

**CHAMPAIGN-URBANA CABLE TELEVISION AND
TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MEETING MINUTES**

DATE: October 13, 2010
4:00 PM

PLACE: Champaign City Building
Council Chambers
102 N. Neil Street
Champaign, Illinois

MEMBERS PRESENT:	CHAMPAIGN	URBANA
	Rick Atterberry	Barbara Gladney
	Karen Walker	David Gehrig
	Giraldo Rosales	Peter Folk

UNIVERSITY of ILLINOIS
Kate Brickman

PARKLAND COLLEGE
Chris Foster

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kyle Harrison

STAFF PRESENT: Jeff Hamilton– City of Champaign
Jake Schumacher, Jason Liggett, Ron O’Neal – Urbana

OTHERS PRESENT: Deb Piscola – Comcast
Durl Kruse

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Walker called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

2. QUARTERLY MEETING AGENDA

Vice-Chair Walker, noting the Commission lacked a quorum, postponed approval of the quarterly meeting agenda until later in the meeting.

3. STUDY SESSION – CUCABLETV.COM & PEG CHANNEL WEBSITE DEMOS

Vice-Chair Walker reported that each PEG channel has developed an online presence that was going to be demonstrated to the Commission today.

UPTV – Jason Liggett presented the UPTV website to the Cable Commission. They use Denver Open Media for their video on demand service. He demonstrated how the video-on-demand works. They are also using Facebook and YouTube.

PCTV – Commissioner Foster presented the PCTV website to the Commission. They also do online distance learning on their site. Their program schedule is available and easy to review. Parkland is redesigning their website and may redesign the PCTV page in the future. All Parkland’s shows are available for video-on-demand. Some shows have interactive web pages too.

UI-7 – Commissioner Brickman presented the UI-7 site to the Commission. Information about UI-7, the program schedule & UI videos are available online. They are on Twitter. They use Vimeo to show their on-demand videos, including high definition videos. Viewers can download their video files too. UI-7 will soon launch a new video-on-demand service. The entire College of Media will post their videos to this site. In response to a question from Commissioner Rosales, Commissioner Brickman stated that anyone on campus can provide content to air on UI-7, but they don’t have the staff to film everything.

CGTV – Jeff Hamilton presented the CGTV site to the Commission. CGTV is streamed live 24x7 and also has City Council/Board/Commission and City programs available on demand. Council meetings go back to January 2008. You can scrub to any point in a meeting or jump directly to a particular agenda item. Currently only Council meetings are bookmarked by agenda item.

CUCableTV.com – Vice-Chair Walker demonstrated the CUCableTV.com website to the Commission. She demonstrated how it is easy to find all 4 PEG Channels from here, including the Cable Commission’s documents. The URL is also much easier to remember than each of the PEG channels’. She reviewed how one can file a cable complaint online, review the franchise agreements and learn more about public access. The website will be redone sometime in the near future. They are also on Facebook.

4. DISCUSSION OF URBANA’S PROPOSED FRANCHISE AGREEMENT

Vice-chair Walker introduced Ron O’Neal, Urbana City Attorney, to present Urbana’s proposed franchise agreement.

Mr. O’Neal reviewed the franchise renewal process to date, including the audits, needs assessment, and negotiations. Urbana retained the 2% PEG fee in the proposed agreement and gained capacity for a 5th PEG channel. The needs assessment recommends Champaign and Urbana jointly operate this 5th channel as a public access channel. He reported that Section 10.2 had been recently revised. Now all 4 PEG channels will remain on the analog basic tier.

Commissioner Gladney asked if the differences between the Urbana and Champaign franchises cause any problems. Mr. O’Neal said there were no problems.

Commissioner Brickman said she was very happy to see the change regarding UI-7 and PCTV. Commissioner Foster seconded those comments.

Commissioner Rosales asked what about a local office requirement? Mr. O’Neal said that in preparation for negotiations. Urbana conducted a phone survey to gauge customer satisfaction. The survey showed customers were largely satisfied and a local office wasn’t a priority. He also

pointed out that calls aren't answered locally now. He said that in negotiations, you have to give on some items and can't expect to get everything you want. He added that Comcast could also choose to get a state franchise if they don't want to reach an agreement with us. The local office just wasn't a priority during negotiations.

