



GREATER WEST BLOOMFIELD CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

KEEGO HARBOR • ORCHARD LAKE • SYLVAN LAKE • WEST BLOOMFIELD

MINUTES

January 14, 2021

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Harvey Gersin, at 7:31PM via ZOOM teleconference. He stated that the meeting is held virtually pursuant to the Michigan Open Meetings Act and Oakland County Health Department order.

2. Roll Call

Members Present

Representing Orchard Lake:

Anne Dziuba (attending in the City of Orchard Lake, Oakland County, Michigan)

Dan Krause (attending in West Bloomfield Township, Oakland County, Michigan)

Representing Sylvan Lake:

Phil Ross (attending in the City of Sylvan Lake, Oakland County, Michigan)

Representing West Bloomfield:

Harvey Gersin (attending in West Bloomfield Township, Oakland County, Michigan)

Mark Kowalsky (attending in West Bloomfield Township, Oakland County, Michigan)

Suzanne Levine (attending in West Bloomfield Township, Oakland County, Michigan)

Deborah Macon (attending in West Bloomfield Township, Oakland County, Michigan)

Jonathan Warshay (attending in West Bloomfield Township, Oakland County, Michigan)

Members Absent

Representing West Bloomfield:

Nada Jamoua

Others in Attendance

David Albery (Executive Director, GWBCCC)

The Chairperson noted that three commissioners representing West Bloomfield were re-appointed by the Township Board on December 7. He thanked the Board and the Supervisor for their confidence in Ms. Jamoua, Mrs. Macon, and himself.

3. Election of Officers

The Chairperson stated that officers are elected at the first regular meeting of each calendar year and that the Commission's bylaws require that one officer be elected from each of the four communities unless a community is not represented on the Commission, in which case a second officer may be elected from one of the communities until that vacancy is filled.

He added that commissioners had been surveyed regarding their interest in serving in each of the officer positions and that the responses have created a slate of officers for election. He asked Mr. Kowalsky, his predecessor as Commission chairperson, to move the election of that slate.

Motion by Mr. Kowalsky, support from Mr. Warshay:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission elect as its officers for 2021 Harvey Gersin of West Bloomfield as Chairperson, Anne Dziuba of Orchard Lake as Vice-Chairperson, Nada Jamoua of West Bloomfield as Secretary, and Phil Ross of Sylvan Lake as Treasurer.”

Voting YES: Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Ross, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

On behalf of all the elected officers, the Chairperson thanked commissioners for their confidence and support.

4. Approval of Agenda

The Chairperson mentioned a slight revision to the agenda involving the correct lettering of the items under the Executive Director’s Report.

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

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve the agenda as revised for the January 14, 2021 meeting.”

Voting YES: Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Ross, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

5. Public Comment

The Chairperson stated that residents are provided an opportunity 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.

No member of the public asked to address the Commission.

6. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mr. Warshay, support from Mr. Ross:

“That the Minutes of the November 18, 2020 joint meeting, the November 19 meeting, the November 24, 2020 joint meeting, the January 5, 2021 joint meeting, and the January 11, 2021 joint meeting be approved as presented.”

Voting YES: Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Ross, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

7. Acceptance of Financial Reports

The reports were summarized by the Executive Director. He stated that the report for January through December of 2020 is not the final report for the year as a few 2020 expenditures are being processed in January of 2021.

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

“That the Financial Reports be accepted.”

Voting YES: Dziuba, Gersin, Jamoua, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Ross, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

8. Committee Reports

The Chairperson stated that this portion of the agenda provides an opportunity for committees to report to the Commission.

Report of the Finance Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was presented by Mr. Ross, the committee chairperson. Members noted that the meeting was held via ZOOM, not at Green Media Center as reported.

Report of the Community Programming Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was summarized by Mrs. Dziuba, the committee chairperson. Members noted that the meetings were held via ZOOM, not at Green Media Center as reported. Mrs. Macon and Mrs. Dziuba mentioned that the committee's focus on West Bloomfield subdivision leaders included both possible participation on the Cable Community Panel and functioning as community ambassadors for the Commission's programming resources.

Report of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was summarized by Mr. Kowalsky, the committee chairperson. Members noted that the meetings were held via ZOOM, not at Green Media Center as reported and that Mr. Ross was in attendance at the December 7 meeting.

In response to a question from Mrs. Macon, Mr. Kowalsky stated that the purpose of the second survey of commissioners regarding the starting time for Commission meetings is not to choose between three options but to gauge sentiment regarding two alternatives to the current time, which the minutes of the joint meeting and report of the committee meeting clearly indicates is the choice of majority of commissioners.

In response to a comment from Mr. Krause about preferences regarding starting times for virtual versus face-to-face meetings, Mr. Kowalsky stated that the subsequent survey will provide ample opportunity for that type of input from commissioners.

