



GREATER WEST BLOOMFIELD
CABLE COMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION

KEEGO HARBOR • ORCHARD LAKE • SYLVAN LAKE • WEST BLOOMFIELD

MINUTES

February 11, 2016

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Harvey Gersin, at 7:31PM at West Bloomfield Town Hall.

2. Roll Call

Members Present:

Representing Keego Harbor: John Horger
Representing Orchard Lake: Dan Krause
Representing Sylvan Lake: Bill Brundage, Jim Endres
Representing West Bloomfield: Larry Brown, Harvey Gersin, Mark Kowalsky,
Suzanne Levine

Members Absent:

Representing Keego Harbor: Michael Grogan
Representing Orchard Lake: Anne Dziuba
Representing West Bloomfield: Deborah Macon, Gerald Walters

Others in Attendance:

Dave Scott (General Manager, Civic Center TV), David Albery (Executive Director, GWBCCC)

The Executive Director stated that Mr. Walters, Mrs. Dziuba, Mrs. Macon, and Mr. Grogan had communicated their inability to attend the meeting. He added that one document in addition to those delivered earlier in the week been provided for commissioners at the dais.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chairperson noted one revision to the agenda in the lettering of items under the Executive Director's Report.

Motion by Mr. Brown, support from Mr. Endres:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve the agenda as revised for the February 11, 2016 meeting.”

Voting YES: Brown, Brundage, Endres, Gersin, Horger, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

4. Public Forum

The Chairperson stated that the forum provides an opportunity for residents to address the Commission regarding cable-related issues at the beginning and the end of each meeting. Those unable to attend should contact the Commission at gwbcable.org.

No member of the public rose to address the Commission.

5. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mr. Brown, support from Ms. Levine:

"That the Minutes of the January 14, 2016 meeting be approved as presented."

Voting YES: Brown, Brundage, Endres, Gersin, Horger, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

6. Acceptance of Financial Report

In the absence of the Treasurer, Mr. Grogan, the reports were summarized by the Executive Director.

Motion by Mr. Horger, support from Mr. Krause:

"That the Financial Reports be accepted."

Voting YES: Brown, Brundage, Endres, Gersin, Horger, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

7. Commission Reports

The Chairperson stated that this portion of the agenda provides an opportunity for committees to report to the Commission.

Report of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was summarized by Mr. Kowalsky, the chairperson of the committee.

Committee Recommendation:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission establish its goals as recommended by the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee.”

In response to a question from Mr. Brundage, Mr. Kowalsky stated that the committee formed a smaller ad hoc group of members to efficiently work to prioritize the 27 strategic planning objectives provided by the Commission’s facilitator.

Report of the Community Programming Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was summarized, in the absence of committee chairperson Mrs. Dziuba and vice-chairperson Mrs. Macon, by the Executive Director.

Motion by Ms. Levine, support from Mr. Horger:

"That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission accept the reports of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee and the Community Programming Committee and consider committee recommendations under New Business later in this meeting.”

Voting YES: Brown, Brundage, Endres, Gersin, Horger, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

8. Executive Director's Report

Civic Center TV

Dave Scott, General Manager of Civic Center TV, addressed the Commission regarding the new news program slated to debut on CCT in late March and the additional staff being added to anchor, report, and produce. He also highlighted live coverage of United We Walk on January 17, national signing day at West Bloomfield High School, the State of the County, and a West Bloomfield/Bloomfield Hills basketball game. He provided metrics regarding internet viewing of CCT programming and social media reach and reported on the success of CCT staffer Leah Robinson at Central Michigan University his own recognition by the West Bloomfield Board of Education.

Mr. Brown stated that the Commission is providing service and support to the West Bloomfield School District far beyond the requirements of the agreement by which the Commission was granted the use of Green Media Center.

Mr. Krause and Mr. Scott spoke regarding the role of amateur radio in the dissemination of emergency information and STEM education in the schools.

The Chairperson applauded the opportunity provided by CCT to young people beginning careers in broadcasting and journalism, and Mr. Brown suggested that the Commission's name should somehow reflect the movement to communications venues beyond cable television. Mr. Scott added that the reach of CCT is far beyond the four communities.

Cable Operators

No communication was received from AT&T or Comcast.

GWBCCC Directory

Members were provided an updated directory of Commission membership, contractors, and committee assignments.

Periodical Review

Analysts predict that by the year 2020, 16 percent of cable subscribers will be receiving a "skinny bundle", a package of channels costing 40 dollars a month or less. As an indication of what subscribers find important, a survey has revealed that 56 percent would drop ESPN to save 8 dollars a month.

FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler is proposing rules that would pave the way for the creation of a single electronic box which can provide video, both on-line and traditional, a unit which consumers could either buy or lease from providers and which would tear down anti-competitive barriers.

In the final quarter of 2015, Comcast added 89 thousand video subscribers, compared to 36 thousand lost in the final quarter of 2014, and 194 thousand lost in 2014.

