



GREATER WEST BLOOMFIELD
CABLE COMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION

KEEGO HARBOR • ORCHARD LAKE • SYLVAN LAKE • WEST BLOOMFIELD

MINUTES

April 13, 2017

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Harvey Gersin, at 7:32PM at the Sylvan Lake Community Center.

He thanked the Sylvan Lake City Council for its hospitality in allowing this meeting to be the first to be cablecast from the Community Center. He also thanked Mr. Endres, cable commissioner and Mayor Pro-Tem of Sylvan Lake, for facilitating the event.

2. Roll Call

Members Present:

Representing Orchard Lake: Dan Krause
Representing Sylvan Lake: Matthew Benavides, Jim Endres
Representing West Bloomfield: Harvey Gersin, Mark Kowalsky, Suzanne Levine,
Deborah Macon, Gerald Walters, Jonathan Warshay

Members Absent:

Representing Keego Harbor: Michael Grogan
Representing Orchard Lake: Anne Dziuba

Others in Attendance:

Russell Meskin, Jim Smith, Dave Scott (General Manager, Civic Center TV), David Albery (Executive Director, GWBCCC)

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

3. Approval of Agenda

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

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve the agenda as provided for the April 13, 2017 meeting.”

Voting YES: Benavides, Endres, Gersin, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Walters, Warshay
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.

Jim Smith of Sylvan Lake welcomed the Commission to the Community Center and thanked Civic Center TV for its annual coverage of the Sylvan Lake Memorial Day parade.

5. Approval of Minutes

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

“That the Minutes of the March 9, 2017 meeting and the March 16, 2017 joint meeting be approved as presented.”

Voting YES: Benavides, Endres, Gersin, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Walters, Warshay
Voting NO:

The motion carried.

6. Acceptance of Financial Report

The report was summarized, in the absence of Mr. Grogan, the Commission’s Treasurer, by the Executive Director.

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

“That the Financial Report be accepted.”

Mr. Warshay stated that he had prepared for the Finance Committee a projection of revenue for 2017 considering the reduction of AT&T PEG support in three of the four communities as 2007 franchise agreements expire.

The Executive Director stated the information would be presented to the committee at its April 18 meeting and in response to a question from Mr. Kowalsky, he stated that Mr. Warshay’s projection is that total PEG support revenue will drop from \$692,000 in 2016 to \$652,000 in 2017.

Voting YES: Benavides, Endres, Gersin, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Walters, Warshay
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.

Report of the Finance Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was presented by Mr. Warshay, the vice-chairperson of the committee.

Report of the Community Programming Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was summarized by Mrs. Macon, the vice-chairperson of the committee.

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

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission accept the reports of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning, Finance, and Community Programming committees”.

Voting YES: Benavides, Endres, Gersin, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Walters, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

8. Executive Director's Report

Civic Center TV

Mr. Scott addressed the Board regarding the upgrade of cable technology at the Sylvan Lake Community Center and West Bloomfield Town Hall, including updated audio technology at both locations, and the hospitality extended by the West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Commission in hosting meetings while Town Hall was under construction. He thanked West Bloomfield Township IT Director Harry Palmer for the partnership between the Township and the Cable Commission in establishing robust connectivity between Town Hall and Green Media Center which will enable the parties to utilize resources in both buildings.

Mr. Scott provided updates regarding Civic Center TV, including development of the new community events database, with several partners already on board, plans for live radio and television coverage of the Orchard Lake Fine Art Show in late July at West Bloomfield High

School, coverage of three events on Memorial Day, and coverage of the Police Memorial on May 3, the Chamber awards dinner on May 9, and the Michigan Week Breakfast on May 19. He also addressed the presentation of information regarding road construction on Orchard Lake Road and Maple, the work of Jonathan Jackson and Cady Wozniak on “The Splash”, and the CCT partnership with the publication “West Bloomfield Today”.

He thanked his staff at Motown Digital for the excellent services provided to the Commission.

Mr. Warshay stated that construction on Orchard Lake Road will begin on June 12 and continue into November, with one lane northbound, one southbound, and one turning lane. He added that West Bloomfield will host an open house for the newly remodeled Town Hall board room on Thursday, May 11, at 10:00AM.

Mrs. Macon commended Civic Center TV for its extraordinary efforts in covering multiple events in May of every year and for its involvement in planning for the Michigan Week Breakfast. The Executive Director added that tickets for the breakfast are available at michiganweek.org.

