

CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COUNCIL (Litchfield)

MINUTES

Thursday, January 14, 2016

The regular meeting of the Cable Television Advisory Council (Litchfield) was held on Thursday, January 14, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. at the Oliver Wolcott Library, South Street, Litchfield, Connecticut. A quorum was present: Stephen Simonin, (Chairman), and Dian Knox, Litchfield; Lucille Paige, Torrington; Richard Antonetti, Thomas Lambert (BOE), Gary Lafferty, and Denise Russ Watertown; Jeff Dunn, Thomaston; Absent: Andy McDavid, Cornwall; John Angevine, Warren; Marie Soliani, John Luciano, Torrington.

Also present: Jennifer Young, *Cablevision*; Cat Cuarnieri from the *Litchfield County Times*.

Mr. Simonin called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Upon a motion by Jeff Dunn, seconded by Richard Antonetti, the minutes of the September 10, 2015 meeting were approved as submitted. Motion carried. Tom Lambert, Jeff Dunn and Diane Knox abstained.

Diane Knox reported the balance in the treasury is \$211.53. Upon a motion by Lucille Paige, seconded by Steven Simonin, the Treasurer's Report was approved as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

Under Correspondence: Stephen Simonin reported receiving an e-mail from a constituent in Litchfield who was concerned about the increased costs of *Cablevision* service and that if there were any discounts available for senior citizens with a fixed income. In bringing this issue to Jennifer Young, of *Cablevision*, Mrs. Young was able to review this customer's subscription and suggest several options to bring about a reduced monthly bill. Both the customer and Stephen Simonin were gratified a successful solution was arrived at.

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Denise Russ, Watertown, had several constituents who are senior citizens and questioned if Cablevision had any such reduced fee schedule for senior citizens, or customized subscriptions or even a reduced fee as an incentive for long time subscribers. Jennifer Young knows of no such "senior citizen" reduction plan, but took the name and addresses of these individuals; she will then contact them and review their subscription to see if a lower rate(s) can be had with channel/tier adjustments.

Jennifer Young suggest that the location may already be receiving a discounted rate due to a bulk service agreement Jennifer will also investigate the placement of an AP (wifi) device in the common area of OWL Library for use by the residents.

The new enhancements include pause and rewind of live TV which can be accessed by renting a device for the box. Other enhancements to the box include improved page load times/box responsiveness, Enhanced search and discovery experience, Optimum app-remote functionality, sending content to your TV, Enhanced library of VOD titles, specifically new Free On Demand networks have been added, new remote control.

Jeff Dunn, Thomaston, also questioned the problems with ESPN launching their own device – Optimum "app" to be able to be used in another home while a *Cablevision* subscriber may be visiting there. Jennifer Young stated that *cablevision* customer would have to use the homeowner's password, etc – if hot spot is located there.

The Optimum App allows you to access your current video subscription (in-home) on any authenticated device (laptop, Ipad, Android). TV to Go allows you to access many programmers (as part of your video subscription outside of the home as long as you sign in & authenticate using your Optimum ID & password. You can access via the programmers website or through the Optimum App. If you sign in once, you are automatically signed in every time following.

Jennifer is not aware of any ESPN App. However, if you have the Optimum App and are at another Optimum customer's home, you can log onto the Optium app using their login information, but not your own.

Jeff Dunn, Thomaston, also inquired as to reduction of cable costs to senior citizens through a town's Social Services department. Jennifer Young suggested investigating the "bundled" services/programming for cable to Senior Centers.

Stephen Simonin discussed the new upgrading of the "black boxes" and the fees associated with it. The enhancements to the boxes include pause, rewind stick, IPP base with an "app" working on it, etc. He reported that in his contacts with Congressmen (Blumenthal), a panel at the FCC has begun working on it with 3rd party devices through AT&T, Frontier, Netflix, Playstation. Optimum "app" allows watching TV through Fusion and enabling access to their three channels through their website.

Stephen Simonin reported the continuing problem with audio on several channels – coming from too much compression in the signals to the home.

Jeff Dunn, Thomaston, questioned the availability of access to Fashion, Discovery, Freedom ABC and WGN America.....

Stephen Simonin reported that initiatives are beginning in Washington at FCC regarding the surcharge on Sports Channels and broadcast channels. The same programming is FREE from the same broadcast for off-air programs but a fee is added for cable transport. He described the distance the HDTV travels off-air is less than the older NTSC was. Based on emergency communication need, the HDTV should be extended to reach all of CT by adding repeaters on hill tops to remove the blocked areas in CT. Anyone with a low cost HDTV antenna will get the Broadcast and sport programming for FREE and meet all emergency communication needs. This requires an FCC change and we are hoping that Senator Blumenthal can make this happen.

Upon a motion by Richard Antonetti, seconded by Denise Russ, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimous.

Respectively submitted,

Lucille A. Paige, Secretary

**The next meeting of the Cable
Advisory Council is Thursday,
March 10, 2016.**