

Saugus Board of Selectmen
July 2, 2012

*****MEETING MINUTES*****

AGENDA
July 2, 2012
7:30 PM
Saugus Board of Selectmen
Town Hall 1st floor conference room
298 Central Street

1.) Cable Station agreement

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The Saugus Board of Selectmen met on July 2, 2012 at 7:30PM in the Town Hall 1st Floor Conference Room, 298 Central Street. Present: Selectmen Stephen Castinetti, Stephen Horlick, Julie Mitchell, Debra Panetta and the Chairman Michael Serino.

1.) Cable Station agreement

The Chair explained he met with Ira (Special Counsel Ira Zaleznik) after the Board voted not to renew the SCTV agreement and Ira submitted options for the Board to consider that he passed out to Board Members at their last meeting and explained the Board wanted to address issues raised and create checks and balances and possibly renegotiating the rate charged to customers (PEG access support) and said he drafted a proposal that includes putting a budget process in place, having the Board of Directors bring a budget to the Selectmen for approval and vendor contract approval and explained this is a working meeting and will place this on the July 18th agenda. The Chair read the proposal.

Mr. Castinetti asked why they Board is going through this process now. The Chair said the Board discussed it in January and decided not to renew and said he's not sure a non-profit works as well as they thought it would and said a lot of issues came before the Board regarding money and meetings and budget and said this would secure the money and reduce the rate to consumers and can try to negotiate capital improvements and said they can't negotiate if its run by a non-profit. Mr. Castinetti asked what issues were raised regarding budget and meetings. The Chair said the Directors couldn't answer as to how much money they have in various accounts. Mr. Castinetti asked if this is forming a new non-profit. The Chair said no, the Town will take control. Mr. Castinetti asked why he's proposing from 9 to 5 members. The Chair said most Boards are 5 member and works better and said this is a proposal for discussion and Board Members can make suggestions. Mr. Castinetti said 5 members appointed by the Selectmen may appear that the Board is micromanaging or controlling all aspects and asked what other problems were brought up. The Chair said the issues were raised at their January meeting. Mr. Castinetti said he's not comfortable with it (appointment procedure) Ms. Mitchell asked who appoints them now. The Chair said the Selectmen appoint 2 and the rest by members and directors. Mr. Horlick said the issue raised about their meetings being public or not and the meetings he saw were disorganized and said there was suppose to be an audit each year and there wasn't one done the first two years and said it's in the contract and said the Board did put it in play to see how it runs out and thinks it's time for change and think they don't need to be sitting on \$600,000 and feels they don't need more than \$200,000 in reserve. Mr. Castinetti said it was only a couple of years ago the Board stopped allotting money and the Board at the time felt comfortable to turn over control. Mr. Serino said it was part of the agreement and they had to turn over the money. Mr. Horlick said there's nothing wrong with shaving some money off the Comcast bill. Mr. Castinetti asked if reducing the bills is the aim. Mr. Horlick said yes.

Bill Kramich, 12 Emory Street, asked about them donating money. Mr. Garabedian said they do. Mr. Kramich asked about donating equipment. Ms. Panetta said there have been donations made and said Comcast collects 3.5% of cable bills that support SCTV and it will be going up again next year.

Peter Manoogian, TMMP10, asked if there's any role for Town Meeting. The Chair said no. Mr. Manoogian asked if the employees would receive Town benefits and if so, if there will be accounting for that and asked what the term for appointments. The Chair said 2 for 3 years and 3 for 1 year. Chris Peatridge, Chairman SCTV said only one employee receives insurance.

Peter Rossetti, SCTV Director, said the Selectmen have control of increases. Mr. Castinetti clarified it says "to increase" not decrease in rate.

Mr. Castinetti asked SCTV Directors present how they feel about the proposal. Mr. Peatridge said he has no heart ache over it and explained SCTV money is secured and said he agrees the money should be with the Town.

Mr. Garabedian said they are not in non-compliance of any terms of the agreement and received no notification they were doing anything wrong. The Chair said everything will stay the same.

Ms. Panetta asked SCTV Directors present if they were comfortable with the time lines laid out in the proposal. Mr. Peatridge said Sept. 1st might be compressed. The Chair said they could extend it in the first year. Mr. Rossetti said there was a reason it was set up as a non-profit, to keep the politics out of it.

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Matt Canterbury, 17 High Street, asked how much this will save the rate payer. The Chair said people are paying 3.5% of their bill now. Mr. Canterbury said around \$6.00 and looking at saving \$1-\$2 a month.

The Chair asked how the Board would like to proceed. Ms. Panetta said this is the first review and suggested putting it on next agenda and to make copies available for the public.

Ms. Mitchell asked who will decide what goes on cable. The Chair said the Board of Directors. Mr. Garabedian said new board of directors appointed by the Selectmen may give the perception they are involved. The Chair said the Selectmen are instituting checks and balances.

Mr. Horlick moved to place the policy on July 18th agenda. Chair seconds. Vote: 5-0.

Mr. Castinetti moved to adjourn. Chair seconds. Vote: 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:49PM

Wendy Reed, Clerk