Cable Operators

Commissioners were provided copies of communications from Comcast regarding customer equipment. The Executive Director stated that Leslie Brogan of Comcast has informed the Commission that subscribers are not being forced to move to the company’s X1 platform.

1st Quarter Report to the Four Communities

Members were provided copies of the report submitted to Keego Harbor, Orchard Lake, Sylvan Lake, and West Bloomfield.

Police Memorial, May 3

Commissioners were reminded of the event on Wednesday, May 3, at 12NOON, in front of the West Bloomfield Police Department, and the request to RSVP to Officer Rick Trabulsy.

Periodical Review

A TIVO survey reports that cord cutting is on the rise, with 20 percent of those who do not subscribe to a pay TV service (cable or satellite) having dropped the service in the past year. That number is 2.3 percent more than a year ago. The primary reasons cited for dropping pay TV include cost, the availability of streaming services, and broadcast television as an alternative. The report also found that 10 percent of pay TV subscribers switched providers in the last three months.

TIVO also reported that 77% of pay TV subscribers are in favor of a la carte choice in services,

and another study of a la carte found that although subscribers view paying for channels they don't watch as a sign of a poor value proposition, once they create their ideal line-up, the cost is more than they are paying now.

Comcast is upgrading its systems by bringing the nodes and therefore the last fiber component closer to residences.

Nielsen has reported trends in live television viewing, down from 4.5 hours a day in 2014 to 4.3 hours in 2016. DVR time-shifting has increased slightly, and the viewing of video on smartphones has more than doubled.

Communication

No additional communications were received.

Preview

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

The Chairperson asked that commissioners be provided a reminder regarding the open house celebrating the newly remodeled board room at Town Hall on May 11.

9. Unfinished Business

No items of Unfinished Business were presented.

10. New Business

Committee Appointment

The Chairperson stated that due to a scheduling conflict, Mr. Endres is not available for meetings of the Community Programming Committee on the first Tuesday of each month.

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

“That Matthew Benavides be appointed to replace Jim Endres as the Sylvan Lake representative to the Community Programming Committee.”

Voting YES: Benavides, Endres, Gersin, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Walters, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

September GWBCCC Meeting

The Chairperson stated that due to the Executive Director's attendance at the NATOA Annual Conference, he will be out of town for the scheduled Cable Commission meeting on September 14. Options include moving the meeting to September 7 or one of the last two Thursdays in August. If the Commission cancels its regularly scheduled August meeting, the time between the July meeting and September 7 would be eight weeks.

Motion by Mr. Kowalsky, support from Mrs. Macon:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission reschedule its September meeting from the 14th to the 7th.”

Voting YES: Benavides, Endres, Gersin, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Walters, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

The Executive Director stated that the location of the meeting is still to be determined, and he added that this move is a bonus for the West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Commission, which moved its meeting from September 28 to September 14 and now can meet at Town Hall with live coverage of Civic Center TV.

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.

Jeffrey Tackel of West Bloomfield addressed the Commission regarding customer service problems with Comcast and asked what recourse subscribers have. The Executive Director stated that the Commission has assisted Mr. Tackel in the past with similar problems and added that the same assistance will be provided again. He also stated that under federal and state law, no level of government, including local, has authority to regulate cable operators' business practices and operations. He added that the ultimate recourse is to stop doing business with a company which does not provide quality customer service but that in a monopoly or duopoly situation, that is difficult. The available recourse is to work with the Cable Commission to present the specific situation to Comcast and ask that it be rectified.

Mr. Walters stated that whenever he reaches a customer service representative from outside the United States, he asks to be transferred to a domestic call center.

Mr. Krause stated that he switched providers recently and saved about sixty dollars a month.

Ms. Levine reminded commissioners of the Greater West Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce Key to the Township Awards Dinner on May 9 at Shenandoah Country Club.

Mrs. Macon stated that the Greater West Bloomfield Michigan Week committee will be recognizing Motown Digital at its awards breakfast on May 19. She also reminded commissioners of a presentation by Salma Ajo at the West Bloomfield Township Public Library on April 23 and the charity pancake breakfast at West Bloomfield High School on May 20.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairperson at 8:26PM.

The next meeting of the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission is **THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2017, at 7:30PM** at **WEST BLOOMFIELD TOWN HALL**, 4550 Walnut Lake Road, West Bloomfield, Michigan.