

**DANBURY, BETHEL, RIDGEFIELD  
CABLE ADVISORY COUNCIL  
3 Fox Den Road, Danbury, CT 06811  
Telephone: 203-792-2436**

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**MEETING MINUTES  
November 15, 2007  
City Hall  
Danbury, Connecticut**

**MEETING OPENED:** 7:08 pm by Dianne Eppinger, Chairman

For the record – meeting videotaped by John McGowan.

**Attendance:** A=Absent, EA=Excused Absence, L=Late, LE=Left Early

**Present:**

Ridgefield: AnneMarie Surfaro-Boehme, Cary Nadel, Melinda Violante  
Danbury: Dianne Eppinger, Lynn Waller  
Bethel: Anne Bissell Freestone, Robert Pitt  
Comcast: Sharon Codeanne, David King, Brad Palazzo

**Absent:**

Danbury: Greg Scalzo(A)  
Bethel: Robin Renner (EA)

**Call to Order:**

A quorum is present for the meeting.

**Public Comments**

Bill Gulya, of Bethel, CT addressed the Council and complained about the number of commercials aired during programming, specifically sports events and the *Glen Beck Show*. It was explained to Mr. Gulya at the October 18<sup>th</sup> meeting and repeated at this meeting that the Council has no authority or control over the number of commercials aired during programming. Sharon Codeanne of Comcast stated that networks control the airing of commercials. It was suggested to Mr. Gulya that he contact the *Glen Beck Show* if he feels that part of the programming is preempted by commercials. He also complained about the quality of the music that plays during the Community Calendar on Channel 23. He also spoke in support of Thomas Bennett's show. He is dissatisfied with his digital box and it was suggested that Comcast look into it because it may be a technical problem and not an issue for the Council. Mr. Gulya was wished a happy 89<sup>th</sup> birthday.

John McGowan, of Bethel, CT addressed the Council. He again questioned the Council's authority to move Mr. Bennett's program to the later hour. Mr. McGowan was advised once again that the decision to air Mr. Bennett's show at 11:30 p. m. (now 11:00 p.m.) was a Comcast decision and not a Council decision. The only action taken by the Council was to declare that the content of *The Big T Talk & Variety Show* was of an adult, mature nature pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes. Sharon Codeanne explained the decision was based on community standards. Mr. McGowan presented the Council with his third Freedom of Information Request regarding the action concerning *The Big T Talk & Variety Show*.

Albert Robinson of Danbury, CT spoke with regard to Governmental Channel 24. His concern is that the City of Danbury is not taking advantage of the opportunity to televise governmental meetings. He also indicated that the rules should be clear to insure that elected officials not use the channel to promote their own agenda. Rules require that governmental meeting be aired gavel to gavel. Mr. Robinson was advised that the Council is presently reviewing the rules for all three channel.

Mr. Robinson asked Sharon Codeanne, the Comcast representative for an update of what action was being taken to monitor Mr. Bennett's programming prior to airing. He was advised that the program is reviewed while being taped. Comcast's Legal Department continues to monitor Mr. Bennett's programming but only after it has aired.

Thomas Bennett, of Danbury, CT, producer of *The Big T Talk & Variety Show* criticized the action taken by the Council and Comcast in determining the content of his program adult, mature content. Mr. Bennett's demeanor became loud and disruptive, resulting in the Chair calling the Danbury Police Department as a precautionary measure. Mr. Bennett left the meeting room prior to the arrival of the police and no police action was taken.

#### **Chairman's Report:**

The Minutes of the October 18, 2007 meeting were approved on Motion by Anne Freestone, seconded by Lynn Waller. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman reported that the two FOI Requests submitted by John McGowan have been responded to by Atty. Martin Lawlor on behalf of the Council. Copies were distributed to Council members.

The Chairman was presented with a letter from Mayor D. Boughton at the meeting regarding the appointment of Sondra Grossi as the Library Representative to the Council. Ms. Grossi works in the Technology Center of the Danbury Library and resides in Danbury.

One customer complaint was received and forwarded to Sharon Codeanne for action. Sharon reported that the customer had been contacted and the issue resolved.

Prior complaints by Ridgefield residents have been addressed. One complaint dealt with cable card issue and the other with a nonstandard cable service installation.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

Balance was \$9,751.06, current \$9,556.60.  
Report was unanimously approved.

### Comcast's Report:

#### Marketing:

Effective December 11, 2007:

The following channels will be launched in the Expanded Basic Service Tier:

"History Channel HD" at channel 197; "Discovery HD" at channel 191;

"A&E HD" on channel 211; "Food HD" at channel 213; "HGTV HD" at channel 212;  
and "USA Network HD" at channel 195.

"Discovery HD" on channel 205 in the Digital Classic tier is being renamed "HD Theater."

"NFL HD" will be added at channel 214 in the Sports Entertainment Pack.

"AMC" will move from channel 71 to channel 37; and "TCM" will move from channel 72 to channel 69.

