



GREATER WEST BLOOMFIELD CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

KEEGO HARBOR • ORCHARD LAKE • SYLVAN LAKE • WEST BLOOMFIELD

MINUTES

March 11, 2021

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Harvey Gersin, at 6:36PM via ZOOM teleconference. He stated that the meeting is held virtually pursuant to the Michigan Open Meetings Act and Oakland County Health Department orders.

2. Roll Call

Members Present

Representing Keego Harbor:

Ashley Attisha (attending in the City of Keego Harbor, Oakland County, Michigan)

Representing Orchard Lake:

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

Dan Krause (attending in the City of Orchard Lake, Oakland County, Michigan)
(arrived at 6:50PM)

Representing Sylvan Lake:

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

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

Dave Scott (General Manager, Civic Center TV/Lakes FM), David Albery (Executive Director, GWBCCC)

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chairperson noted that agenda item 5-A should read "February 11, 2021".

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

"That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve the agenda as revised for the March 11, 2021 meeting."

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

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

4. 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.

5. Approval of Minutes

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

“That the Minutes of the January 14, 2021 meeting, the February 23, 2021 joint meeting, the March 1, 2021 joint meeting, and the March 2, 2021 joint meeting be approved as presented.”

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

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

6. Acceptance of Financial Reports

The Executive Director presented the report for January and February 2021 and the summary of fourth quarter 2020 cable operator revenue.

Motion by Mr. Warshay, support from Ms. Attisha:

“That the Financial Reports be accepted.”

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

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

7. 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 summarized by the Executive Director.

Mr. Krause arrived at 6:50PM.

Report of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was summarized by Mr. Kowalsky, the committee chairperson.

Committee Recommendation:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission amend Article VII, Section 1 of its bylaws as proposed.”

Report of the Community Programming Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was summarized by Mrs. Dziuba, the committee chairperson.

Committee Recommendation:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission recognize Charles “Chuck” Scott for the generous sharing of his time and abilities in the design and construction of radio station WBLD at West Bloomfield High School in 1974 and the upgrading of the transmitter and antenna in 2015.”

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

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission accept the reports of the Finance, Commission Operations and Strategic Planning, and Community Programming committees and consider committee recommendations under New Business later in this meeting.”

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

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

8. Executive Director's Report

Civic Center TV/Lakes FM

Mr. Scott addressed the Commission regarding the operation of Civic Center TV and Lakes FM, focusing on the rebuild of the radio studio in the television studio, the move from the Comcast fiber-optic wide area network to the new West Bloomfield Township network, the development of internet protocol technology for the cablecasting of meetings, and the West Bloomfield High School football championship recognition event on March 20.

He reported to the Commission regarding its 2021 special projects initiative designed to increase Civic Center TV viewership, relevance, and economic stability in the face of changing technology and funding modalities. His report focused on the history of Civic Center TV, the problems currently facing cable access channels and the solutions to those problems, including additional outlets for programming, partnerships for content, funding, and distribution, and the role of Civic Center TV and Lakes FM in the dissemination of emergency information locally and regionally. He noted an initial contact with another Oakland County community media operation regarding possible partnerships.

In response to a question from Mr. Warshay, Mr. Scott stated that there are multiple avenues to the development and implementation of a smart TV app for Civic Center TV and that he will provide more information at an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Kowalsky stated that he appreciated the thoughtfulness and thoroughness of Mr. Scott's presentation and added that the analysis is exactly what the Commission and the communities need to move forward. Mr. Scott thanked the Commission for its support of the 2021 initiative.

The Chairperson commended the presentation and in response to his question regarding a timeline for the changes envisioned, Mr. Scott stated that the Megacast, now nearly a year old, has accomplished some of the initial objectives and that others will follow through 2021.

Mrs. Macon thanked Mr. Scott for the information and added that the regional content he referenced is all public access under a different name, which she has long promoted. In response to her question regarding short-form and long-form content, he stated that his presentation focuses on technology and that viewer preference for devices other than television sets (computers, tablets, smart phones) dictates the addition of shorter programming to the traditional longer forms. She stated her understanding that his reference to long-form means 20 to 30 minutes while short-form means a few minutes at the most.

She stated that a Civic Center TV program guide is a high priority for her and, in response to her question regarding establishing CCT and Lakes FM as the prime source of critical local emergency information, Mr. Scott stated that repetition of the message in every way possible is the key along with creating the infrastructure to disseminate information when it is needed.

