

Meeting Minutes
Northbridge Cable Advisory Board
Hybrid Meeting
03/20/2023

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23 JUN 29 AM 9:00
Approved 6/7/23
Sharon

Meeting Started: 7pm

Present on Zoom: Town Manager, Adam Gaudette.

Cable Advisory Board Present: Harry Berkowitz, Sharron Ampagoomian, James Hackett, Mike Yesco, JP Courveau, Absent: Ben Corman.

Northbridge TV Staff Present: Bill Tartaglia, Aaron Meadows.

Harry went over Northbridge Community Television want list while waiting for Atty. Hewig and Charter Spectrum's John Maher to login to Zoom.

Listed as follows:

- * 5% gross annual revenue paid quarterly.
- * \$260,000 capital funding over 10 years. Day one of execution date of cable license and year 5 of the cable license.
- * 3 HD channels in sequential order. 191, 192, 193.
- * Electronic Programming Guide (EPG)
- * No tampering with currently set up drops and our system configurations including at the headend.
- * Financial breakdown with every operations check of all TV revenue including ad sales and HSN and all other items listed on the attached example including write-offs, etc.
- * Senior discount continuation,

Sharron mentioned that both channel 3 and channel 193 are off the air.

Harry said Atty. Hewig is to send a draft license to John Maher that we should get back for review.

Arrived via Zoom 730pm: Town Council, Atty. Hewig and Charter Spectrum's Government Relations Representative, John Maher.

Atty. Hewig went through some of the items that Northbridge TV requested.

5% Operations and 260,000 for capital. – John Maher's response was going from 3.5% to 5% is a big jump. I think I could do 5% but not with capital exceeding the 5% cap. Bill T. asked why, because the operations cap has nothing to do with the capital funding. John Maher agreed. That is just our policy John Maher said.

3 HD Channels: Maher's response was that there is a \$10,000 per year per channel charge. Maher went on to say, "We don't offer HD channels through our renewals." Bill T. mentioned that Grafton and Ludlow both have options for HD with no mention of a separate deal or costs. Atty. Hewig said there is no mention in the Grafton license for the cost for HD. John Maher said he talked to Grafton and quoted the same \$10,000 per channel per year for HD. John Maher said it is a separate business transaction of 800.00 a month No pass through to the subscriber. Sharron said to Maher, "Channel 1 in HD. Maher, correct. Sharron said they do a great job at channel 1. Don't you want us to be able to do a

great job also? Sharron said all of our equipment is in HD. We can't even buy equipment is SD. Bill T. said we need to dumb everything down to make it work on Charter Spectrum. Sharron said the Spectrum system is not updated to today's standards.

Sequential channels: Maher said he will check on that.

EPG: Maher said he will research. Maher said I think it is doable it is my understanding. Bill T. mentioned Worcester gets the EPG.

Financial breakdown of GAR: Maher is not familiar with this document. Bill T. will send copies of these specific documents to Atty. Hewig.

Continue with the senior discount: John Maher said no more senior discount.

Liquidated Damages: Maher asked, "why are you asking for liquidated damages." Atty. Hewig said, "Because it is the best enforcement mechanism that you can have in the license."

Senior Discounts: Maher said no senior discounts. It is now Charter Spectrum policy. Maher said it is a rate issue. Atty. Hewig said it would be good PR and suggested a side letter. Maher said, "We never do side letters."

Atty. Hewig would you be willing to give us the same language as in the Grafton license in our license in regards to HD. Maher said yes.

Spectrum App: Harry mentions the PEG channels are not on the app. Is it possible to get our channels on the app? Maher said he will check on that one.

Adam G. questioned the amount of subscribers. The amount of 3600 was mentioned. Maher agreed that number sounds right.

James Hackett mentioned the technical contact issue. This means the NCTV Staff have no real way to contact Charter Spectrum to resolve issues that are coming from outside of our facility. Maher said he will look into it. He said he believes there is a PEG email and phone number he will give to Atty. Hewig for the PEG facility.

Discussion about subscriber counts. Bill T. said he sent the numbers to Adam G. and that the 2022 numbers will be released in a couple weeks at the DTC. Bill T. will follow up with the DTC to get the 2022 sub numbers.

Atty. Hewig gives an explanation on the operations and capital funding. Atty. Hewig said he will send us a breakdown of all the ways that we can get the funding before next meeting so it can be discussed then.

Bill T. told Atty. Hewig. that Grafton is getting \$6000.00 as year in capital plus .05% GAR. Atty. Hewig said it matters of what we asked in previous contracts. Aaron Meadows said since we were not greedy in the past license and did not ask for 5% and capital, that means now we cannot get what we ask. Atty. Hewig said yes.

Atty. Hewig said he will send us the numbers. Bill T. said the 5% operations is a variable and the capital is not. Then it makes more sense to get boost the capital and less on the variable. Atty. Hewig agreed.

Atty. Hewig: Free HD channels probably not going to happen. Is it possible to negotiate the cost down.

IP Based: What if we go IP based. That would eliminate the need for using Spectrum's fiber, thereby no charge should be needed.

Sharron mentioned she is concerned about music rights on internet. Atty. Hewig said that is not his expertise.

Harry said we operate on grants and donations.

Atty. Hewig said, If the PEG facility has money issues it is conceivable for NCTV to ask the town to step up to make a donation.

Atty. Hewig: said local originating lines and sights are okay. That means Charter Spectrum will maintain replace them as needed.

Atty. Hewig wants to negotiate with Maher and he will come back to us with the money options before the next meeting. He said there should be a number of options. Motion made by Mike Yesco seconded by Sharron (unanimous) for Atty. Hewig to start actual negotiations with Maher and Charter Spectrum.

Harry set next meeting for April 24, 2023. This meeting date is tentative based on how far Atty. Hewig gets with Charter Spectrum.

Atty. Hewig said he will put together a draft license and send it to Adam and the committee. Also to Bill T. That way we will be prepared for next meeting.

Adam G. and Atty. Hewig left the meeting at 8:33pm.

Meeting closed: 8:37pm.