Communication

No items of communication were received.

Preview

The Executive Director presented his agenda for the time period between this meeting and the next.

Mr. Brown stated that his Comcast bill increased last month and when he indicated to the company that he was thinking of dropping the service, they offered a promotional rate which was the same rate he had been paying.

Mr. Horger stated that when he has asked for the retention department at Comcast, he has been very successful in lowering his bill. He added, in regard to set-top boxes, that for years he has used a TIVO unit with a cable card, giving him Comcast cable channels and streaming services through a single box.

At the request of Mr. Endres, the Executive Director reported that the two of them discussed how commissioners could take a positive role in promoting voter turn-out for the March 8 election. Accordingly, Civic Center TV will be prepared to record those messages during three different time periods during the week of February 15. Mr. Endres added that a federal judge has overturned the state law which prohibited any public official from communicating information regarding elections, even when they are to be held or what the choices are.

9. Unfinished Business

No items of Unfinished Business were presented.

10. New Business

Recommendation of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee

The Chairperson stated the recommendation.

“That the Greater West Bloomfield establish its goals as recommended by the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee.”

Motion by Mr. Endres, support form Mr. Kowalsky:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield establish its goals as recommended by the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee.”

Voting YES: Brown, Brundage, Endres, Gersin, Horger, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

Sunshine Week 2016

The Chairperson stated that Sunshine Week, a national initiative to promote open government and freedom of information, is being celebrated on March 13 – 19, 2016. At his request, the Executive Director presented a resolution in support of the initiative for Commission consideration.

Motion by Mr. Krause, support form Mr. Brown:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission adopt the resolution in Support of Sunshine Week as presented.”

Mr. Endres stated that one of the four communities did not approve the resolution last year due to

some misunderstanding regarding its full intent.

Mr. Brundage addressed the cablecasting of meetings in the four communities, specifically his community of Sylvan Lake, in light of language in the resolution declaring that “every citizen in our participatory democracy has an inherent right of access to government meetings”. He stated that coverage is especially important to senior citizens and not providing it is a disservice to residents. He asked for any advice from commissioners regarding the issue.

Mr. Kowalsky stated that there may a disservice being done to residents of Sylvan Lake, but the Commission is not doing it.

Mr. Krause stated that the Orchard Lake City Council should be cablecasting its meetings.

In response to Mr. Brundage’s question regarding how to move forward on this issue, the Executive Director stated that the decision regarding cablecasting meetings belongs completely to each community. He added that the community that did not approve the resolution in support of Sunshine Week in 2015 believed that in recommending approval the Cable Commission was advocating for that coverage, not simply providing the infrastructure should such coverage be desired. He stated that meetings held pursuant to the provisions of the Michigan Open Meetings Act fulfill the language of the resolution.

The Executive Director outlined some scheduling conflicts that would need to be worked out in order to facilitate live coverage of meetings of the Orchard Lake and Sylvan Lake councils, should they decide they would like to go in that direction. Whether or not to cablecast can be a controversial decision, and would be the result of grass roots advocacy in each community, with the Commission providing any information requested.

Mr. Brown stated that in 2008, the West Bloomfield Township Board decided to cablecast all meetings except personnel interviews, and he added that the city councils will decide to have meetings covered if the community demands it.

In response to a question from Mr. Brundage, Mr. Endres stated that the Sylvan Lake City Council has been asked to cablecast its meetings and the request was turned down.

Mr. Scott stated that as General Manager of Civic Center TV, his job is to provide coverage if asked. He added that there are additional options beyond live coverage, including a live stream, delayed coverage, or providing the coverage as a web archive.

Mr. Brundage stated that if one of the two communities decides to cablecast, it will provide more impetus for the other community to follow suit. Mr. Endres added that he believes Sylvan Lake is closer to making that decision than Orchard Lake.

The Chairperson stated that his hope that by this time in 2017, all four communities’ meetings will be covered in some fashion.

Mr. Kowalsky stated his belief that the Commission should not advocate for or against coverage of meetings but rather stand available as a resource to facilitate the decision made by the elected officials in each community.

Mr. Brundage stated he was appointed by the Sylvan Lake City Council to represent the city on the Cable Commission and that it is his responsibility to share the fact that coverage of meetings is a service the Commission offers but stay neutral regarding taking advantage of that service. Mr. Kowalsky stated that if Mr. Brundage believes as a resident of Sylvan Lake that coverage is

a good idea, he should advocate accordingly.

The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion to adopt the resolution.

Voting YES: Brown, Brundage, Endres, Gersin, Horger, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

11. Public Forum

The Chairperson stated that the forum provides an opportunity for residents to address the Commission regarding cable-related issues at the beginning and the end of each meeting.

No member of the public rose to address the Commission.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairperson at 8:37PM.

The next meeting of the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission is **THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2016, at 7:30PM at WEST BLOOMFIELD TOWN HALL, 4550 Walnut Lake Road, West Bloomfield, Michigan.**