

NORTH METRO TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION MEETING

May17, 2017
6:00 p.m.

**SPRING LAKE PARK CITY OFFICES
1301 81st Avenue NE
Spring Lake Park, Minnesota**

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL
2. CONSENT AGENDA **pp. 1-10**
 - 2.1. Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting, April 19, 2017
 - 2.2. Approval of the April financial reports and bill list
3. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD
4. NORTH METRO TV REPORT **pp. 11--18**
 - 4.1. Monthly update
5. REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE **pp. 19-25**
 - 5.1. Carousel Unit/Makito X Update
 - 5.2. Closed Captioning Work Plan
6. REPORT OF OPERATIONS COMMITTEE **p. 26**
7. REPORT OF LEGAL COUNSEL
 - 7.1. Monthly Report
8. REPORT OF COMCAST
9. REPORT OF CENTURYLINK
10. NEW BUSINESS
11. OLD BUSINESS
12. REPORT OF DIRECTORS
13. COMMUNICATIONS **pp. 27-33**
14. ADJOURN

NORTH METRO TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Commission Meeting – April 19, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Chair M. Percy called the regular meeting of the North Metro Telecommunications Commission to order at 6:04 p.m. at the Spring Lake Park city offices.

ROLL CALL

Directors Present: Dick Swanson; Blaine, Mike Murphy; Lexington, Matt Percy; Circle Pines, Steve King; Centerville, Melissa Maher; Lino Lakes, Cindy Hansen; Spring Lake Park

Directors Absent: Al Parranto; Ham Lake

Others Present: Heidi Arnson; Executive Director, Rose Valez; Admin. Asst.

Comcast Rep:

CenturyLink Rep:

CONSENT AGENDA

- **Minutes, Bill List, Financial Reports**

The February 15, 2017 minutes and February and March bill lists and financial reports were approved as presented. **Motion for approval made by M. Maher. Second, C. Hansen. Motion passed.**

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

None present.

REPORT OF NORTH METRO TV

H. Arnson reviewed the North Metro TV report as presented in the packet. A summary was also given of activities for the months of March and April. Topics included:

- Trevor Scholl was introduced as the new Municipal Producer for North Metro TV. His job is to produce video content for the City channels. He has met with contacts at most of the Member City departments and will continue until he has established a relationship with all of them. He will be calling these

contacts monthly and the contacts are encouraged to call him with requests as well. He is already working to wrap up a couple of projects that were left unfinished by his predecessor, and is working on several new programs.

- Two additional employees have been hired at North Metro TV. Matt Waldron was promoted from the Sports Producer to the Video Engineer. He has been meeting with City staff to familiarize himself with each system, and he has already jumped in with the City HD upgrade meetings and plans. With Matt's promotion, the Sports Producer position opened up. Jeremy Millington was hired in that position. He has worked for the last nine years as a production specialist for the City of Coon Rapids producing local sporting events with their production truck.
- The graphics wrap on the new production truck is scheduled for completion in May. The new sets should be in place by the end of July. An open house will take place after that to showcase the completed HD upgrade.
- NMTV staff have produced plays and programs for all three high schools and the Centennial Elementary and Middle Schools in the last month.
- The 16th Annual VIP Awards ceremony will take place on Tuesday, May 2nd at the Heights Theatre.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE/OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

D. Swanson reported on the following items:

- The Carousel and Makito X quote from Alpha Video was reviewed. A Carousel system will be purchased for each City channel and will be housed at the North Metro TV head-end. It will generate HD graphics and videos which will be displayed between scheduled programming such as meetings and events. Once the units are installed, NMTV staff will be able to create the majority of the content going on the channels, with direction from the Cities. This will relieve City staff of having to create the content for the channels. The Makito X transport system will solve the problem of transporting an HD signal from City Hall to the NMTV head-end at a reasonable cost. The quote included costs to set up one City with the capability to transmit an HD signal, and all of the rack equipment for all seven Cities. It will be necessary to add encoders and decoders as each City upgrades to HD. It was thought to be a good idea to start with one system, work out any problems, and then buy equipment through the North Metro TV budget as Cities upgrade. The Carousels and Makito X will be paid for with franchise fees collected in 2016 that were in excess of the original estimate. Once the equipment is paid for, the remaining fees will be returned to Cities.

MOTION: To approve purchasing a Carousel System for each City and one Makito X system, as quoted by Alpha Video, to be paid for with franchise fees collected in 2016, with any remaining franchise fees to be returned to Member Cities. **Motion for approval made by: D. Swanson. Second: C. Hansen. Motion approved.**

- The next quarterly meeting with CenturyLink has been scheduled for Tuesday, June 6th, at 11:30 am at the North Metro TV studio.
- Staff reported that CenturyLink has been told that not having a customer service presence in the North Metro franchise area, or any enabled homes in Lexington is a problem. It was requested that those issues be resolved by the next quarterly meeting.
- Every year, as an administrative matter, the Commission has to decide whether or not to waive the statutory tort liability limits for insurance purposes. This decision determines the amount an individual would be able to recover on any claim to which the statutory tort limits apply. In the past, the Commission has opted to NOT WAIVE the monetary limits on municipal tort liability. The Executive Committee recommends that the Commission NOT Waive the monetary limits.

MOTION: To NOT WAIVE the monetary limits on municipal tort liability. **Motion made by D. Swanson. Second, S. King. Motion passed.**

REPORT OF LEGAL COUNSEL

No report was presented.

REPORT OF COMCAST

No report was presented.

REPORT OF CENTURYLINK

No report was presented.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was presented.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was presented.

REPORT OF DIRECTORS

- M. Maher inquired as to the purpose of a letter received regarding financial connections to the Commission. Administrative Assistant, R. Valez, stated that the letters were related to the annual audit.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m. **The motion to adjourn was made by C. Hansen. Second, M. Murphy. Motion approved.**

The next meeting of the NMTC will be held on **Wednesday, May 17, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.** at the city offices of Spring Lake Park.

