



GREATER WEST BLOOMFIELD CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

KEEGO HARBOR • ORCHARD LAKE • SYLVAN LAKE • WEST BLOOMFIELD

MINUTES

August 8, 2024

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Jennifer Taylor Boykins, at 7:00PM at West Bloomfield Town Hall.

2. Roll Call

Members Present

Representing Keego Harbor

Ronnie Dahl (arrived at 7:07PM)

Joel Ross

Representing Orchard Lake:

Anne Dziuba

Representing Sylvan Lake:

Pat Riney

Phil Ross

Representing West Bloomfield:

Jennifer Boykins

Stuart Dorf

Harvey Gersin

Mark Kowalsky

Suzanne Levine

Deborah Macon

Members Absent

Representing Keego Harbor

Joel Ross

Others in Attendance

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

The Executive Director stated that Joel Ross had communicated his inability to attend the meeting.

3. Approval of Agenda

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

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission approve the agenda as provided for the August 8, 2024 meeting.”

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

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

4. Public Comment

The Chairperson noted no members of the public in attendance.

5. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Phil Ross, support from Mr. Gersin:

“That the Minutes of the July 11, 2024 meeting, the August 5, 2024 joint meeting with the Executive Committee, the August 5, 2024 joint meeting with the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee, and the August 6, 2024 joint meeting be approved as presented.”

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

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

6. Acceptance of Financial Report

The report was summarized by the Executive Director.

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

“That the Financial Report be accepted.”

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

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

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 Executive Committee

Commissioners were provided a written report which was presented by Ms. Boykins, the committee chairperson.

Report of the Commission Operations and Strategic Planning Committee

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

Mrs. Macon emphasized that her suggestion to add alternate members of committees could be accomplished by methods other than amendment of the Commission's bylaws.

Ms. Dahl arrived at 7:07PM.

Report of the Community Programming Committee

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

Mrs. Macon commended Mrs. Dziuba for the effort that expended in preparing for the committee meeting on August 6, and Mrs. Dziuba commented that the West Bloomfield RFP template and the Orchard Lake RFP were valuable in providing ideas for the creation of the Commission's RFP.

Strategic Plan Implementation 2024

Commissioners were provided a written update regarding implementation of the Commission's strategic plan.

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

“That the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission accept the reports of the Executive, Commission Operations and Strategic Planning, and Community Programming committees, as well as the strategic plan implementation update.”

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

Voting NO:

The motion was approved.

8. Executive Director's Report

Civic Center TV/Lakes FM

Commissioners were provided a written report of programming cablecast on Civic Center TV in July.

Mr. Scott addressed commissioners regarding the operation of Civic Center TV and Lakes FM, focusing on the new scoreboard at West Bloomfield High School and Civic Center TV involvement in programming in partnership with the Chaldean Federation at its renovated facility

at Walnut Lake Road and Inkster.

Cable Operators

Commissioners were provided copies of a communication from Comcast.

Cable Industry News

Efforts continue in Congress to reinstitute the Affordable Connectivity Program, which was serving 24 million homes when funding was depleted earlier this year. The Senate Commerce committee approved an additional 7 billion dollars while lowering the eligibility threshold to 135 percent of the poverty level, down from 200 percent. Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) has stated that he will oppose the funding on the floor. A bipartisan bill has been introduced in the House authorizing an additional 6 billion dollars.

In the second quarter of 2024, Comcast lost 419 thousand video subscribers, the lowest quarterly loss since the fourth quarter of 2022.

A survey of internet users indicates that the those who subscribe to fiber or municipal providers are most satisfied with their service, with cable and satellite subscribers significantly less satisfied.

Streaming constituted over 40 percent of all television viewing in June, the highest number ever.

Communication

No communication was received.

Commission Assistance to Residents

The cable in a West Bloomfield subdivision has been buried by Comcast following a Commission request.

The Commission asked Comcast to make a service call to resident with internet and wi-fi problems connectivity problems. Minor adjustments were made, and subscriber is satisfied. Comcast did note that the speed of internet service is dependent on the age of the subscriber's equipment.

The Commission is working with Comcast and a West Bloomfield resident whose home was damaged by a sub-contractor for the company.

Preview

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

Mr. Kowalsky stated that Channel 4 did a story regarding downed wires, reporting that Comcast was the first company on site and not only cleared its cable but facilitated the removal of other cables.

In response to a question from Mrs. Dziuba, the Executive Director stated that equipment older than three or five years would be considered outdated.

Phil Ross added that subscribers have the option of chasing their own internet equipment but that subscriber-owned equipment also becomes obsolete.

In response to a question from Ms. Dahl regarding letters of intention provided in July by both of the Commission's contractors, the Chairperson Director stated that the letters were included under Communication at the July 11, 2024 Commission meeting and would be the subject of committee discussion later in the year. Mrs. Macon added that the letters were included as informational, not action, items.

9. Unfinished Business

No items of Unfinished Business were presented.

10. New Business

No items of New Business were presented.

11. Commissioner Comments

Ms. Levine noted the Chamber Cup Challenge golf event in September and the Leadership Luncheon at Wabeek on October 8.

Mrs. Macon stated that she has often mentioned the Commission's governance and structure and suggested that it might be beneficial to document the organization's current practice regarding roles and responsibilities in preparation for changes to align with non-profit and municipal best practice. The Commission is working under a "working board" model, under which members take on significant responsibilities and workload. Discussion of her comments focused on which standing committee should address these issues and which questions to ask, and the Executive Director noted that governance issues have been on the agenda of the Executive Committee at the Chairperson's direction, and the Chairperson stated that the issue will be addressed in future committee meetings.

Ms. Dahl stated that if you are not moving forward, you are moving backward, leading to failure, and the agenda items for the Commission have not changed over the past six years. She added that in her previous time as a member of the Commission, she mentioned cord-cutting, and that the Commission must think forward, basing its decisions not on the past, but on the future.

Technology is changing.

She added that when she mentioned Mr. Scott in her comments at the July meeting of the Community Programming Committee, Phil Ross characterized those comments as inappropriate. She stated that her comments were based in fact.

She stated that she has no problem with the bullying she has experienced from some commissioners and asked how the Commission's budget is being spent, specifically for contracted services and the boosting of social media content. She suggested a document regarding how commissions in other communities are addressing decreased revenue and noting what non-profit models have been successful and not successful.

She stated that if the truth is inappropriate, she will continue to be inappropriate. The allegations regarding Mr. Scott which she presented at the July 11 meeting were not written by her, and her perspective is based on her past employment with Michigan Digital and her previous and current Commission membership. In the interest of diversity and inclusion, the Commission should open up both of its independent contractor agreements, adapting to changes in society and technology and exercising its fiduciary responsibilities.

The Chairperson stated that the Commission values Ms. Dahl's comments and that no one should ever feel bullied. She added that the comments will be addressed later, and all should feel welcome at the table.

Phil Ross stated that he did not characterize Ms. Dahl's earlier comments as inappropriate, just the way in which they were presented.

Mr. Scott stated that he is transparent regarding the services provided to the Commission and that the Commission has adapted to changing technology and become a digital provider.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chairperson at 7:50PM.

The next meeting of the Greater West Bloomfield Cable Communications Commission is **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024, at 7:00PM at WEST BLOOMFIELD TOWN HALL, 4550 Walnut Lake Road, West Bloomfield, Michigan.**