

Cable Advisory Committee Charge and Information

Final – Adopted October 19, 2016

Charge

Support the Princeton Board of Selectmen (BOS), as Cable TV Issuing Authority (IA), in the initial Cable TV (CATV) franchise licensing process. Perform research on available options, prioritize those options, and make recommendations to the IA as to desired components of a CATV franchise contract.

Information

The primary outcome of this initial process is the Issuing Authority Report (IAR), which is the IA's response to any franchise applicants. CATV applicants will respond by November 3, 2016 with the required Form 100 and a \$100 application fee, and may or may not also submit an outline or detailed proposal of potential services, build timeframe, financial factors, or other information.

The IAR is the vehicle whereby the town states to CATV franchise applicants the town's desired primary contract factors. There are a very large number of possible of priority elements any town might desire: free Internet services to town facilities, Closed Circuit Community Access Channel(s) (CCCATV) are two examples frequently noted. From brief informal conversations with abutting towns, we understand that the town will likely get agreement with a CATV providers on only a very few desired options.

The BOS has stated publicly on several occasions that their primary goals are (1) CATV services to be made available to any premise in town, (2) the CATV infrastructure build be completed and services available to residents as rapidly as possible, and (3) least possible financial impact to subscribing residents relative to their premise being a long distance from their road. No-cost Internet services to town facilities are attractive, especially for Tomas Prince School. At this point, the BOS has expressed little interest in CCATV, as its costs are back-billed to subscribers.

The CATV provider also pays the town a portion of gross video-related revenues as a licensing fee. We understand that the licensing fees are typically 5-6% for initial franchise agreements, and 4-5% for renewal contracts. Informally, the BOS will likely act to dedicated this revenue towards the Make Ready loan repayments, as to lessen

the burden of our taxpayers, should there be no or only partial for MBI reimbursement for Princeton Make Ready.

The BOS will retain special legal counsel (experienced CATV attorney) to vet the IAR and team with the town administrator for contract negotiations.

Some ideas for CAC consideration – approach

Contact the DTC and engage with the (perceived) Community Liaison person. Find out if that person believes there are IAR's that are exemplary or favorable to a community, or if the DTC has any informal thoughts on this matter. Note: Both Comcast and Charter have informed the Princeton Broadband Committee there has not been a "new" CATV franchise in the Commonwealth for over 20+ years.

Contact officials from abutting and DTE recommended towns and discuss their CATV contracts – what they find favorable and like, what they would change at contract renegotiation, et cetera.

Via CAC Chair Darcy Rowell, keep the BOS informed of progress, questions, and resource requests.

Direct CAC contact with applying CATV franchisees (Comcast, Charter, etc.) is at the discretion of the town administrator and BOS Chair.