Mike Murphy; Secretary, NMTC

**NORTH METRO TELECOMMUNICATION
BILL LIST**

APRIL 2017

Date	Check #	Payee	Amount
APRIL	COMBINED	PAYROLL	33,008.74
APRIL	COMBINED	IRS/US PAYABLE	11,934.09
APRIL	COMBINED	MN REVENUE PAYABLE	1,946.92
APRIL	COMBINED	PERA PAYABLE	6,430.75
APRIL	COMBINED	PEACHTREE	38.40
APRIL	COMBINED	DISCOVERY BENEFITS	2,215.00
13060	4/6/17	SwatAerial	7,635.93
13061	4/7/17	Richard D. Larson	386.75
13062	4/7/17	Winter Green Lawn & Snow L.L.C.	635.00
13063	4/7/17	Alpha Video & Audio, Inc	1,345.00
13064	4/17/17	City of Blaine	122,720.01
13065	4/17/17	City of Centerville	7,610.19
13066	4/17/17	City of Circle Pines	10,914.02
13067	4/17/17	City of Ham Lake	31,807.86
13068	4/17/17	City of Lexington	4,078.52
13069	4/17/17	City of Lino Lakes	37,595.25
13070	4/17/17	City of Spring Lake Park	13,124.16
13071	4/19/17	Steve King	135.00
13072	4/19/17	Al Parranto	135.00
13073	4/19/17	Michael A. Murphy	135.00
13074	4/19/17	Melissa S. Maher	135.00
13075	4/19/17	Cindy A. Hansen	135.00
13076	4/19/17	Grass Hopper Lawn & Snow	175.00
13077	4/19/17	Metro Sales, Inc.	615.54
EPAY-01	4/7/17	Republic Services	109.11
EPAY-02	4/7/17	CenterPoint Energy	240.69
EPAY-03	4/7/17	Assurant Employee Benefits	752.28
EPAY-04	4/7/17	AT&T Wireless	380.93
EPAY-05	4/7/17	VERIZON WIRELESS	355.08
EPAY-06	4/7/17	Fleet One LLC	74.12
EPAY-07	4/9/17	HealthPartners	10,867.46
EPAY-08	4/10/17	U.S. Bank Card Service	748.78
EPAY-09	4/11/17	Dept of Empl and Eco Development	4,474.31
EPAY-10	4/11/17	Connexus Energy	1,892.05
EPAY-11	4/11/17	City of Blaine-utilities	56.22
EPAY-12	4/20/17	T-Mobile	103.08
EPAY-13	4/20/17	POPP TELECOM	774.79
EPAY-14	4/20/17	Comcast	275.92
EPAY-15	4/25/17	SA Fleet-Wex Bank	146.74
EPAY-P01	4/19/17	Richard R. Swanson	135.00
EFILE	4/1/17	Virtual Merchant Credit Card	51.86
EFILE	4/1/17	Authorize.Net	25.90
EFILE	4/16/17	Chase Visa Card Services	13,329.37
MAR SALES TAX	4/12/17	MN Dept. of Revenue	76.00

329,761.82

North Metro Telecommunications Commission

Balance Sheet

April 30, 2017

ASSETS

Current Assets		
Cash - Checking Account	\$	2,415,548.21
Petty Cash		150.00
A/R - NMTC		188,207.18
Prepaid Insurance - NMTC		13,314.26
Total Current Assets		2,617,219.65
Property and Equipment		
Office Equipment - NMTC		2,061,716.78
Accum Deprec - NMTC		(2,352,870.53)
Accumulated Amortization		(107,700.15)
Bond Setup Fee		92,700.15
Bond Setup Fee 2012		15,000.00
Bond Equipment 2016		200,000.00
Building-Polk/125		1,503,204.17
Land-Polk/125		225,700.00
Total Property and Equipment		1,637,750.42
Other Assets		
Deferred Out Related/Pension		72,490.00
Total Other Assets		72,490.00
Total Assets		\$ 4,327,460.07

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

Current Liabilities		
A/P - NMTC	\$	5,355.00
Accrued Vacation		198,411.94
Accrued Wages		10,459.20
Franchise Fee App		883,889.23
Deferred In Related/Pension		54,575.00
Total Current Liabilities		1,152,690.37
Long-Term Liabilities		
Net Pension Liability		523,433.00
Total Long-Term Liabilities		523,433.00
Total Liabilities		1,676,123.37
Capital		
Net Equity		344,424.30
Net Equity - Media Ctr		(206,243.34)
Net Equity - NMTC		2,517,656.37
Net Income		(4,500.63)
Total Capital		2,651,336.70
Total Liabilities & Capital		\$ 4,327,460.07

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

Cash Receipts Journal

For the Period From Apr 1, 2017 to Apr 30, 2017

Date	Transaction Ref	Line Description	Debit Amnt	Credit Amnt
4/13/1	MARCH PAYPAL	MARCH PAYPAL PAYPAL	19.12	19.12
4/25/1	1ST QTR FRAN FEES	4TH QUARTER FRANCHISE FEES CenturyLink-Franchise	12,043.30	12,043.30
4/25/1	1ST QTR PEG FEES	1ST QUARTER PEG FEES CenturyLink-Peg	10,352.16	10,352.16
4/26/1	APR CC SALES-AUTH	APRIL CREDIT CARD SALES-AUTHORIZE.NET APRIL CREDIT CARD SALES-AUTHORIZE.NET Credit Card Sales	0.44 14.56	15.00
4/27/1	APR CC SALES-VM	CREDIT CARD SALES - VIRTUAL MERCHANT Credit Card Sales	107.50	107.50
4/28/1	1ST QTR FRAN FEES	1ST QUARTER FRANCHISE FEES Comcast-Franchise	309,323.45	309,323.45
4/28/1	1ST QTR PEG FEES	1ST QUARTER PEG FEES Comcast-PEG Fees	188,616.98	188,616.98
4/29/1	INTEREST	INTEREST-COMMISSION CHECKING INTEREST - COMMISSION	947.94	947.94
			<u>521,425.45</u>	<u>521,425.45</u>

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

Check Register

For the Period From Apr 1, 2017 to Apr 30, 2017

Filter Criteria includes: 1) Accounts Payable only. Report order is by Date.

Check #	Date	Payee	Amount
EFILE	4/1/17	Discovery Benefits	20.00
EFILE	4/1/17	Virtual Merchant Credit Card	51.86
EFILE	4/1/17	Authorize.Net	25.90
13060	4/6/17	SwatAerial	7,635.93
EPAY-02	4/7/17	CenterPoint Energy	240.69
EPAY-01	4/7/17	Republic Services	109.11
EPAY-03	4/7/17	Assurant Employee Benefits	752.28
EPAY-04	4/7/17	AT&T Wireless	380.93
EPAY-05	4/7/17	VERIZON WIRELESS	355.08
EPAY-06	4/7/17	Fleet One LLC	74.12
13061	4/7/17	Richard D. Larson	386.75
13062	4/7/17	Winter Green Lawn & Snow L.L.C.	635.00
13063	4/7/17	Alpha Video & Audio, Inc	1,345.00
EFILE	4/7/17	Discovery Benefits	1,750.00
EPAY-07	4/9/17	HealthPartners	10,867.46
EPAY-08	4/10/17	U.S. Bank Card Service	748.78
EPAY-09	4/11/17	Dept of Empl and Eco Development	4,474.31
EPAY-10	4/11/17	Connexus Energy	1,892.05
EPAY-11	4/11/17	City of Blaine-utilities	56.22
PEACH	4/12/17	Peachtree/Sage Software	17.60
EFILE	4/12/17	MN Dept. of Revenue	950.34
EFILE	4/12/17	IRS/US BANK	5,704.30
EFILE	4/12/17	Public Employees Retirement	3,141.52
MAR SALES TAX	4/12/17	MN Dept. of Revenue	76.00
EFILE	4/16/17	Chase Visa Card Services	13,329.37
13064	4/17/17	City of Blaine	122,720.01
13065	4/17/17	City of Centerville	7,610.19
13066	4/17/17	City of Circle Pines	10,914.02
13067	4/17/17	City of Ham Lake	31,807.86

