

**CHAMPAIGN-URBANA CABLE &  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

**QUARTERLY MINUTES**

**DATE:** April 18, 2012, 4:00 p.m.

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

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>CHAMPAIGN</b>	<b>URBANA</b>
	Karen Walker	Dale Sinder
	Giraldo Rosales	Peter Folk

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**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Rick Atterberry, Kyle Harrison, Chris Foster, Chris Lukeman

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jeff Hamilton – City of Champaign  
Jake Schumacher – City of Urbana

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Art Svymbersky – Comcast

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Walker called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m. She explained that while a quorum was not present, the Commission would proceed with some informational items.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Chair Walker welcomed Dale Sinder as a new representative for the City of Urbana.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES**

Due to lack of a quorum, the approval of the agenda & minutes was deferred.

**4. REPORTS**

**Operator Reports**

**Comcast** - Art Svymbersky reported that there were several channel changes and other information included in the Commission's packets. He reported that on June 5, 2012, the Basic tier will be available only in a digital format. Basic customers will need a digital tuner, cable card, or digital adapter (DTA) to continue to watch Basic cable. Basic customers can get up to 3 DTAs for free. Customers subscribing to tiers above Basic are largely unaffected by this change, as the other tiers are already digital-only. Mr. Svymbersky reported that Comcast sent each City a 2011 Annual Report. He stated that Comcast recently launched Xfinity Signature Support – computer technical support for customer equipment and networks. This month they are also launching Infinity Home – a home security and automation product. He reported that Comcast Cares Day is April 21<sup>st</sup> and they will do a community service project at Booker T Washington Stem Academy. The public is welcome to join in the project. On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 19 Central Illinois high schoolers will receive Leaders and Achievers scholarships at a reception at the Governor's

mansion. He stated that the Internet Essentials program is being modified to now include reduced-lunch program households (in addition to free-lunch). Internet speeds were also doubled for those users. Organizations can also sponsor individuals.

Commissioner Sinder asked if a DTA allows timed channel changes.

Mr. Svymbersky replied that digital set-top boxes can, but the DTAs cannot.

Commissioner Sinder asked if HD broadcast channels are available.

Mr. Svymbersky answered that the HD signals are passed thru, but that current DTAs in use can't handle HD. The new DTAs expected later this year will be HD-compatible.

Chair Walker asked about equipment and costs for the Xfinity Home service.

Mr. Svymbersky replied it will depend upon the customer's existing equipment and needs. Comcast's service will be compatible with some existing equipment. Initial rates are \$39.95-\$99.95 depending upon equipment connected. He will send more information on this new service to the Commission.

### **Staff Reports**

**UPTV** - Jake Schumacher reported that the Alliance for Community Media Annual Conference is in Chicago this July and 2 UPTV staff members will attend. UPTV volunteers and Cable Commissioners are also welcome to register. He reported that UPTV now has fiber linked directly to the local Urbana schools and UPTV can switch the live feeds for school board meetings instead of relying upon Comcast. He stated that UrbanaPublicTelevision.org is UPTV's new Drupal-based website and that there are a lot of capabilities on the new system. UPTV has several entries in the ACM video competition. The Alliance for Community Media is also searching for video judging sites and anyone interested should contact him.

**CGTV** – Jeff Hamilton reported CGTV now televises the UC2B Policy Board meetings. He reported on other productions they completed or are currently working on. CGTV is also running more content from Champaign schools and Champaign County. CGTV's on-demand videos are now available for viewing on iPads and iPods and they hope to make the live stream work on iPads very soon. He also reported that the City of Champaign has a NATOA membership and that he will forward any critical information from NATOA to the Commission.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Amendment of Commission Rules & Regulations**

Mr. Schumacher recommended amending the Commission's Rules and Regulations relative to the switch of Commission responsibilities from Champaign to Urbana. He also recommends a change so that 7 Commissioners are no longer needed to make Rules changes. He recommends changing it to a majority of a quorum. Legal departments from both Cities will also be asked to review any proposed changes.

Lacking a quorum, Mr. Hamilton suggested the Commission provide some informal feedback regarding the recommended changes and that staff could begin drafting new language. Any changes would need to be formally approved by the Commission at a future meeting.

Chair Walker stated that her sense of the Commission's position was to draft the changes as proposed and bring them back for consideration at a future meeting.

## **B. Online Certification of Commissioners as Required by Open Meetings Act**

Mr. Schumacher reported that the State of Illinois now requires all Board and Commission members to complete Open Meetings Act certification. He stated that information about the online registration is in the Commission's packets. Mr. Hamilton reported the process takes about 2 hours to complete online. Completed certificates should be sent to Mr. Schumacher. As a newly appointed member, Commissioner Sinder has 90 days to complete the certification. The other Commissioners have until December 31<sup>st</sup>.

## **C. Comcast Migration of Basic Tier to Digital**

Mr. Hamilton reported that the Commission has typically been very interested in any changes to the Basic tier, and he requested this agenda item so the Commission could focus discussions or do public education on the digital migration. This is the same change Mr. Svymbersky reported on earlier in the meeting. Mr. Hamilton reiterated that Basic subscribers will need some type of converter box from Comcast unless they have a new digital television. He stated that the converter boxes can be ordered from Comcast and are pretty easy to install.

Chair Walker asked if Comcast was assisting with the installation of the boxes if needed. Mr. Svymbersky said the boxes come with good instructions and everything is color coded to make it easy to install. Those having trouble can call Comcast for assistance. The boxes are also available to pick up at the local office – 303 Fairlawn Drive, Urbana

Commissioner Sinder asked if the digital signals are being transmitted yet. Mr. Svymbersky stated that they are.

Commissioner Folk asked if the digital tuner in new TVs will work without a need for a box. Mr. Svymbersky stated that the Basic service can be tuned with a digital television's QAM tuner.

## **6. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION - None**

## **7. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS - None**

## **8. NEXT MEETINGS**

Mr. Schumacher reported that the Commission's next quarterly meeting is 4:00 p.m. on July 18, 2012, in the Urbana Council Chambers.

Mr. Schumacher informed the viewing audience that the Commission still has one opening for an Urbana-appointed member. If interested contact staff or the Urbana Mayor's Office. Mr. Folk stated there is also an application form on Urbana's website.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Hamilton  
Telecommunications/AV Technician  
City of Champaign