

Hampton Cable Contract Renewal Committee Minutes 10/4/18

The committee met for the first time in the Selectmens' meeting room at 7pm.

Those present :

Jim Waddell - jwaddell@town.hampton.nh.us

Brian McCain - bmccain@town.hampton.nh.us

Richard (Rick) Canter - rcanter@town.hampton.nh.us

Nathan Page - npage@town.hampton.nh.us, nathanpage@myfairpoint.net

Ann Carnaby - annthehatter@gmail.com, acarnaby@town.hampton.nh.us

John Judson - jjudson@sau90.org

Frank DeLuca - fdeluca@sau90.org

Officers were elected as follows:

Jim Waddell - chair

Brian McCain - Vice Chair

Ann Carnaby - clerk

Chairman Waddell noted that there is an error in the current Comcast contract with the town, since the town of Greenland is named, not Hampton.

General discussion of present state of Comcast service to the town as follows, per Rick:

The existing distribution from the town for both Channel 13 and Channel 22 is analog over fiber lines from the Winnacunnet St. Fire station to Exeter. The Fire Station is the demarcation (hand off) point for both channels. Comcast owns the fiber transmitters and the fiber lines which provide this service. They monitor the signal from the fire station to their head end, although according to the Comcast engineer, the signals are only monitored for their presence and not for quality. Comcast then converts these signals to IP and distributes them back to Hampton in their combined cable feed. Since both stations have now digital transmission we should include in the new contract the requirement for Comcast to extend their IP network out to at least to the Hampton Fire Station and complete their IP conversion locally. This will eliminate encoding errors (which affects quality) in the signal transmitted to the end user home. This is exactly what Comcast has done in other communities PEG channels which have already

transitioned to Digital TV so there is already a precedent for Comcast to make and fund these changes.

Terms defined (thanks Rick!):

- **analog** is a type of signal, its a waveform instead of one and zeros as in a digital system. It is the old TV standard more susceptible to interference and the signal degrading than digital systems

- **digital** is a bunch of one's and zero's; there are a number of protocols which can sent digital files.

- **IP - Internet Protocol** - one method of digital signals being moved from one place to another. Your computer uses IP to send and receive files from the internet.

- **IP conversion** - converting from one digital file type to another

- **combined cable feed** - the consumer's home has one cable from Comcast which has all the channel they are signed up for on that cable. In fact all the channels even the ones you have not signed up or paid for are on that one cable. The Cable box at your TV knows which channels your allowed and understands how to tune into each channel when you choose a channel to watch. That is the combined cable feed. Comcast's headend (building where it all starts) combines all the channel available to the town and transmits this combined feed out down the cable to all the homes in the area.

other notes:

- there an electronic or transmitting reason why channels have to be sold by the bundle, even though apparently the channels can be removed one at a time

- this is more than what most people need to know but is relevant to how Ch 13 and Ch 22 get on the Hampton Comcast system and needs to be part of the contract negotiations.

Waddell confirmed that we could theoretically get any other carrier except that it could mean laying lines all over town, whereas Comcast already has the lines in place. Carnaby mentioned a line leasing arrangement similar to those held by phone companies in order to prevent one company being a monopoly. Leased lines must be repaired first by the owning company to keep a fair balance in the arrangement.

Tasks to be accomplished & assignments:

- determine the nature & amounts of the franchise fee - Jim, John & Rick
- establish a budget - Jim, Frank & Brian

- get input from the public - Jim, Ann & Nathan

Meeting Schedule:

first & third Thursdays **at 6 pm** selectmen's room or conference room

goal is to finish by February school vacation

Meeting dates are:

10/18 (cancelled - room not available)

11/1 **at 6pm** Manager's conference room upstairs

11/15

12/6

12/20

1/3

1/17

2/7

2/21 if needed

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Carnaby, clerk

note: Jim, where else do these have to go?

Does Kristina get a copy?

Is she posting them somewhere?