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

Check Register

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13068	4/17/17	City of Lexington	4,078.52
13069	4/17/17	City of Lino Lakes	37,595.25
13070	4/17/17	City of Spring Lake Park	13,124.16
EPAY-P01	4/19/17	Richard R. Swanson	135.00
13071	4/19/17	Steve King	135.00
13072	4/19/17	Al Parranto	135.00
13073	4/19/17	Michael A. Murphy	135.00
13074	4/19/17	Melissa S. Maher	135.00
13075	4/19/17	Cindy A. Hansen	135.00
13076	4/19/17	Grass Hopper Lawn & Snow	175.00
13077	4/19/17	Metro Sales, Inc.	615.54
PEACH	4/19/17	Peachtree/Sage Software	1.60
EPAY-12	4/20/17	T-Mobile	103.08
EPAY-13	4/20/17	POPP TELECOM	774.79
EPAY-14	4/20/17	Comcast	275.92
EFILE	4/22/17	Discovery Benefits	445.00
EPAY-15	4/25/17	SA Fleet-Wex Bank	146.74
PEACH	4/26/17	Peachtree/Sage Software	17.60
EFILE	4/26/17	MN Dept. of Revenue	980.64
EFILE	4/26/17	Public Employees Retirement	3,154.46
EFILE	4/26/17	IRS/US BANK	5,783.80
PEACH	4/26/17	Peachtree/Sage Software	1.60
EFILE	4/30/17	Public Employees Retirement	134.77
EFILE	4/30/17	MN Dept. of Revenue	15.94
EFILE	4/30/17	IRS/US BANK	445.99
Total			<u>296,753.08</u>

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

General Journal

For the Period From Apr 1, 2017 to Apr 30, 2017

Date	Reference	Trans Description	Debit Amt	Credit Amt
4/1/17	ACCRUED VAC/COM/SICK	ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK	99,204.14	99,204.14
4/1/17	ACCRUED WAGES	ACCRUED WAGES ACCRUED WAGES	10,308.00	10,308.00
4/30/17	ACCRUED DEPRECIATION	ACCRUED DEPRECIATION ACCRUED DEPRECIATION	12,900.00	12,900.00
4/30/17	ACCRUED VAC/COM/SICK	ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK	101,121.83	101,121.83
4/30/17	ACCRUED WAGES	ACCRUED WAGES ACCRUED WAGES	10,308.00	10,308.00
	Total		233,841.97	233,841.97

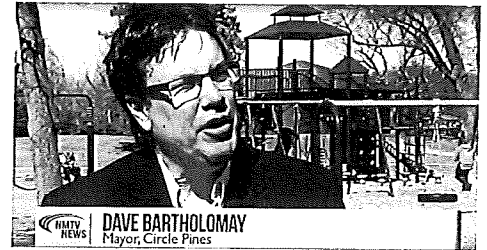
North Metro TV

April 2017 Update

Program Production

In April, a total of **81 new programs** were produced utilizing the North Metro facilities, funds, and services. This constitutes **58:00:00 hours of new programming**.

- 40 programs were produced by the public
- 17 programs were produced by NMTV staff
- 24 programs were produced by City staff



Van Shoots

The HD truck was used for **16:00:00** hours of production. Bad weather resulted in many shoot cancellations.

- Boys Tennis: Blaine vs. Centennial
- JV Boys Tennis: Coon Rapids vs. Centennial
- Baseball: Andover vs. Spring Lake Park



Workshops

Workshop	Instructor	Organization	Students
Garage Deals Field Shoot	Eric Houston	Video Club	3
Intro to NMTV	Eric Houston	General Public	2
DaVinci Academy Production Series, Day 1	Eric Houston	DaVinci Students	6
Intro To NMTV	Eric Houston	General Public	1
DaVinci Academy Production Series, Day 2	Eric Houston	DaVinci Students	6
Connecting Anoka County Shoot	Eric Houston	Video Club	7
6 Workshops			25 Students

Home Movie Transfers

Home movie transfers have become one of our most popular services. Residents can transfer their family videos, film, slides, and photos at North Metro TV themselves for free, or pay NMTV to do it. Most participants want to do it themselves.

Month	Hours Transferred	Tapes	Film Reels	DVDs	Photos/ Slides	Fees Paid
January	205.75	58	174	46	80	\$675
February	165.75	65	41	14	672	\$411
March	131.5	41	98	45	0	\$305
April	118.5	60	34	40	0	\$157.50
TOTAL:	621.5	224	347	145	752	\$1,548.50

Public Usage Stats

For statistical purposes, the public access department documents total numbers of unique individuals and total hours of usage of the facility by the general public, every month. These numbers include regular users, class participants, individuals transferring videos, people who attend events, and any other public usage of the facility. The numbers do not take into account the many members of the public who work with any other NMTV department, such as news, sports, outreach, or educational.

Month	Unique Individuals	Total Usage Hours
January	67	523.5
February	74	461.75
March	54	476.75
April	71	326.5
TOTAL PUBLIC USAGE:		1,788.5

Production Highlights

NMTV News Highlights

Each week Danika Peterson and Ben Hayle create a news program that highlights events, people, issues, and information important to citizens of our Member Cities. Some April highlights include:

- Blaine water system review
- Lino Lakes couple will be on ABC's the Toy Box. It is a competition show to find the next great toy.
- Lupus Spiel at 4 Seasons Curling Club in Blaine
- The National Sports Center looks for community input as they plan for the next 30 years.
- Circle Pines Golden Lake large water quality project
- Arrive Alive drives home message with Centennial High School students.
- Bike helmets save lives



In addition to daily playbacks of North Metro TV News on the cable systems, there are over 377 local stories archived for viewers on the NMTV YouTube page. The page can be accessed through the northmetrotv.com website.

