



GREATER WEST BLOOMFIELD CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

KEEGO HARBOR • ORCHARD LAKE • SYLVAN LAKE • WEST BLOOMFIELD

MINUTES

January 11, 2024

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Jennifer Taylor Boykins, at 7:01PM at West Bloomfield Town Hall.

2. Roll Call

Members Present

Representing Keego Harbor

Joel Ross

Representing Orchard Lake:

Jackie Beach

Anne Dziuba

Representing Sylvan Lake:

Pat Riney

Phil Ross

Representing West Bloomfield:

Jennifer Boykins

Stuart Dorf

Harvey Gersin

Mark Kowalsky

Suzanne Levine

Deborah Macon

Others in Attendance

David Albery (Executive Director, GWBCCC)

At the request of the Chairperson, Joel Ross, appointed by the Keego Harbor City Council to the Commission in December, introduced himself to other commissioners, and they introduced themselves to him.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chairperson suggested that the agenda as presented be revised by adding Item 11-E, Committee Appointments, under New Business.

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

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve the agenda as revised for the January 11, 2024 meeting.”

Voting YES: Beach, Boykins, Dorf, Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Levine, Macon, Riney,
Joel Ross, Phil Ross

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

4. Election of Officers

The Chairperson stated that she is available for re-election to the office of Chairperson.

The Executive Director stated that in addition to the information provided to commissioners, Mr. Riney has indicated he would accept election to the office of Vice-Chairperson and is not available for the offices of Chairperson, Secretary, or Treasurer.

The Chairperson asked if any commissioner wished to nominate a slate of officers.

Motion by Mr. Gersin, support from Mrs. Beach:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission elect its officers for 2024 as follows: Jennifer Taylor Boykins of West Bloomfield as Chairperson, Anne Dziuba of Orchard Lake as Vice-Chairperson, Joel Ross of Keego Harbor as Secretary, and Phil Ross of Sylvan Lake as Treasurer.”

Voting YES: Beach, Boykins, Dorf, Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Levine, Macon, Riney,
Joel Ross, Phil Ross

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

5. Public Comment

The Chairperson noted no members of the public in attendance and stated that comments are always welcome at gwbcable.org.

6. Approval of Minutes

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

“That the Minutes of the November 30, 2023 meeting, the December 4, 2023 joint meeting, and the January 8, 2024 joint meeting be approved as presented.”

Voting YES: Beach, Boykins, Dorf, Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Levine, Macon, Riney,
Joel Ross, Phil Ross

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

7. Acceptance of Financial Reports

The report for January through December 2023 and the report of third quarter cable operator payments were summarized by the Executive Director.

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

“That the Financial Reports be accepted.”

Voting YES: Beach, Boykins, Dorf, Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Levine, Macon, Riney,
Joel Ross, Phil Ross

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

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 Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee

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

Report of the Community Programming Committee

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

In response to question from Mr. Dorf, the Executive Director stated that the Commission owns the equipment used to produce Civic Center TV programming and Michigan Digital personnel use that equipment pursuant to the Cable Television Local Government Programming Services Independent Contractor Agreement between the Commission and the contractor.

Report of the Finance Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was presented by Phil Ross, the committee chairperson.

Strategic Plan Implementation 2023

Commissioners were provided a written report regarding implementation of the Commission's strategic plan in 2023.

Strategic Plan Implementation 2024

Commissioners were provided a written report regarding implementation of the Commission's strategic plan in 2024.

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

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

Voting YES: Beach, Boykins, Dorf, Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Levine, Macon, Riney,
Joel Ross, Phil Ross

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

9. Executive Director's Report

Civic Center TV/Lakes FM

Commissioners were provided a written report of programming cablecast on Civic Center TV in December and early January.

Cable Operators

No communication was received from Comcast or AT&T.

GWBCCC Directory

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

2024 GWBCCC Budget

The budget was approved by the four communities, the West Bloomfield Township Board of November 20, the Orchard Lake City Council on November 20, the Sylvan Lake City Council of December 20, and the Keego Harbor City Council on December 21.

Cable Industry News

The Federal Communications Commission has voted to prohibit the imposition of early

termination fees by cable operators. The cable industry opposed the action because the Commission has no authority to impose the same rules on streaming providers.

Consumers are not adding as many streaming services as they were in the last several years, citing the cost and the difficulty of keeping track of content with multiple services of available, indicating that they would actually pay more for a service which would help them keep track of content and location.

The third quarter of 2023 was the worst ever for pay TV, with losses of nearly 900 thousand subscribers, nearly 12 percent worse than the third quarter of 2022. Analysts believe that will continue at the same rate, with no plateau in site.

55 percent of homes in the U.S. currently subscribe to some form of pay TV, 42 percent to traditional pay TV and 13 percent to virtual multi-channel program distributors such as YouTube TV, Hulu Live, and Sling TV. The 55 percent number is projected to drop to 32 percent by 2028, compared to 89 percent in 2020/2021.

