

**CHAMPAIGN-URBANA CABLE &
TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

REGULAR QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

DATE: October 16, 2013

PLACE: Urbana Council Chambers, 400 South Vine St., Urbana, Illinois

MEMBERS PRESENT:	CHAMPAIGN Karen Walker	URBANA Peter Folk Dale Sinder
	PARKLAND	U of I Chris Lukeman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Giraldo Rosales, Chris Foster
STAFF PRESENT: Jeff Hamilton – City of Champaign
Jake Schumacher – City of Urbana

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Folk called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Attendance was noted.

3. MODIFICATIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The 5/15/13 minutes were approved as presented.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Vice-Chair Folk reported that former Chair Rick Atterberry's resignation letter was in the Commission's packets. Mr. Hamilton reported that the FCC granted Comcast's Petition for Effective Competition and Champaign can no longer regulate Basic cable rates. Mr. Schumacher reported that Urbana has not received a similar Petition. Mr. Hamilton reviewed the cable complaints since the last meeting, stating that Urbana received one complaint and Champaign received five.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Amendment of Commission Rules & Regulations

Commissioner Sinder asked about the Legal Department's review of the proposed Rules changes. Mr. Schumacher stated that both City Legal Departments were sent the document to review. Urbana Legal provided multiple suggestions and suggested that the document should be completely redrafted. Champaign Legal provided no comments.

Commissioner Sinder reported he had trouble following the marked-up version of the document. He requested more information from Urbana Legal on their suggestion to re-write the document. He

suggested the Commission review the comments one by one, re-draft the document, and then send back to Legal for review again. He volunteered to re-draft the document.

Motion to have Commissioner Sinder clean up the draft and bring it back to the Commission passed unanimously.

B. Broadband Access Committee (BAC) Membership and Charge, UC2B and Community Benefit Fund Questions.

Vice-Chair Folk stated he had made progress and had located several interested volunteers, but he still had work to do on this issue.

Mr. Schumacher stated that at a prior meeting, former Chair Atterberry stated since the Committee was ad hoc it either needed a new charge or should be disbanded.

Mr. Hamilton stated the BAC will continue to be in place unless dissolved by the Commission. He reminded the Commission that the Open Meetings Act rules still apply to the Committee.

Mr. Schumacher reviewed the current BAC membership list, which includes: Jeff Hamilton, Josh King, Peter Folk (Chair), Mel Farrell, Bill DeJarnette, Safiya Noble, Pete Resnick, and Daniel Meredith. Vice-Chair Folk stated that three or four of those members were no longer in the community. He stated he felt the BAC still has an important role.

Motion to remove Josh King and Daniel Meredith (both left the community) from the BAC passed unanimously.

7. REPORTS

A. Committee Reports – None

B. Staff Reports

UPTV – Mr. Schumacher reviewed the UPTV annual PEG report. He reported that new local programming continues to increase and that UPTV no longer runs a bulletin board. He thanked Jason Liggett for his hard work producing UPTV programming and assisting with public access. Vice-Chair Folk stated he was very impressed with UPTV's work and he enjoys the clip reels shown during UPTV Commission meetings.

UI-7 – Commissioner Lukeman reviewed the UI-7 annual PEG report. He reported that UI-7 is running more, shorter videos. He reported the Media Commons is a new media production/studies center at the undergrad library. UI-7 news is moving towards high definition (HD) programming and the studio will be HD soon. UI-7 is streamed live 24x7.

CGTV – Mr. Hamilton reviewed the CGTV annual PEG report. CGTV saw an increase in new local programming and launched a YouTube page last year. Janet Ahern has joined CGTV as the new fulltime Multimedia Producer.

Peter Folk invited each PEG channel to put together a highlight reel to show at the next meeting.

C. Operator Reports – None

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resignation of Chair/Election of Officers

Vice-Chair Folk called for nominations for Chair. Commissioner Walker nominated Peter Folk. Vice-Chair Folk nominated Dale Sinder. Nominations were closed. Motion to elect Peter Folk as Chair. Roll call: Lukeman – aye, Folk – abstain, Walker – aye, Sinder – aye. Commissioner Folk was elected Chair by a vote of 3-0-1 abstention.

Chair Folk called for nominations for Vice Chair. Commissioner Walker nominated Dale Sinder. Peter Folk nominated Karen Walker, who declined the nomination. Nominations were closed. Motion to elect Dale Sinder as Vice Chair. Roll Call – all ayes. Dale Sinder was elected Vice Chair by a vote of 4-0.

B. Discussion of CUTC Mission Going Forward

Chair Folk reviewed the “Powers, Duties and Functions” section of the Commission’s Rules. He asked the Commission’s thoughts about the Commission’s role.