Arrive Alive 2017

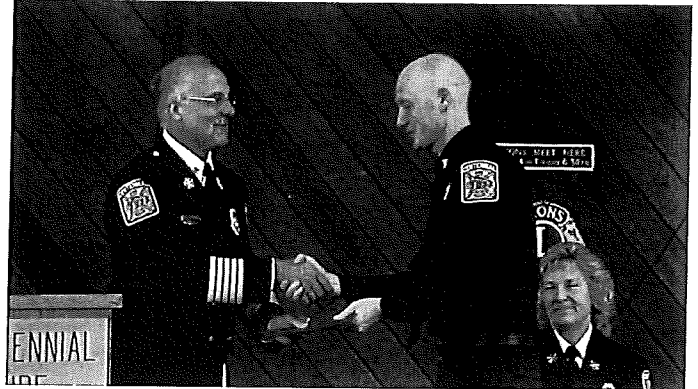
T.J. has wrapped up work on this year's version of Arrive Alive, with Centennial High School. T.J. and his two volunteers shot the final accident scenes and then T.J. edited all night long to have the completed performance for the big presentation to the student body ready for the next day. The presentation of the video, and student, teacher, and parent comments were all included in the final product. It always ends up being a very emotional production. The program is currently being scheduled on the North Metro TV channel and the Centerville, Circle Pines, and Lino Lakes city channels.



Miscellaneous April Shoots

In addition to Arrive Alive, T.J. Tronson worked on several additional projects. They include:

- Completed Centennial Middle School's Madagascar
- Shot more video for Spring Lake Park Leo Club promo
- Recorded Blaine High School's musical Shrek
- Recorded Blaine High School's Special Education play Pigs and Wolves
- Centennial Fire Awards



The Centennial Fire Awards program is currently playing on the North Metro TV channel, and the Centerville and Circle Pines city channels.

Tech Workshops

New Video Engineer, Matt Waldron, has introduced a weekly learning opportunity for NMTV staff, interns, and volunteers. Every Thursday morning Matt schedules three hours to teach basic skills to newer folks, and advanced techniques to the old-timers. Instead of learning on the job, new interns and volunteers will be thoroughly trained on tripods, cameras, wrapping techniques, handling equipment, rain protection, storage and easy troubleshooting techniques before they are working in the field. Staff members will benefit from classes on more specialized pieces of equipment, and gain insight on operation at the engineering level with topics such as routing, signal flow, Dante audio, networking, re-ending cables, and cablecast programming. With such a large amount of new equipment, advanced training on proper use will be helpful for keeping the equipment in optimal working order. Matt's plan is a forward thinking method for creating a strong knowledge base among staff members, which will result in capability redundancies and smoother operations with less down-time.

City Productions

New Municipal Producer, Trevor Scholl, hit the ground running in April. He started by setting up meetings with City officials and communications contacts to introduce himself and start building a catalog of video requests from each City. During his first week he created a program called Mayor's Minutes that can be produced for each City that would like to participate. The first episode featured Centerville Mayor, Jeff Paar. He also taped episode two, featuring Blaine Mayor, Tom Ryan. He also completed a program on bike helmet fittings. Several projects that he is currently working on include:

- CivicReady application
- Senior Safety Fair
- Tip 411 App
- Recycling in the parks
- Centennial Public Safety body cams
- Community farmers markets
- Animal humane society issues
- Circle Pines promo
- Softball tournament in Lexington

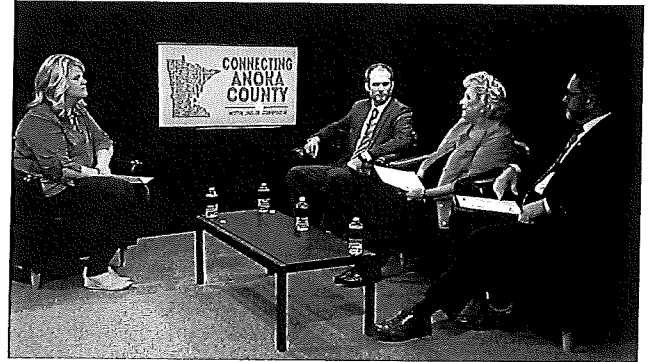
Future programs being organized include:

- Tower Days Events
- Blaine Festival
- Fetes Des Lacs
- Blue Heron Days
- Fishing/water use on Ham Lake
- Business profiles
- Fire station recruitment needs for each department
- Explorers programs
- City comprehensive plan coverage
- Lexington Fall celebration

Trevor touches base with contacts on a regular basis and looks forward to hearing from Cities regarding new show ideas.

Connecting Anoka County

Eric Houston has been working to create a public access show that focuses on Anoka County non-profit organizations. The program is hosted by Stepping Stone Emergency Housing Director and Blaine City Council member Julie Jeppson. The first episode featured the Rotary Clubs of Blaine, Ham Lake, Coon Rapids and Anoka. The goal is to produce a new episode every month or two. Public Access Video Club members serve as production crew for the program.



Production equipment consulting for cities and schools

Blaine

- Video Engineer Matt Waldron met with Roark Haver and discussed the Blaine HD upgrade. Made recommendations regarding equipment.
- Created template for equipment bidding process.
- Recommended new way to display City information once Carousel units are in place. It would consist of a split screen with graphics in one spot, and video in another.
- Bookmarked City meetings and placed On Demand

Spring Lake Park

- Created 42 new graphics for City Channel.
- Bookmarked City meetings and placed On Demand

Ham Lake

- Bookmarked City meetings and placed on Demand.
- Meetings from Ham Lake were getting over-modulated audio on our encodes and live broadcasts from NMTV head-end. Ham Lake's recorded audio and video was fine at their end. The issue had to do with the Le4ctrosonics DM1624 Audio Matrix Router. The output of channel 18 (the channel going directly to NMTV) was cranked up to +20db which was causing the Behringer MDX2600 audio compressor to over-modulate, which caused the audio distortion at NMTV. Matt reset the audio level to 0db gain and watched the live meeting on April 10th to verify the issue was fixed.
- Contacted Comcast regarding on-going video issues with Ham Lake live video feed. Recordings at Ham Lake look fine. The feed is terrible once it reaches NMTV and is sent out over the system. Comcast field technicians have been working on a solution. They are testing all cabling and connections between Ham Lake and NMTV.