The consumer basket of typical streaming services (Netflix, Prime, Max, Peacock, Paramount+, Disney+, Hulu) is currently priced at 105 dollars per month, up 17 dollars from 2023. The cost of the same basket in 2020 and 2021 was 55 dollars.

Communication

No communication was received.

Commission Assistance to Residents

The Commission received a concern from a resident regarding use of the Xfinity stream app. The concern was referred to Comcast, and the company assisted the subscriber in installing and activating the software.

The son of a recently deceased West Bloomfield resident was having trouble closing her account, and Comcast helped him complete the process after an inquiry from the Commission.

A resident contacted the Commission regarding a seeming double billing for Netflix, one from the streaming service and one from Comcast. The Commission asked the operator to untangle the situation, which was done, with an account credit granted.

Preview

The Executive Director presented his agenda for the time period between this meeting and the next. He stated that the State of the Communities event will not occur on March 11 and that Civic Center TV will produce programming to provide that information in a different format.

Mr. Riney noted a typo in his listing in the Commission directory.

Mr. Kowalsky reported that Spectrum cable is offering a device which helps subscribers keep track of streaming content.

Mrs. Macon stated her belief that the State of the Communities event was never intended to feature only the elected leaders of the four communities but also, since the March 11 date occurs during Sunshine Week, to promote the Commission's mission, vision, goals, and accomplishments. It may be that the elected leaders are not enthusiastic about participating in the event, but the Commission should create an event for that evening which highlights its role in presenting valued information and insight regarding civics and invite any community leaders who will assist in emphasizing that role. She asked commissioners to prioritize that date to ensure their attendance and participation.

Phil Ross stated that Amazon is offering a Prime streaming service with commercials at reduced cost.

10. Unfinished Business

No items of Unfinished Business were presented.

11. New Business

Recommendation of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee – Guidance for the Conduct of Commission and Committee Meetings

Committee Recommendation:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve revisions to its ‘Guidance for the Conduct of Commission and Committee Meetings’ ”.

Motion by Mr. Kowalsky:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve revisions to its ‘Guidance for the Conduct of Commission and Committee Meetings’ as recommended by the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee”.

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

Voting YES: Beach, Boykins, Dorf, Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Levine, Macon, Riney,
Joel Ross, Phil Ross

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

Recommendation of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee – 2024
Executive Director Independent Contractor Agreement

Committee Recommendation:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission, at its January 11, 2024 meeting, approve the Executive Director Independent Contractor Agreement with Cable Commission Consulting, LLC, as revised.”

Motion by Mr. Kowalsky:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve the Executive Director Independent Contractor Agreement with Cable Commission Consulting, LLC, as revised.”

Mrs. Macon stated that her vote in opposition to the agreement at the committee level reflects her view of the role and responsibilities of the contractor, not the performance of the Executive Director. She suggested a review of the 1984 agreement which created the Commission and a review of the bylaws.

Voting YES: Beach, Boykins, Dorf, Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Levine, Riney,
Joel Ross, Phil Ross

Voting NO: Macon

The motion was approved.

Resolution in Support of Sunshine Week, March 10 – 16, 2024

At the request of the Chairperson, the Executive Director read the resolution.

Motion by Ms. Levine, support from Mrs. Macon:

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve the resolution in support of Sunshine Week 2024.”

Voting YES: Beach, Boykins, Dorf, Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Levine, Macon, Riney,
Joel Ross, Phil Ross

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

Revision of 2024 Cable Commission Meeting Schedule

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

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission revise its 2024 meeting schedule by moving the final meeting of the year from November 28, 2024 to December 5, 2024.”

Voting YES: Beach, Boykins, Dorf, Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Levine, Macon, Riney,
Joel Ross, Phil Ross

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

Committee Appointments

The Chairperson announced her appointment of Joel Ross of Keego Harbor to the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee, the Community Programming Committee, and the Finance Committee.

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

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission confirm the Chairperson’s committee appointments.”

Voting YES: Beach, Boykins, Dorf, Dziuba, Gersin, Kowalsky, Levine, Macon, Riney,
Joel Ross, Phil Ross

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

11. Commissioner Comments

Ms. Levine announced the installation of the new Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors on Friday morning, January 19, at WB Parks Connect and noted that the entire event will be covered live on Civic Center TV.

Mrs. Macon reported that United We Walk will occur on Sunday, January 14, from 1:00 to 3:00PM at West Bloomfield Middle School. She also requested future Commission conversation regarding increasing the number of meetings of the Finance Committee.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairperson at 7:57PM.

The next meeting of the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission is **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2024, at 7:00PM at WEST BLOOMFIELD TOWN HALL, 4550 Walnut Lake Road, West Bloomfield, Michigan.**