



**Portsmouth
Cable Commission Meeting
3:30 p.m. – March 8, 2007
Media Room, Portsmouth High School**

The Portsmouth Cable Commission met on Thursday, March 8, 2007 at 3:30 p.m.

- I. Call to Order** - The following were present:
- John Gregg, Chairman
 - City Manager John Bohenko
 - Louis Vinciguerra, Commissioner
 - Brian Gregg, Commissioner
 - Kathy Pearce, Commissioner
 - Nancy Beach, Commissioner
 - Gary Lowe, Alternate Commissioner

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

Chairman John Gregg called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m.

The Commission met in the Media Room at the High School with Robert Lister, Superintendent of Schools; Pamela MacArtney, Career/Tech Director; Nat Heard, TV Production Media Teacher and Matt Tobey, Media Technician. The Commission introduced themselves and the Chair stated that most of the members have not had a chance to visit the school before and as we are interested in the possibility of public and educational access we again look at a potential studio and the other item on the Agenda is to talk about how we can help if you would like to move forward with an educational channel and the interest in bringing together an educational channel and the time frame and can we work together on this. The Commission will then have a non-public session.

II. Site Tour of the Media Room at Portsmouth High School - Mr. Lister suggested having the tour with Nat Herd, Matt Tobey and Pam MacArtney will explain how this fits into carrier tech education. As they have not spent a lot of time discussing an educational channel the tour may generate some questions and maybe set a direction for them. The Commission then toured the Classroom and Media Room.

III. Update PEG Access - The Chair presented the Commission with the Cable Subscriber Survey dated May 2006 showing the interest of parents of children under 18 is 77% for an educational channel and similar to those interested of the general public having a public access channel. This has been shared with the City Council and as a Commission we agreed to work through some of the questions that they would want answered in deciding how to set up a non-profit. We have recommended that we ask Comcast for 2 channels and will shortly be forwarding

to them a draft of what we would like to be the new contract. Ideally we would have it toward the end of this year.

The chair asked the school how fast they would like to move forward and secondly how they want to move forward and to work with you should you want to move forward.

Dr. Lister stated they want quality programming and to make sure to use all resources that are available.

The City Manager suggested combining resources showing that during the day is available to students of the community and in the evening available to the adults, that the equipment is being utilized to its maximum and is not sitting around. It would be to our advantage to bring in the school system. One of the things to cooperate on is getting the equipment for the studio and share it.

Louis Vinciguerra stated that most people are not against Public Access, they are against funding, they do not want to spend taxpayer's money.

Dr. Lister explained that Pam MacArtney is the Career Tech Director having the responsibility of what fits into the mission of career tech education and at the same time, yes we want to share resources and be cooperative and collaborate and how do we put all this together in such a way that it is a win win situation? The School Board needs to be aware of the purpose is and to get them involved.

Suzanne Woodland stated the sharing arrangement can be documented, there would be agreements with the school in terms of sharing, respecting policies and boundaries, but we hope there will be two separate channels so the educational content be addressed at the school level, public access would have their own policies.

The City Manager suggested in 2009 with the capital money design and do a studio with some of these funds and if we do get the educational channel and public access channel, then we would have an agreement such as Suzanne Woodland described.

The City Manager will inform the City Council of the Commission's exploring collaborative efforts with the School Dept. which ultimately has to be approved by the School Board.

The Chair asked Dr. Lister if it would be helpful to talk to the School Board and make a presentation. Dr. Lister thought this was a good idea.

Matt Tobey informed the Commission that February 9, 2009 is the date the switch will be made over to digital, the School presently does not have a cable box from Comcast, access only to basic analog cable for free for cable in the classroom. To his knowledge nothing has been addressed as to what is going to happen with the School system. There will not be any analogue signal access whatsoever from February 9, 2009.

IV. Approval of Minutes – Voted to approve and accept the minutes of the February 1, 2007 meeting. Motion passed.

The City Manager reported to the Commission that a public hearing was held on the six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and basically three years were questioned out of 243 million dollar CIP one of which was the \$30,000 cable access. Referred to a Petition that Alan Brady passed out to the Commissioners. There is a group that does not want to spend the money through the CIP. The Commission needs to be aware of this opposition.

Suzanne Woodland stated that Verizon has proposed a deal with Fairpoint to sell off some of its assets and confirmed that the Fios service is in deed going to be part of the transfer. The Public Utilities Commission in the State of NH sent around notice that if you were interested in that particular transaction and the hearings to take place, go ahead and file as an intervener and Suzanne did file on behalf of the City of Portsmouth to be an intervener in this action. There are pole issues as well as the Fios service and whether we will have a competitor to Comcast in the next several years. She also received a summary of the issues that will be addressed by the Public Utilities Commission. On this list is where Fios is installed, how it will be used and maintained, so Fios is on the Public Utilities Commission radar screen. Suzanne will keep track of and also spoke with Verizon today and confirmed they are not doing any more build out of Fios network and will leave what is there. Suzanne is looking for the Commission to give some direction to state our concerns.

V. Non-Public Session (meeting with Legal Counsel)

MOTION made by Brian Gregg to go into non-public session. Seconded by Louis Vinciguerra. Motion passed.

The Commission then went into non-public session.

MOTION made by Louis Vinciguerra to go back into public session. Seconded by Brian Gregg. Motion passed.

VI. Adjournment - MOTION made by Brian Gregg to adjourn. Seconded by Gary Lowe. Motion passed.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine E. Boucas