Circle Pines

- Create 3 new SCALA slides.
- Bookmarked City meetings and placed On Demand
- Parts arrived for Circle Pines DVD burner. Made repairs, tested and burner is now operational.
- An audio hum is over the top of everything recorded. Discovered an attenuator on the amplifier was turned on. Turned it off and reset the level of all the microphones in the chamber by bringing them all down about 50% at the attenuator had affected most of the mics. The ambient mic was also turned up nearly all the way and was picking up an abnormal amount of external undesirable audio.

Lexington

- Processed City meetings for VOD

- Contacted Alpha Video for quote on simple 1 camera HD upgrade for Council Chambers
Centerville
- Processed City meetings for VOD
- Channel was down. Tested signal on site and determined all fine on City's end. Tested connections in master control at NMTV. Checked dashboard and it pointed toward an issue with an analog to HD-SDI convertor in Rack 2, Card 4. Tested the card and determined the video input was bad. Replaced it with a spare and the channel came back online. Ordered a replacement through Alpha Video and it is covered under warranty.
- Channel airing pinstripes. The SCALA computer in the AV room at City Hall crashed. Matt restarted the computer and the graphics page cam back online.
Lino Lakes
- Bookmarked City meetings and placed On Demand
- Reviewed progress made by Z Systems in Lino Lakes HD upgrade
- Met with Z Systems to review current drafts of drawings for HD upgrade
- Conduct research on options for live streaming of City meetings. Checking on Ross OpenGear streaming encoder card and also on Tightrope streaming servers. Weighing pros and cons of both and creating report and recommendation for City.
Spring Lake Park
- Bookmarked City meetings and placed On Demand
- Create 42 SCALA slides

City Channel 16 Playback Stats

City	Number of Times Programs Played	Hours Programmed on Channel
Blaine	172	183:17:10
Centerville	153	100:10:21
Circle Pines	256	127:31:32
Ham Lake	68	60:23:37
Lexington	122	73:48:36
Lino Lakes	88	110:55:44
Spring Lake Park	95	53:12:00
Totals:	954 Program Playbacks	709:19:00 Hours of Video Programming on Channels

Programs Produced by the Public

Title	Producer	Runtime
It's Only Food With Chef John Politte (7 episodes)	John Politte	01:43:24
CREX Carpet Co.: Weeds to Wealth	Joachim Scholz	00:19:55
Chit Chat: Fire 1-2	Sharon Carlson	00:34:55
Game Time: How Old? (2 episodes)	Video Club	00:35:55
Every Movie Ever (3 episodes)	Eric Houston, Ben Daniels, Alex Johnson, Gavin Van Trease	01:08:29
The Super 8 Show (4 episodes)	Video Club	01:34:45
Cornerstone Church	Rick Bostrom	00:29:47
Lovepower (6 episodes)	Ann Sandell	06:00:00
The Power of Love (6 episodes)	Rick Larson	03:00:00
Rice Creek Watershed District Meeting (2 episodes)	Theresa Stasica	03:07:27
Hope Church (2 episodes)	Cindy Hardy	01:42:42
Oak Park Moments (5 episodes)	David Turnidge	03:10:34
40 New Programs		23:27:53 New Hours

Programs Produced by NMTV Staff

Title	Producer	Runtime
Anoka County Board Meeting (4/11/17)	T.J. Tronson	00:46:37
Anoka County Board Meeting (4/25/17)	T.J. Tronson	00:38:21
Cable Commission Meeting	T.J. Tronson	00:08:00
Centennial Fire District Awards	T.J. Tronson	00:43:23
2017 Arrive Alive	T.J. Tronson	00:55:54
Shrek The Musical	T.J. Tronson	02:13:49
Competition State Thespian Performances and Tracks	T.J. Tronson	02:00:00
North Metro TV News (4 episodes)	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle	01:35:10
Golden Lake Water Quality Project	Ben Hayle	00:05:56
Blaine Bike Helmet Fittings	Trevor Scholl	00:03:24
Mayor's Minutes Centerville	Trevor Scholl	00:05:38
Boys Tennis: Blaine/Centennial	Kenton Kipp	00:56:47
JV Boys Tennis: Coon Rapids/Centennial	Kenton Kipp	00:45:26
Baseball: Andover/Spring Lake Park	Kenton Kipp	02:08:10
17 New Programs		13:06:35 New Hours

Programs Produced by City Staff

Title	Producer	Runtime
Blaine Traffic Commission Meeting (4/4/17)	Blaine Staff	01:22:37
Blaine City Council Meeting (4/6/17)	Blaine Staff	02:13:31
Blaine Planning Commission Meeting (4/11/17)	Blaine Staff	00:11:59
Blaine Natural Resources Conservation Board Meeting (4/18/17)	Blaine Staff	00:39:27
Blaine City Council Meeting (4/20/17)	Blaine Staff	01:33:40
Centerville City Council Meeting (4/12/17)	Centerville Staff	02:20:23
Centerville City Council Meeting (4/26/17)	Centerville Staff	01:32:31
Circle Pines Park Board Meeting (4/4/17)	Circle Pines Staff	00:16:59
Circle Pines City Council Meeting (4/11/17)	Circle Pines Staff	00:17:31
Circle Pines Utility Commission Meeting (4/19/17)	Circle Pines Staff	00:36:59
Circle Pines City Council Meeting (4/25/17)	Circle Pines Staff	00:36:09
Ham Lake City Council Meeting (4/3/17)	Ham Lake Staff	01:10:15
Ham Lake Planning Commission Meeting (4/10/17)	Ham Lake Staff	01:22:23
Ham Lake City Council Meeting (4/17/17)	Ham Lake Staff	00:52:34
Ham Lake Park & Tree Commission Meeting (4/19/17)	Ham Lake Staff	00:22:51
Ham Lake Planning Commission Meeting (4/24/17)	Ham Lake Staff	00:09:14
Lexington City Council Meeting (4/6/17)	Lexington Staff	00:45:01
Lexington City Council Meeting (4/20/17)	Lexington Staff	00:08:28
Lino Lakes City Council Meeting (4/10/17)	Lino Lakes Staff	02:20:36
Lino Lakes Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting (4/12/17)	Lino Lakes Staff	00:33:46
Lino Lakes City Council Meeting (4/24/17)	Lino Lakes Staff	00:31:42
Spring Lake Park City Council Meeting (4/3/17)	Spring Lake Park Staff	00:32:30

Title cont.	Producer Cont.	Runtime Cont.
Spring Lake Park City Council Meeting (4/17/17)	Spring Lake Park Staff	00:40:00
Spring Lake Park Planning Commission Meeting (4/24/17)	Spring Lake Park Staff	00:23:04
24 New Programs		21:34:10 New Hours

If you have any questions or comments regarding this monthly report please contact
Heidi Arnson at 763.231.2801 or harnson@northmetrotv.com.

