John Gregg called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m.
- II. Approval of Minutes – August 2, 2007** - Voted to approve and accept the amended minutes of the August 2, 2007 meeting. Motion passed.
- III. Other Items –**
 1. Fair Point State Hearing Status, Conveyance of Commission concerns Status – Suzanne Woodland stated that the PUC will be holding hearings regarding the proposed transfer of assets from Verizon to Fair Point. It is anticipated at the end of the month John Gregg and Steve Parkinson Public Works Director will go to the PUC to express our concerns, being neither wholly for or against, and asking the Commission to take our concerns into account along with the concerns of other municipalities.
 2. FCC/Comcast Rate Hearing Plans, Opportunity to Express Concerns – The Chair referred to discussion at the last meeting issue of Comcast raising rates and Suzanne Woodland looked into this. Suzanne Woodland reported that the FCC used to regulate rates, but no longer do so. There is a possibility of supposedly regulating rates at the basic tier, as a practical matter in order to do that you have to be an approved rate making entity and have the expertise. Most municipalities are not.
 3. Comcast Channel Reallocation Complaint i.e. Movement of CSPAN 2 to Digital Grouping – The Chair received a telephone call from a gentleman

who had been notified by Comcast that they would be moving CSPAN 2 (Channel 45) to Channel 247 which requires that you have digital service. The City also received a call on the same issue and Kathy Pearce heard from the School.

The Chair stated this takes place November 1st and the explanation has to do with the fact that they are trying to remove analog channels in order to increase their capacity to offer HDTV channels, programs, etc.

Suzanne Woodland added that we have been told by Comcast it has to do with capacity, as analogs take up more capacity in the pipe line of information than digital, so in order to continue to provide and expand high speed services and digital, you need to lose an analog as you get ten digital channels to one analog and 3 on demand to one analog.

CSPAN is senate hearings and the City Manager suggested writing letters to Senators Gregg and Sununu.

MOTION made by Brian Gregg to send a letter to Senators Gregg and Sununu and local federal representative that we received complaints on this issue and ask them to respond to us. Seconded by Louis Vinciguerra. Motion passed.

4. Implications of U.S. Conversion to Digital only in February 2009 and Comcast Plans – The Chair stated it would be good to find out from Comcast how they are going to manage this and what the implications are. He believes there are likely to be a lot of confused and disappointed people. Suzanne Woodland stated that Comcast presumably early next year will have a better understanding of how the rollout will happen and what communications will look like and offered to come and meet with us to explain the ramifications and how this will take place. The Chair asked Attorney Woodland to follow through with this.
5. Update on City Plans for Expansion of Wireless Internet – In response to a question raised at a prior meeting, Alan Brady stated the development of wireless networks in Portsmouth is being driven by the Chamber of Commerce. The City is supporting there efforts.
6. Update on Inquiry of Brian Gregg regarding FIOS in his neighborhood - Suzanne Woodland reported that there was an issue of Verizon getting into a particular vault underneath a newly paved road and that Verizon had been asked to wait at least till the end of the tourist season. In the meanwhile, Verizon ceased their expansion of FIOS in the city.

IV. Non Public Session (meeting with Legal Counsel)

MOTION made by Nancy Beach to go into non-public session. Seconded by Kathleen Pearce. Motion passed.

The Commission then went into non-public session.

MOTION made by Kathy Pearce to go back into public session. Seconded by Brian Gregg. Motion passed.

Nancy Beach referenced a situation with a City Councilor candidate who has either a cell phone or internet phone and is not listed in the phone book. She raised the question of how the public would be able to get in touch with this person and asked if the City could / should provide a voice mail box or an e-mail forwarding, not necessarily for candidates, but for City Councilors.

The City Manager pointed out that this would mean the home computer files of the individual would be “discoverable” under the freedom of information act. Voicemail is fine, but the City Manager would recommend against any elected official linking / accessing a City of Portsmouth e-mail account on their home computer.

Next Meeting is scheduled for November 1, 2007 unless something develops.

- V. **Adjournment - MOTION** made by Nancy Beach. Seconded by Louie Vinciguerra. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine E. Boucas, Recording Secretary