"Leased Access" will move from channel 96 in the Basic Service tier to channel 190 in the Digital Starter Package, "Court TV" will move from channel 37 in the Expanded Basic tier to channel 182 in the Digital Starter Package; "CSPAN 2" will move from channel 23 on the Basic Service tier to channel 186 in the Digital Starter Package; and "The Weather Channel" will move from channel 69 in the Expanded Basic tier to channel 96 in the Basic Service tier.

#### Community Relations:

Brad Palazzo was introduced as the Community Relations Specialist and spoke about the Comcast Foundation. The Comcast Foundation invests in organizations that assist communities with literacy, youth leadership development and community service programs. The Leaders and Achievers program provides scholarships to area high school students. Council members were invited to contact Mr. Palazzo for further information and specific grants available.

#### Community Access:

David King reported the following:

Kevin Gallagher, along with crew and volunteers presented LIVE election night coverage on Election Day. The broadcast provided local election results and interviews with the candidates.

The Fall Studio Production course was completed on November 9<sup>th</sup> with nine participants completing the course. It is our hope that the participants will continue their involvement with Channel 23 as producers and volunteers.

A graduate from a training course held last year recently produced a program concerning the issue of sports injuries and children. The program titled, *Sports Injuries: Is Your Child At Risk?* is scheduled to air at various times during the months of November and December.

Studio Camera One was sent out for repair. A replacement camera is currently in operation in its place.

The annual Open House is scheduled for Tuesday, December 11<sup>th</sup> between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

In observance of Thanksgiving as a Comcast company holiday, the studio will be closed and there will be no programming on Channel 23 on Thursday, November 22, 2007.

Lynn Waller expressed her concerns that the studio closes on occasion during the business day when production time has been scheduled creating a problem for producers. This issue had been discussed a year ago and will be reviewed again to insure that the studio remains accessible to producers as required.

**Old Business:**

**New Business:**

On Motion by Lynn Waller, seconded by Melinda Violante and unanimously approved, New Business item j. was added to the New Business Agenda.

- a. Application for Stay of Cease and Desist Orders of Richard Blumenthal, Attorney General for State of Connecticut dated October 24, 2007 re: Docket Numbers 07-03-34; 07-05-23; and 07-10-04.
- b. AT&T's Response to the Application for Stay of Cease and Desist Orders of Richard Blumenthal, Attorney General for the State of Connecticut dated October 25, 2007 re: Docket Numbers 07-03-34; 07-05-23; and 07-10-04.
- c. Petition of the City of Bridgeport, City of Danbury and City of Stamford for Party Status dated October 26, 2007 re: Docket No. 07-10-04, Application of Southern New England Telephone Company for Certificate of Video Franchise Authority.
- d. Robinson & Cole LLP letter dated October 31, 2007 re: Docket No. 07-\_\_-\_\_; DPUC Review of Comcast of Danbury, Inc. FCC Forms 1240 and 1205.
- e. State of Connecticut, Department of Public Utility Control letter dated November 1, 2007 to AT&T and The Southern New England New England Company re: Docket No. 07-10-04 – Application of The Southern New England Telephone Company for Certificate of Video Franchise Authority.
- f. AT&T letter dated November 1, 2007 to Department of Public Utility Control re: Docket No. 07-10-04 – Application of The Southern New England Telephone Company for Certificate of Video Franchise Authority.

- g. State of Connecticut, Department of Public Utility Control letter dated November 1, 2007 to Office of Bridgeport City Attorney re: Docket No. 07-10-04 – Application of The Southern New England Telephone Company for Certificate of Video Franchise Authority.
- h. State of Connecticut, Department of Public Utility Control letter dated November 2, 2007 to Office of the Attorney General re: Docket No. 07-03-34 – Application of the Cities of Bridgeport, Danbury and Stamford for a Declaratory Ruling Regarding the Safety of V-RAD Boxes, Docket No. 07-05-23 – DPUC Review of AT&T Connecticut's Community Access Funding Obligations and Docket No. 07-10-04 – Application of The Southern New England Telephone Company for Certificate of Video Franchise Authority.
- i. Robinson & Cole LLP letter to Department of Public Utility Control dated November 2, 2007 re: Comcast – Programming Changes and Channel Additions.
- j. Robinson & Cole LLP letter to Department of Public Utility Control dated November 9, 2007 re: Comcast – Programming Changes and Channel Additions.

All of the above Agenda items were reviewed and discussed by the Council and Comcast representatives present. The main concern of the Council is how the approval of AT&T's Application for Certificate of Video Franchise Authority to provide video service to the entire State of Connecticut will impact community access in the Danbury, Bethel, Ridgefield Franchise Area.

The following 2008 Meeting Schedule was adopted:

February 21	Danbury City Hall
April 17	Bethel Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center
June 19	Ridgefield Town Hall Annex
September 18	Ridgefield Town Hall Annex
October 16	Bethel Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center
November 20	Danbury City Hall

**Public Comments - follow-up:**

**No follow-up public comments.**

**Motion to Adjourn: Anne Freestone**

**Second: AnneMarie Surfaro-Boehme**

**Vote: Unanimously Approved**

**Meeting Adjourned: 8:30 pm. by the Chairman**

Minutes as recorded by Dianne Eppinger, Chairman and presented subject to approval, on February 21, 2008.

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

Dianne Eppinger