NORTH METRO TV

Production Statistics 2017

Programming Statistics	J	F	M	A	M	JU	A	S	O	N	D	17 Total	17 Average
Cablecast Programs	2550.00	2317.00	1852.00	2087.00								8806.00	733.83
Cablecast Hours	1851.00	1568.00	1322.50	1508.50								6250.00	520.83
Programs Produced - Public	27.00	23.00	25.00	31.00								106.00	8.83
Program Hours Produced - Public	14.75	18.25	15.50	15.50								64.00	5.33
Prog. Produced - Affiliated Public	6.00	8.00	9.00	9.00								32.00	2.67
Prog. Hours Produced - Affil. Public	6.00	9.50	8.50	8.00								32.00	2.67
Programs Produced - City Staff	21.00	20.00	20.00	24.00								85.00	7.08
Prog. Hours Produced - City Staff	16.25	23.50	17.50	21.50								78.75	6.56
Programs Produced - NMTV Staff	33.00	22.00	16.00	17.00								88.00	7.33
Prog. Hours Produced - NMTV Staff	17.50	18.00	11.50	13.00								60.00	5.00
Total Public Programs Produced	33.00	31.00	34.00	40.00								138.00	11.50
Total Staff Programs Produced	54.00	42.00	36.00	41.00								173.00	14.42
Total Internal Programs Produced	87.00	73.00	70.00	81.00								311.00	25.92
% Staff Produced Programs	62.07%	57.53%	51.43%	50.62%								55.63%	55.63%
% Public Produced Programs	37.93%	42.47%	48.57%	49.38%								44.37%	44.37%
External Programs Submitted	81.00	18.00	33.00	22.00								154.00	12.83
External Program Hours	72.75	15.00	24.00	17.00								128.75	10.73
Total New Programs	168.00	91.00	103.00	103.00								465.00	38.75
Equipment Usage Statistics													
Facility Hours Available	208.50	199.00	246.00	200.00								853.50	71.13
Public Field Equipment Uses	10.00	9.00	12.00	4.00								35.00	2.92
Studio A	36.25	84.00	39.75	19.50								179.50	14.96
% of Available Time	17.39%	42.21%	16.16%	9.75%								21.03%	21.03%
Studio B	26.00	25.50	24.00	23.25								98.75	8.23
% of Available Time	12.47%	12.81%	9.76%	11.63%								11.57%	11.57%
Public MAC A Edit Suite	118.00	115.75	101.25	71.00								406.00	33.83
% of Available Time	56.59%	58.17%	41.16%	35.50%								47.57%	15.21%
Public MAC B Edit Suite	111.50	114.75	108.00	105.25								439.50	36.63
% of Available Time	53.48%	57.66%	43.90%	52.63%								51.49%	51.49%
Public MAC C Edit Suite	138.50	103.50	133.00	68.75								443.75	36.98
% of Available Time	66.43%	52.01%	54.07%	34.38%								51.99%	51.99%
Production Van Statistics													
Production Hours	14.25	30.00	14.00	16.00								74.25	6.19
Number of Van Shoots	2.00	4.00	2.00	3.00								11.00	0.92
Average Hours Per Shoot	7.13	7.50	7.00	5.33								6.75	0.52
Number of New Volunteers	2.00	3.00	0.00	2.00								7.00	0.58
Volunteer Hours	14.00	22.00	11.00	14.00								61.00	5.08
Public Access Statistics													
Number of Workshops	9.00	6.00	7.00	6.00								28.00	2.33
Number of Students	31.00	24.00	45.00	25.00								125.00	10.42
PAP Volunteer Hours	140.50	210.50	169.00	101.50								621.50	51.79
Total Public Facility Usage Hours	523.50	461.75	476.75	326.50								1788.50	149.04
Tours	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00								2.00	0.17
Tour Attendees	0.00	0.00	0.00	26.00								26.00	2.17

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Meeting of May 3, 2017

Executive Cmte. Present: Dick Swanson; Blaine, Matt Percy; Circle Pines, Cindy Hansen; Spring Lake Park

Absent: M. Murphy; Lexington

Others Present: Heidi Arnson; Executive Director, Rose Valez; Admin. Asst.,

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the April 5, 2016 Executive Committee meeting minutes was made by C. Hansen. Second, D. Swanson. Motion approved.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

- The Carousel Units and Makito X transport system have been ordered. There may be some cost savings because of a newer, less expensive Carousel Unit. If there are cost savings, franchise fees returned to Cities will reflect that. Any remaining franchise fees will be returned to Cities when the project is completed and has been paid for. It will take six weeks to build the units. An Alpha Video project manager has been assigned to work with NMTV staff on the integration of the new equipment.
- Commission Legal Counsel submitted a work plan for determining compliance with ADA closed captioning rules. The project will help to determine NMTV and our member Cities' responsibilities, if any, concerning closed captioning.

MOTION: To recommend participating in the Closed Captioning Work Plan, as presented by Legal Counsel, at a cost of no more than \$5,000. **Motion made by D. Swanson. Second, C. Hansen. Motion approved.**

- Conducting a franchise fee review of Comcast was considered. With franchise renewal starting at the end of the year it was thought that it would be more cost effective to conduct a franchise fee review later, as part of renewal.
- The CenturyLink quarterly meeting has been rescheduled for Tuesday June 6th, at 11:30 a.m. First quarter franchise fees and PEG fees were reviewed.

OLD BUSINESS

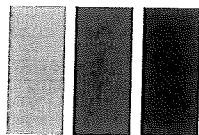
No old business was presented.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was presented.

ADJOURN

**Motion to adjourn made by D. Swanson. Second, C. Hansen. Motion approved.
The meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.**



Bradley

MEMORANDUM

To: Clients and Interested Parties
From: Mike Bradley and Leslie Saporito
Re: Closed Captioning Work Plan
Date: April 26, 2017

Closed Captioning – Proposed Work Plan

Local governments must comply with the closed captioning requirements of both the Federal Cable Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). While local governments are likely exempt from the majority of closed captioning requirements under the Federal Cable Act without taking additional action, local governments are not exempt from the ADA and rules promulgated by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) unless they take certain actions. As a result, local governments risk exposure under the ADA closed captioning requirements in the event the DOJ undertakes a compliance audit. I have attached some select slides from a presentation that I recently made at the SEATO Annual Conference that reviews the requirements under the Federal Cable Act and the ADA.

