

DRAFT

PRESENT: Larry M. Smith, Chairman; Richard P. McDermott, Vice Chairman; Lori A. Ruest, Town Administrator; Susan H. Ayer, Secretary.

NOT PRESENT: James E. Ziolkowski, Selectman

COMCAST FRANCHISE AGREEMENT/PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNEL/INTERNET

OPTIONS: Kate Miller of Donahue, Tucker and Ciandella was present to discuss renewal of the Comcast Cable franchise agreement as well as the options for a public access channel to be used by the Town.

L. Smith said that it has been decided to renew the contract but that the Board is interested in hearing the attorney's recommendations about public access channels and live streaming.

K. Miller said that at this point it is cheaper for towns to do the internet broadcast/streaming solution rather than cable. Some towns do both. She cautioned that Comcast is no longer offering help with set up or equipment costs, and that it would cost at least \$10,000 per mile to run the fiberoptic cable from its source in Exeter to Hampton Falls.

K. Miller went on to say that Hampton, Seabrook and Hampton Falls have a provision in their franchise agreement with Comcast that if they request an education channel, Comcast will provide it within 180 days. She said this is good for communities that work well together; recordings can be brought to the Hampton studio to be placed online. She also said that if the town doesn't want live programming, a lot of educational programming can still be included. The cost can be spread out or funded through the SAU. Educational programming can include such things as sporting events, graduations, grandparent luncheons, anything affiliated with the school or that takes place on school property. Comcast monitors the education channels, and no political or advertising content can be shown. This option would not cover municipal meetings or events.

In the case of an education channel through Comcast, K. Miller said that the school district would come up with the plan and commitments, and once the Selectmen were comfortable that all is in place, they would be the ones to trigger the channel, as the Town of Hampton Falls is the entity with the Comcast agreement. No public hearing would be necessary. If the costs were not paid up front, they would be billed to the subscribers in their monthly bills.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding what might be shown on a municipal-based channel or on an education channel. Discussion included the topic of where the separate entities of Town, Library and School should remain separate and where they might collaborate in certain areas.

L. Smith said that the cost of a cable access channel is prohibitive, amounting to around \$100,000, and that he was inclined to look into internet based solutions. K. Miller said that for internet streaming, there is a fee to the internet entity used, but no restrictions on the amount of programming.

The Board then returned to the topic of the Comcast agreement and discussed the three percent franchise fee. The Town has the legal right to increase this amount up to 5% as an amendment to the agreement. The Town is exploring uses of the fees, but has no need to increase the amount at this time, and K.

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Miller said the option can be put in even if it is never exercised. Provision for increases of no more than one percent in any year will be written in.

MOTION: To schedule the first reading of the amendment to the Comcast Franchise Contract for June 7, 2017, and post notice of a Public Hearing on the matter to take place on June 21, 2017.

MOTION: L. Smith

SECOND: R. McDermott

PASSES

K. Miller was asked to attend the Public Hearing to help answer questions that may arise.

At this time, Attorney Miller left the meeting and George Koch was asked to join the discussion on audio/videotaping and public mobile application options.

As background, L. Smith said that Selectman Ziolkowski had been working on gathering information and pricing on microphones and speakers to be used for municipal meetings, and had secured Board approval to purchase as previously proposed. L. Smith said that he had asked J. Ziolkowski to delay purchase of this equipment until the discussion is complete, to ensure that it will be compatible with other components that might be added. This equipment has not been purchased to date.

G. Koch said that he is working on a strategic plan for communications for the entire municipality, going across departments so that there is no redundancy. He said he has spoken with Earth Channel, a company that works with municipalities as a post-production provider. The company would provide all the hardware needed to get the information on the internet, except the Town would need to buy the camera and microphones needed to create the actual content. This could then be uploaded as a live stream or archived. Once created, the content could be uploaded to the Town's website and accessed using any computer or via a mobile application. It would not be necessary to have an employee do the work of putting the content on the website.

With regard to equipment, G. Koch said that it is better that the microphones have not yet been purchased, as his contact with Earth Channel will send a catalogue of equipment that is compatible with the software and that other municipalities have used successfully.

G. Koch said pricing of the service is dependent on population size and certain variables. He said that live streaming and regular services, to include maintenance and support and all equipment aside from cameras and microphones, was quoted at an annual cost of \$2,995.

The public meeting was recessed at 10:30 so that the Selectmen could go into non-public session.

MOTION: To enter Nonpublic Session made by L. Smith seconded by R. McDermott.
Specific Statutory Reason cited as foundation for the nonpublic session:

XX RSA 91-A:3, II(c) *Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board, unless such person requests an open meeting.*

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pothole or missed trash pickup.) There was a lengthy discussion about the abilities of such an application.

For this application, G. Koch said that the best fit seems to be a company called City Source. It is available for both Android and Apple platforms and utilizes high level and drop down sublists for ease of navigation. G. Koch will provide documents and screen shots for review.

There was a discussion of service requests and how they would be routed to the appropriate department or person, and other details of what the application could do.

Cost for the City Source mobile application would include a one-time set up fee of \$3,500, and annual subscription fee for hosting and maintenance between \$3,000 and \$9,000. G. Koch recommended a level of service that would cost \$6,900 per year and provide what he considered the best “bang for the buck.”

This application would also allow for 130-character “push” notification, which could be used to inform of major events or emergencies.

The Board decided to have G. Koch make a presentation at a future Selectmen’s meeting. This will introduce a strategic plan for a Hampton Falls municipal online initiative and mobile application to the public and also allow department heads to consider how they could use the technology.

2017 MS- 535

The Board signed the Financial Report of the Town Budget for the period ending 12/31/2016.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO CUT WOOD OR TIMBER – Map 8, Lot 34:

The Board authorized the Chairman to sign a Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber for property located at Map 8, Lot 34, East Road.

MOTION: To adjourn at 12:00 PM

MOTION: L. Smith

SECOND: R. McDermott

UNANIMOUS