Motion by Mr. Warshay, support from Mr. Kowalsky:

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

Voting YES: Dziuba, Gersin, Jamoua, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Ross, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

9. Executive Director's Report

Civic Center TV/Lakes FM

Commissioners were provided a report of programming cablecast on Civic Center TV in December and early January. The Executive Director highlighted segments from the Chamber of Commerce VIBE event in late October, West Bloomfield High School National Signing Day, West Bloomfield Parks 50th Anniversary Celebration, the installation of Chamber officers coming up on January 15, and United We Walk on January 17.

Cable Operators

No communication was received.

GWBCCC Directory

Members were provided an updated directory of Commission membership, contractors, and committee assignments. The Executive Director noted the re-appointment of three of the six commissioners representing West Bloomfield.

Cable Industry News

Comcast imposes a data cap of 1.2 TB on most of its internet subscribers across the country, a cap which was lifted early in the pandemic and then re-instituted. The company has announced that the cap will extend to customers in New England starting this month, raising the ire of state legislators in Massachusetts, who have stated that it is “inconceivable that Comcast would chose to impose this “cap and fee” plan during a pandemic, when many Massachusetts residents are forced to work and attend school from home via the internet”.

FCC Chairman Ajit Pai will be resigning his position on January 20 as President Biden is inaugurated, leaving the Commission deadlocked at two Democrats and two Republicans until the president appoints a fifth member. Observers believe this change will slow down the Commission’s de-regulation agenda.

Comcast raised video subscriber rates effective January 1, including major increases in the broadcast and regional sports fees, items which are not included in promotional deals.

The cable industry organization, NCTA – The Internet and Television Association, wants the FCC to level the rules applied to all video providers, whether cable or streaming, in the areas of equipment and children’s advertising.

AT&T is receiving bids of approximately 15 million dollars for the purchase of DirecTV, which the company purchased in 2015 for 50 million dollars. Observers believe that the buyer will merge the service with the other satellite provider, Dish Network.

Communication

No communication was received.

Commission Assistance to Residents

The Commission has asked Comcast to resolve a commissioner’s issues with telephone and alarm service. Final resolution has not yet occurred.

A resident was having difficulty making changes in her account. She contacted the Commission, and at the Commission’s request, Comcast contacted the subscriber, explained the options, and re-configured the account to her preferences.

A resident whose elderly parent had moved out of the family home and into assisted living contacted the Commission due to difficulties in closing the Comcast account and being credited for returned equipment. At the Commission’s request, Comcast resolved all issues to the resident’s satisfaction.

Preview

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

The Chairperson stated that Comcast has also increased the monthly cost of cable converter rental.

Mr. Ross stated that he found when his Comcast promotional deal ended that he needed to renew his premium services individually, not as a package.

In response to a question from Mr. Warshay, the Executive Director stated that the person most likely to be appointed chairman of the FCC was vehemently opposed to the FCC's 2019 franchise order, leading to hope that the Commission will reverse its order when the Democrats are in the majority.

Mr. Kowalsky stated that he appreciates being on the NATOA mailing list and receiving legislative and policy updates.

Ms. Levine thanked the Executive Director for his assistance in working to resolve the alarm and telephone issue at her home.

10. Unfinished Business

No items of Unfinished Business were presented.

11. New Business

Sunshine Week 2021

The Chairperson stated that Sunshine Week is an annual celebration of open and transparent government. At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Executive Director read the proposed "Resolution in Support of Sunshine Week".

Motion by Mr. Gersin, support from Mr. Warshay:

"That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission adopt the 'Resolution in Support of Sunshine Week' for 2021".

Mrs. Macon suggested the Commission undertake an active initiative to demonstrate the importance of Sunshine Week and that, in the context of the State of the Communities component of the celebration, school districts in addition to West Bloomfield be included. She also suggested that governmental bodies in addition to the four Greater West Bloomfield communities be notified of the Commission's advocacy regarding Sunshine Week.

Voting YES: Dziuba, Gersin, Jamoua, Kowalsky, Krause, Levine, Macon, Ross, Warshay

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

12. Public Comment

The Chairperson stated that residents are provided an opportunity to address the Commission regarding cable-related issues at the beginning and the end of each meeting.

No member of the public asked to address the Commission.

13. Commissioner Comments

Ms. Levine stated that the installation of Chamber of Commerce officers will take place on Friday, January 15, at 8:00AM, live on Civic Center TV and Lakes FM.

Mrs. Macon thanked Civic Center TV for support of United We Walk, with this year's virtual celebration taking place on Sunday, January 17, at 2:30PM, preceded by a virtual watch party at 2:00PM. She added that additional activities will be taking place at the West Bloomfield Township Public Library on Monday, January 18.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairperson at 8:32PM.

The next meeting of the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission is **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2021**, at **7:30PM** via **ZOOM** teleconference.