In short, every local government must do the following to ensure compliance with the ADA and DOJ rules:

- Consider how you can meet the needs of the disabled to the maximum extent possible.
- Determine the financial and administrative burden each option would have, considering all resources available to the Local Government/PEG Operator.
- Prepare a Written Statement.
 - If you conclude that closed captioning and/or other auxiliary aids or services would create an undue burden.
 - Signed by Head of Public Agency (or designee).

To assist local governments in ensuring compliance with the ADA and DOJ rules, we are putting together a group of clients to help each client determine how it can provide captioning services and to determine the costs of providing such services. We will also work with each client in determining whether providing captioning services will create a financial and administrative burden considering all of the resources available. If appropriate, we will assist each client in preparing a written exemption statement.

Bradley Berkland Hagen & Herbst, LLC

1976 Wooddale Drive | Suite 3A | Woodbury, MN 55125 | (651) 379-0900 | BradleyLawMN.com

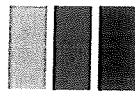
To accomplish these objectives, we will assist each client by providing the following services:

- Provide a legal analysis of the relevant closed captioning rules under the Federal Cable Act and ADA;
- Identify closed captioning options for PEG channels and web streaming;
- Obtain pricing estimates for the provision of closed captioning equipment from up to three sources for captioning both PEG channels and web streaming;
- Obtain pricing estimates for live captioning services from up to 3 sources;
- Obtain pricing estimates for description captioning services from up to 3 sources;
- Obtain pricing estimates for Spanish captioning (or other language of client's choice) from up to 3 sources;
- Confirm that the cable operators are capable of receipt and playback of closed captioning;
- Consult on feasibility of providing captioning with each client;
- Prepare a report for each client summarizing closed captioning rules, captioning options, captioning pricing, and captioning feasibility analysis; and
- Prepare documents required for ADA compliance, such as written exemption statement.

We anticipate that we will request the following from each client to assist us with the study:

- One client contact;
- Identification of the number of PEG Channels and whether client is providing web streaming services;
- An estimate of the number of hours of recorded content on each channel per year;
- An estimate of the number of hours of live programming on each channel per year;
- Department and Organizational budget; and
- Any other information needed to ensure compliance with the ADA.

Our fees for this project will be \$5,000 per client. A minimum of six clients are needed to commence the project at this pricing level.



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Closed Captioning and PEG

The 2017 SEATO Annual Conference

By Mike Bradley
Bradley Berkland Hagen & Herbst, LLC
mike@bradleylawmn.com
(651) 379-0900 ext. 101
March 27, 2017

FCC PEG Channel Exemption

- Closed captioning **not required** if the captioning expense would exceed 2% of gross revenues.
- Any channel producing revenues below \$3M annually is exempt from the closed captioning requirements of the Communications Act.
 - 47 CFR § 79.1(d)(11).
- No PEG Channel Produces Revenues of \$3M – All PEG Channels are Exempt from FCC Closed Captioning Laws



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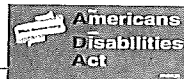


Closed Captioning and the Americans with Disabilities Act

- ADA Title II
 - Prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities
 - In all programs, services, and activities of state and local government.
- Effective Communications Requirement
 - When governments seek to communicate with the public, they must do so by means that are as effective to those with disabilities as to others.



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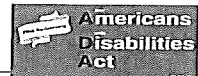


Does the ADA Cover PEG?

- Does the ADA Title II apply to PEG? DOJ Says Yes.
 - <https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/events/2015/11/roundtable-discussion-of-closed-captioning-for-public-access-and-governmental-programming>
 - Minutes 31-36
- FCC Roundtable on CC (Nov. 2015)



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ADA Application to Access TV

- DOJ Nondiscrimination Rules Implementing Title II
- "Television and videotape programming produced by public entities" are covered by Title II of the ADA.
 - Explicitly inclusive of state and local governments and their subdivisions and instrumentalities
 - Include the City's government access channel, since it is television programming produced by a City department.
 - Therefore, the City's government access channel must provide "effective communication" to disabled persons under the ADA.
- Authority: Nondiscrimination Rules, 56 Fed. Reg. 35694 (July 26, 1991), available at <http://www.ada.gov/reg2.html>



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How to Provide Effective Communications

- Effective communication is accomplished through "auxiliary aids and services."
- In determining what type of auxiliary aid and service is necessary, a public entity shall give **primary consideration to the requests of the individual with disabilities.**
- Authority: 28 C.F.R. § 35.160 (2009)



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Auxiliary Aids - Exemption Reasonableness Standard

- The broad mandate of Title II accommodations is limited by a **reasonableness standard**.
 - Exempts public entities from compliance
 - If providing auxiliary aids or services "would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens."
- Many (but not all) PEG Operations/Local Governments have limited financial and administrative resources
 - May therefore be exempt from compliance with Title II



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What Do I Have to Do?

- Determine what options it has to provide effective communications to disabled persons.
 - This would include, but would not be limited to, the auxiliary aid or service of closed captioning.
 - Study different methods to provide closed captioning
 - Study other auxiliary aids and services to provide effective communications to disabled persons in this context, such as using a transcription service or using voice recognition software.



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ADA

CC

What Do I Have to Do?

- Consider how you can meet the needs of the disabled to the maximum extent possible
- Determine the financial and administrative burden each option would have, considering all resources available to the Local Government/PEG Operator.
- Prepare a **Written Statement**
 - If you conclude that closed captioning and/or other auxiliary aids or services would create an undue burden.
 - Signed by Head of Public Agency (or designee)



Bradley

**NORTH METRO TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
UNAPPROVED OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES**

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting began at 10:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

B. Petracek, D. Buchholtz, D. Krueger, M. Ericson, J. Karlson, P. Antonen, C. Arneson

MEMBERS ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT

H. Arnson

APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES

The meeting notes of April 4, 2017 were approved by consensus.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

- The Carousel Units and Makito X transport system have been ordered. There may be some cost savings because of a newer, less expensive Carousel unit. If there are cost savings franchise fees returned to Cities will reflect that. It will take six weeks to build the units. An Alpha Video project manager has been assigned to work with NMTV staff on the integration of the new equipment.
- Commission Legal Counsel submitted a work plan for determining compliance with ADA closed captioning rules. The project will help to determine NMTV and Cities' requirements, if any, concerning closed captioning.
- Conducting a franchise fee review was considered. With franchise renewal starting at the end of the year it was thought that it would be more cost effective to conduct a franchise fee review later, as part of renewal.
- The CenturyLink quarterly meeting has been rescheduled for Tuesday, June 6th, at 11:30 a.m., right after the regularly scheduled Operations Committee meeting.
- Staff asked whether Cities would like the Anoka County Board meetings to play on the government channels. All agreed it would be a good fit.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was presented.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was presented.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.



