

City of Lincoln
Cable TV Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes – November 1, 2012

Members Present: Thomas Higley, Ed Hoffman, Jerrod Jaeger, Linda Jewson, Jim Johnson, Colleen Jones, Dara Troutman

City Staff: Steve Huggenberger, Diane Gonzolas

Representatives of Time Warner: Ann Teget, Jamie Wenz

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by chair Ed Hoffman

Minutes from the January 2012 meeting were read. Troutman moved approval, Jones seconded, minutes approved as read.

New Business

Possible expansion of cable board duties

We discussed possible expansion of board duties. Huggenberger said that there has been discussion from board members that there's not a lot to do; some question whether the board is necessary if there's nothing to do. There has been a suggestion to make this a telecommunications board. The Mayor has in mind to give the board other telecommunications duties as assigned; he wants to know how board members feel about this. Hoffman said he thinks there are things that we could do to enhance the community. Not sure what we could do but thinks that the board has a lot of experience in these areas. Hoffman has talked to Huggenberger about whether we could get information on telecommunication issues; he has also talked to Gonzolas about this. Jewson commented that it would be good to get some information on technical issues. Troutman doesn't object to an expansion of the board's duties. She said that she, along with board members Laurie Thomas Lee and Shandi Peterson, have a lot of experience in more than just television. Higley said that after having been on the board for five quarters he thinks we should either expand or disband; he thinks expansion would be better. Johnson and Jones agreed. Jaeger took no position. Hoffman said that we haven't had a lot to do because there haven't been many issues to work with. Gonzolas said that ever since she's been working with the board the technology has been changing.

Huggenberger asked if the board would be averse to meeting monthly, if there were a lot of issues coming across our plate. Hoffman said that we might have subcommittees to help with specific issues. Gonzolas said that we could have a standard monthly meeting date, then cancel if we don't have a quorum or business. Higley would be OK with setting up a monthly board meeting, or with subcommittees. In terms of budget needs, Huggenberger thought we might be able to find staff time for administrative work, but probably not money for research.

Teget said that Time Warner Cable has shown good faith efforts to work with the City. Unless there are legitimate needs to work with TWC regarding cable issues she thinks it might be time for the board to disband. Hoffman said he sees her point but thinks we should be around in case anything comes up that would need the Cable Board's assistance. Teget said that the meetings have been a positive resource for TWC. Hoffman said that it's his thought that if there are issues then we could move into those areas. Gonzolas asked if representatives of TWC should be expected to come to meetings if we move to a board with expanded roles. Hoffman said that he has some concern anyway about the role of TWC during meetings; he thinks that the relationship between Time Warner Cable and the City might be misconstrued by people who see their level of participation in meetings. Troutman said that she thinks posing a question to either TWC or staff is OK. Jaeger said that he thinks Hoffman's comment was more about whether it's appropriate to include Time Warner Cable as part of our meetings; he thinks it might be better to have a time for public comment on an issue by issue basis, and include TWC comments in that portion of the discussion, rather than having them participate in our board meetings as a separate entity.

Board Orientation

Gonzolas said that some board members have asked for an orientation session. She wants to know what the preference would be: a meeting, or some kind of online presentation. Troutman said that interpersonal would be better. Jones agrees; sometimes one doesn't know what questions to ask. Gonzolas said she would try to set something up, possibly in early December. Higley said he would attend; he would like to hear about the Citizen Information Center.

Proposed Changes to Access Channel Rules

We discussed possible changes to Chapters I and III of the Cable Access Rules. Gonzolas distributed a draft copy incorporating changes discussed at our last meeting. Teget said that Time Warner Cable has also submitted some suggestions that weren't included in the draft copy.

Gonzolas went over the changes. In Section 1.2, items (i), (j), and (k) have been modified as suggested our last meeting. Hoffman suggested that we change the opening sentence of Chapters I and III to read "The City of Lincoln has responsibility for the context of this chapter." Board agreed on this. Hoffman commented that in section 6.1 we should drop "Television" from the name of the board, just use "Cable Advisory Board." General agreement.

Hoffman thought we should consider the document as we have it for now, and invite Time Warner to submit their changes to be considered at the next meeting. Board agreed to this.

In Chapter III section 1.3, Troutman said we should change "airing" to "cable-casting" and change "channel" to "channels." Jaeger asked if there is a definition of "cable-casting" in the document; Gonzolas said not currently. Board agreed to Troutman's suggestions. Troutman asked if we want to make changes to 8.8 similar to what we did in 3.5; adding "with prior approval of the access coordinator", but not adding the phrase "but not conduct" as was done in 3.5; also remove the phrase "health and wellness" to make the statement more general. Board agreed to this.

Troutman asked if there is a provision to make revisions of the rules if the cable channel lineup changes. Huggenberger said that there isn't but he thinks we should put one in.

Higley asked if we might want to go ahead and schedule a meeting in a month or two, followed later by a vote at our next regularly scheduled meeting. Troutman asked Teget if she could tell us about the nature of the changes that TWC wants us to consider. Teget said that the biggest concern is that they want to make sure that commercial advertising doesn't happen on the PEG channels.

Reports from Time Warner Cable

Wenz distributed the Public Access Coordinator's report. Higley commented that he has taken a tour of the access studio and found it helpful. Hoffman thinks it would be good to give members an opportunity to tour it. Jones suggested that we could do an orientation at TWC and follow up with a tour for those who want one. Higley asked if we would want this to be a public meeting; Jaeger said yes.

Reports from the City

Gonzolas distributed a written report.

Adjournment

Next meeting scheduled for January 24, 2013, at the City County Building. Possible interim meeting in late November or early December.

(Secretary's note: The January meeting has subsequently been rescheduled for February 28, due to scheduling issues. No interim meeting was held, partially due to the weather and partially due to schedule incompatibilities.)

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Johnson, secretary