Commissioner Rosales asked how customers will return equipment. Deb Piscola responded that customers can return equipment by shipping it prepaid back to Comcast. State law allows them to close the local office today, though they have no plans to do so. Mr. O'Neal added that AT&T doesn't have a local office, and the other utilities in town aren't required to have an office.

Commissioner Folk asked about the impact of Comcast getting a state franchise. Mr. O'Neal said AT&T has a state franchise and doesn't have to deal with the City much. Urbana would get to keep the 5% franchise and 2% PEG fee. State franchises don't require providing service to the entire community, however.

Commissioner Gladney asked about providing PEG to newly annexed areas. Mr. O'Neal said if an area is annexed, Comcast would try to serve it from the existing headend. If a new headend was needed, the City may have to pay to have PEG delivered to this new area; an unlikely scenario. Ms. Piscola added that most of the areas adjoining the City already have service from Comcast.

Ron O'Neal added that Urbana is rewriting their right-of-way ordinance and Comcast has agreed to follow it.

Commissioner Folk said Section 2.1 allows Comcast to provide non-television services. What about non-cable services? Mr. O'Neal said this agreement doesn't address these services, only television.

Chair Atterberry said the State of Illinois EAS Plan doesn't require cable operators to broadcast weather or tornado warnings. Champaign's proposed agreement would have required the broadcast of tornado warnings. He recommended that language be added.

Commissioner Gladney pointed out there are differences between the two proposed franchise agreements, which concern her. Chair Atterberry pointed out that the franchises have never been identical, but it would be beneficial if they were close.

Chair Atterberry read the PEG capacity sections from both the Champaign and Urbana proposed agreements, pointing out they are different and who owns the 4 PEG channels is unclear. Mr. O'Neal said both cities work through items like this daily and will work out any conflicts together. Commissioner Gladney suggested eliminating any ambiguities between the two proposals now. Mr. O'Neal said Champaign and Urbana do intergovernmental agreements all the time and would probably write an agreement regarding the 5th channel. Commissioner Gehrig said once the franchises are signed, both cities should write up an agreement regarding the 5th channel.

Durl Kruse (audience member) suggested the cities better understand how the PEG channels are assigned and used. He suggested that the consultant clear up this ownership issue in both franchise agreements.

Chair Atterberry reminded the Commission that they have been asked to provide a recommendation regarding the franchise agreement. Chair Atterberry asked if the Commission was generally supportive of the proposed agreement. All agreed, yes.

Chair Atterberry asked if any Commissioners had any comments or suggestions that should be brought to the Council's attention.

Commissioner Folk said to remove the blank in Section 3. Mr. O'Neal said he could change it to be more general and not cite a specific chapter number.

Commissioner Rosales said to clarify the language about ownership of the PEG channels. Mr. O'Neal said how the PEG channels are used is up to the cities; having broad language allows both cities some wiggle room.

Chair Atterberry asked what about encouraging both cities to work together on how the 5th channel might be used.

Commissioner Gehrig asked how about a separate letter of intent for the Council to adopt on how the channel would be used. Mr. O'Neal offered that they could draft a Resolution to have both cities meet to discuss the 5th channel. Jeff Hamilton said Champaign and Urbana work these things out together all the time and will do so on this issue.

Commissioner Folk said customer service issues have increased since Comcast took over. Commissioner Gladney added that she thinks the local office is important. Mr. O'Neal asked what Urbana should give up to try and get the local office. Commissioner Brickman said having a local office would be great, but she doesn't want to require it and hold up the agreement.

Commissioner Gehrig thanked the Commission for their expertise on this issue and input to Urbana's Council.

Chair Atterberry suggested that Comcast be required to broadcast tornado warnings.

Chair Atterberry said he will write the Council a letter regarding the Commission's thoughts and suggestions about the proposed franchise.

6. QUARTERLY MEETING AGENDA

Now having a quorum, the quarterly meeting agenda was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Hamilton