In response to Mrs. Macon's question regarding Civic Center TV/Lakes FM memberships as a vehicle to help residents feel that they belong to something important, Mr. Scott stated that an increased emphasis on memberships could be part of this 2021 initiative.

Mr. Krause emphasized the role of amateur radio in emergency response and the importance of working with groups in the community to raise public awareness.

Ms. Levine thanked Mr. Scott for his presentation and analysis regarding the future of video

programming.

Cable Operators

No communication was received from AT&T or Comcast.

GWBCCC Directory

Members were provided an updated directory of Commission membership, contractors, and committee assignments.

Report to the Four Communities

Members were provided copies of the report for the last six months of 2020 and the annual report for 2020, provided in February to Keego Harbor, Orchard Lake, Sylvan Lake, and West Bloomfield.

Cable Industry News

The pay TV industry, including cable operators, telephone companies, and satellite providers, lost 6 million subscribers in 2020. AT&T's DirecTV and U-verse accounted for half those losses, and Comcast lost 1.4 million customers. At the end of the year, 57 percent of homes in the U.S. subscribed to traditional pay TV.

Oral argument on the appeal of the FCC's 2019 franchise fee order is scheduled for April 15 in the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati. The Commission has asked that the case be delayed for 120 days, until August 13, because only one commissioner who voted in support is still a member and the body may re-evaluate its position later this year.

Communication

No communication was received.

Commission Assistance to Residents

The Commission's assistance to residents over the past month focused in the areas of billing and internet service.

Comcast worked with subscribers referred by the Commission to explain and resolve billing concerns.

Several subscribers were concerned with the speed of their Comcast internet service, and although the Commission and the communities have no jurisdiction in that area, Comcast worked with those residents to resolve problems, sometimes remotely and sometimes with a service call. Many of the problems involved the subscriber's computer hardware.

Preview

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

In response to a question from Mrs. Macon, the Executive Director stated that the agenda for the "State of the Communities" event has not been finalized but will certainly focus on those issues the four communities wish to highlight. Mrs. Macon stated her feeling that for future events, she would value the input of the chairperson of the Community Programming Committee in terms of the content of the conversation. The Executive Director stated that in working with Motown Digital to format the event, he is relying completely on the elected leaders of the four communities to determine content. Mr. Scott echoed the Executive Director's comments. Mrs. Macon stated that the event should include students from all Greater West Bloomfield school districts, not just West Bloomfield, and the Executive Director stated that this year's event will likely not include any school-related segments.

9. Unfinished Business

No items of Unfinished Business were presented.

10. New Business

Recommendation of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee – Amendment of GWBCCC Bylaws

The Chairperson presented the recommendation.

"That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission amend Article VII, Section 1 of its bylaws as proposed."

At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Executive Director read the amendment for the record.

The Chairperson stated that, pursuant to the provisions of the bylaws dealing with amendments, this is the first reading of the amendment, which will be considered by the Commission for approval at its April 8, 2021 meeting.

Recommendation of the Community Programming Committee – Recognition of Charles “Chuck” Scott

Motion by Mrs. Dziuba:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission recognize Charles “Chuck” Scott for the generous sharing of his time and abilities in the design and construction of radio station WBLD at West Bloomfield High School in 1974 and the upgrading of the transmitter and antenna in 2015.”

The Chairperson noted that as a committee recommendation, the motion does not require support.

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

Voting NO:

The motion carried.

Mr. Scott, on behalf of the Scott family, thanked the Commission for the recognition, and Mrs. Dziuba that the honor is well-deserved and the Commission is glad to be able to provide it. The Executive Director noted that Chuck Scott’s contributions to WBLD spanned a period of over forty years.

11. 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.

12. Commissioner Comments

Ms. Levine reported on the Chamber of Commerce “SOS” (Support Our Shops) initiative and a contest sponsored by LaFontaine Automotive to highlight the effort.

Mrs. Macon noted that the deadline for nominations for Michigan Week awards has been extended to midnight on March 12. She wished a happy one-year birthday celebration to the Megacast, which debuted on Civic Center TV and Lakes FM on March 18, 2020.

Ms. Attisha stated that Keego Harbor has established a web site at plankeegoharbor.com to publicize the city’s master plan project and solicit public input.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairperson at 8:04PM.

The next meeting of the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission is **THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 2021, at 6:30PM via ZOOM** teleconference.