Commissioner Sinder stated he is very concerned that the Commission has no power. He likes that the Commission serves as a public forum.

Commissioner Lukeman stated he primarily looks out for the University of Illinois’ interests in his role on the Commission.

Commissioner Walker said it’s a great service to have Comcast and U-Verse representatives answerable to the Commission. It is valuable that the Commission can ask the operators questions. Commissioner Lukeman agreed that having the operators here and as a matter of public record is beneficial.

Commissioner Sinder said the operators haven’t been to the meetings in quite a while. Mr. Schumacher pointed out that the last meeting was a special meeting, not normally on their schedule. Commissioner Lukeman said the Commission should more strongly encourage them to attend in the future.

Commissioner Walker said she’d like to ask questions relevant to the cable complaints but cannot when the operator’s don’t attend. Chair Folk summarized that the Commission’s ability to publicly question the operators is a valuable public service.

Chair Folk said the Commission could do a better job advising both City Councils on cable issues.

Commissioner Sinder offered his understanding that the Urbana Mayor isn’t interested in the Commission’s input. He said they should inquire about both Cities’ interest in the Commission. He suggested that could be done in a letter of inquiry. Chair Folk stated a lot of the items in the Commission’s duties haven’t seen action in a while and the Commission should determine what the Councils want the Commission to advise on. He said the Commission should discuss the letter of inquiry further before acting. The Commission discussed the best way to approach the subject with Council.

Staff and the Commission discussed whether the City Councils need to approve the new Commission rules. Staff will seek clarification on the issue.

C. Annual Report of the Commission

Chair Folk reviewed the report submitted to Council last year. He suggested last year’s report be updated and a draft report be sent to the Commission to consider. He suggested a special meeting be held to approve the report before sending it to the Councils this year. He suggested the Commission

could also delegate a member to approve the report in the event a special meeting can't be scheduled.

Commissioner Sinder suggested that the Commission could also review a new draft of the Commission's Rules at that meeting.

Motion to delegate Chair Folk to approve the report (absent a special meeting) was approved 4-0.

Chair Folk asked the Clerk to poll dates in two weeks for a special meeting. Mr. Schumacher stated the Commission had discussed changing their meetings to Thursdays but that a Rules change was needed. He offered that until that happens they could schedule Special Meetings in lieu of Regular Meetings. Chair Folk approved this suggestion.

D. Annual Reports of Comcast and AT&T

Chair Folk reviewed the reports and said that both reports tout the investment the operators have made on infrastructure. He also discussed Comcast's Internet Essentials program and the need to continue expanding broadband services to low-income families.

Commissioner Lukeman stated he felt both reports were pretty general and not community specific.

Chair Folk asked if a more detailed report was available from U-Verse. Jeff Hamilton responded that he forwards all the operator reports he gets to the Commission.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICPATION – None

10. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Commissioner Lukeman asked about the possibility of converting UI-7 to an HD channel. He stated the University is very interested in this and would like information about what is possible. Mr. Hamilton stated that Comcast hasn't been approached about this topic yet. He reported that CGTV will install HD equipment in the next 12-18 months and that Champaign could be interested in having that discussion with Comcast as well. He pointed out that the entire Comcast lineup is digital now and that this is a significant change from the 6 MHz channels used previously. He said that since the four PEG channels are jointly controlled by both Cities, the Cities will need to take the lead in those discussions. Mr. Schumacher stated that other PEG Channels went HD only during a new franchise or by reopening an existing franchise. He reported that Urbana has a lot of standard definition equipment to replace before it can go HD. Chair Folk said he's hear rumors about the losing the current PEG channel number assignments if they went HD. He asked how important channel number 7 is to UI-7. Commissioner Lukeman said that it's not nearly as important any longer. The HD content on the channel is more important and will be a huge priority in the near future. Commissioner Sinder asked if staff thought merely discussing the HD channel issue with Comcast would trigger a channel number change. Mr. Schumacher responded that he thought it was possible and that he didn't want to do anything to jeopardize UPTV's channel location. He stated there are still lots of PEG viewers without HD sets and UPTV wants to serve them. Chair Folk said the Commission could hold a special meeting to discuss the topic sometime in the next year. Commissioner Sinder offered this might be appropriate for a Public Hearing. Chair Folk said that the Commission could research and provide advice to the City Councils on the subject.

11. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

Chair Folk said the next meeting would likely be a special meeting (in about three weeks) to review the Commission's Annual Report.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is January 15, 2014.

Meeting adjourned at 5:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Hamilton
Telecommunications/AV Technician
City of Champaign