**CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COUNCIL (Litchfield)**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, June 25, 2015**

The regular meeting of the Cable Television Advisory Council (Litchfield) was held on Thursday, June 25, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. at the Oliver Wolcott Library, South Street, Litchfield, Connecticut. A quorum was NOT present: Steven Simonin, Chairman, Diane Knox, Vice Chairman – Litchfield;

Lucille Paige, Torrington; Richard Antonetti, Watertown. Absent: Jeff Dunn, Thomaston; Andy MacDavid, Cornwall; Marie Soliani,Torrington; John Angevine, Warren, and Denise Russ, Watertown; John Luciano, Torrington; Gary Lafferty, Watertown.

Also present: Jennifer Young, *Cablevision.*

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m.

Richard Antonetti directed his report to Jennifer Young, *Cablevision*. He had received several e-mail from his constituents in Watertown; many regarding the continuing cost increases, the required number of boxes per household/set.

Gerry Gault, of Litchfield e-mailed experiences when attempting to get a new HD box; the customer service rep for *Cablevision* was unable to locate the same type of box Mr. Gault required; the customer service rep. offered to substitute the box with an upscale model instead. The offer connected to the upscale box seemed somewhat like a “bait and switch”. He declined. Jennifer Young investigated to find that the customer rep for *Cablevision* was new on the job and was not familiar with replacement boxes.

Steven Simonin reported his problems with USA network – wherein the program exhibited a delayed sound following my pixilation and then returned to normal viewing – he questioned the problem to be too much compression on the Cablevison signals into his home. Lucille Paige also experienced the same type of problem with her program viewing.

Jennifer Young, Cablevision, reported that ESPN is suing Verison over the providers new video programming bundle. ESPN accuses Verison of “breach of contract” for placing it inot a tier in violation of it is existing agreements.

It was suggested at the table that the cable industry should try to keep their customer base sot that subscribers not look for ways to get around their service from Cablevision.

Mrs. Knox gave the Treasurer’s Report: After distribution of seven (7) scholarships (@$250 each) the current balance today in the treasury is $281.13.

Jennifer Young, representative, reported Eyewitness News is now on Escape TV. (Not WFSB).

The meeting was declared adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Richard Antonetti asked if Frontier was connected to Cablevision; answer, it is not. In response to his question regarding the Cable Television Annual Report to PURA, he was advised that PURA no longer requires these reports and there is no longer a department at PURA that handles filings and reports of this kind. Steven Simonin advised that Frontier is sharing signals resulting in those signals being compressed together; poor reception to the subscriber.

Marie Soliani reported that a customer (house-bound) has three televisions, along with three separate Cablevision boxes. Cannot one or two of these boxes be condensed and yet carry the same channels to each television; can the wires be reconnected to obtain this objective? Jennifer Young replied that there must be one individual box for each television. Steven Simonin that there are ways to switch the wires on one or two televisions to carry only the basic channels.

Andrew MacDavid had no report or comments from subscribers.

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Lucille Paige cited the “loss signals” to the channels she subscribes and pays for. While this condition as not permanent, it nevertheless was annoying and inconvenient.

Steven Simonin reported that a member from the State-Wide Advisory Council suggested that a tax be added for “internet”. This member was advised that internet is not video and constitutes freedom of speech, therefore, a tax cannot be placed on it. Steven is working with Senator Richard Blumenthal and other Washington congressmen to address these problems with cable television providers and the PURA, and FCC. Everyone must have “equal access”. With the FCC, internet is under Title 2: FCC has to protect internet access. Jennifer Young stated that Cablevision does not currently have any pricing, agreements with third party vendors. Comcast did have such an agreement in place with Netflix to allow for faster streaming, which is what the FCC says is not allowed on their new Title2 regulations; Internet service providers should not be allowed to pick winners and losers. Comcast was also found to be in violation for throttling a subscriber4’s service for large filing sharing.

Steven Simonin reported that surcharges can be avoided by the subscriber (for sports and local broadcasts) can be had by using an antenna thereby getting these services free of charge. Subscribers opting to use this method should make sure their antenna has a good “line of sight” to pick up those channels. Change agreement on “repeater” on hill to increase line of site. Steven has placed an antenna on his home roof and found to have very clear reception and good audio. This is not the same signal that comes from Cablevision. John Angevine advised that the points should be cleaned occasionally.

Under Management’s Report, Jennifer Young announced “Free Wheel” to those subscribers who have Optimum – the device is $99. If you are an Optimum online subscriber, the monthly price is$9.99/mo. The service is strictly Wi-Fi only. Jeff Dunn asked if Cablevision was going to develop any “apps”. Cablevision is working toward developing an APP that would allow the same services.

Upon a motion by Steven Simonin, seconded by John Angevine, the minutes of the January 15, 2015 meeting were approved. Marie Soliani, Denise Russ and Richard Cantonetti abstained.

Diane Knox, Treasurer reported the current balance in checkbook is: $2,180.

Lucille Paige explained the process that has begun in awarding scholarships in the amount of $250 each to one graduating senior (2015) in each of the seven high schools within the franchise. Announcements have been made in the local newspapers and letters to each of the high school guidance departments have been sent.

Upon a motion by Richard Cantonetti, seconded by Diane Knox. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m. Voted unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucille A. Paige, Secretary