ABOUT US	MEMBERSHIP	EVENTS	POLICY/ADVOCACY	PEG	CABLE/BROADBAND	MEMBERS ONLY
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2017 MACTA Annual Conference Agenda

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Full Agenda

- 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Registration, Continental Breakfast, & Visit with Vendors
- 9:00 – 9:15 a.m. Welcome
- 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. General Session
 - **The Changing World of Media & Information Consumption**
A panel of media experts discusses the ever-changing world of media consumption and distribution. From “fake news” to real news, how is the internet, social media and even PEG programming affecting how we receive our information.
- 10:15 - 10:45 a.m. Break and Visit with Vendors
- 10:45 - 12:00 p.m. Concurrent Sessions
 - **Oh, the Stories We Can Tell (Content/Technical Track)**
As professionals in this industry, our video programming is more than just a window to the world. We have assembled a panel of local, award-winning storytellers, who will share tips and tricks they have learned. Hear from producers who have taken creative storytelling to a whole new level.
 - **State and Federal Legislative Updates (Policy/Legal Track)**
Hear from key legislators and policy experts who were directly involved with this year’s Minnesota legislative session and learn what any new legislative initiatives mean to you and your organization. Also, learn how changes at the federal level may affect cable, broadband and telecom policy.

Sign In

Sign In securely

Haven't registered yet?

Calendar

- 5/17/2017
MACTA Brown Bag Lunch
Meeting – Tracking Cable
Customer Inquiries
- 6/21/2017
2017 MACTA Annual
Conference

12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Networking Luncheon

- **NATOA Update**

1:30 - 2:00 p.m. **Dessert and Visit with Vendors**

2:00 - 3:15 p.m. Concurrent Sessions

- **Showcase - Production Tools of the Trade Roundtables (Content/Technical Track)**

Remember when pinch rollers and capstans wore out and had to be replaced? Today's high-tech world is different. Learn about new tools available in our show and tell sessions with a whole new twist: multiple subject tables with ongoing roundtable presentations on topics like gimbals, drones, sliders, Dante audio, digital audio delays, wireless microphones, shotgun microphones, and re-used and recycled gear.

- **Cable Franchising: Apocalypse Soon? (Policy/Legal Track)**

Is this the beginning of the end of cable franchising? Could it finally be happening? Our panel of legal experts will discuss competitive franchising in Minnesota, emerging broadband technologies, and what the stock market is saying about the cable television business. Join us for a free ranging discussion of the future of cable franchising.

3:30 - 4:30 p.m. General Session

- **Diversity & Inclusion: Programming for Diverse Audiences & Attracting a Dynamic Workforce**

Our communities are becoming more diverse. How do we produce and market video content to new audiences while engaging them in a meaningful way? What are the internal policies, systems and structures that may serve as barriers to hiring a more diverse workforce? You'll hear from professionals whose cities and organizations are actively addressing these challenges. Their examples will provide you with the tools you need to be successful in your efforts.

4:30 p.m. Closing Remarks - Conference Concludes

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Mayor: Small Cell 'Pizza Boxes' Are More Like Fridges

Says preempting local broadband deployment rules and regs would reduce innovation
5/04/2017 1:53 PM Eastern

By: John Eggerton

The Wireless industry has made much of the "pizza-box" sized equipment for deploying small-cell, 5G, wireless broadband technology, usually in making the argument for its unobtrusiveness as it argues for help in deployment.

But in Hill testimony this week on easing the deployment of broadband, Gary Resnick, mayor of Wilton Manors, Fla., and the former chair of the FCC's Intergovernmental Advisory Committee under Democratic Chair Tom Wheeler, took issue with that as he argued against allowing the FCC to preempt local and state regs in the interest of more rapidly deploying that and other broadband infrastructure.

The venue was a Senate Commerce Committee hearing on "Investing in America's Broadband Infrastructure: Exploring Ways to Reduce Barriers to Deployment."

Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), ranking member of the Committee, said Resnick had made it clear he did not want the feds "messing around" with state and local regulations on broadband expansion, and specifically FCC Chairman Ajit Pai's rulemaking proposals on speeding deployment, which includes potential preemption.

Resnick said preemption was not a good idea, and that the equipment was much larger than advertised, and added he would have demonstrated it at the hearing but it would not fit on the plane.

He said local regulation has been part of the success of tower siting for wireless and infrastructure rollouts of wireline broadband.

He said preemption would have a "devastating effect" on both industry and consumer choice. He said that "one size does not fit all," and that preemption is the government picking winners and losers.

And on the subject of size, he added: "By the way, small cell is not small. That term refers to the size of the coverage, not the facilities." He said some companies have approached his town about putting up 100 foot poles and "refrigerator-sized" boxes. "They are definitely not the size of pizza boxes."

He pointed out that local governments can require camouflage for equipment—like the cell towers masquerading as trees—or encourage innovations, including by requiring co-location rather than allowing new towers, and prompting creativity. He cited technology that can use manhole covers to provide the same kind of technology as small cells.

He said if the FCC preempts those initiatives, it would hurt innovation and competitors.

Committee Chairman John Thune (R-S.D.) said he did not want to "step on local interests or discourage experimentation," but he did want to identify logjams that serve no public interest.

Asked to comment about logjams, Witness Larry Downes, project director at the Georgetown Center for Business and Public Policy, said it was not an all or nothing proposition and that there were a lot of things at the local level that were specific to that locality, but that, at the same time, there is "a lot that is wasteful."

He said as soon as there is a hint of a new tower there are all kinds of ad hoc authorities and people who get involved who don't know what they are debating about, and that is usually where the delay comes.

He said it is not the regulations so much as a lack of uniform process, which is what he said he thought the FCC was getting at in its latest Notice of Proposed Rulemaking—on speeding citing and authorizations—not "to foreclose local interests."

Time for Congress to Act on Net Neutrality

FCC's Title II rollback proposal lays groundwork for legislative solution 5/09/2017 5:00 AM

Author: Sen. Roger Wicker

The internet has revolutionized our world over the past 25 years, and it has done so within a regulatory framework that allowed for unprecedented growth and tremendous breakthroughs. Unnecessary interference from Washington only threatens to disrupt this successful equation.

I support the recent announcement by the Federal Communications Commission to roll back the misguided and overbearing regulatory structure imposed during the Obama administration. Access, choice and low costs are important to American consumers when it comes to high-speed internet. That is not what the Democratic-led FCC achieved with the reclassification of broadband service under a burdensome, utility-like regulatory framework.

Instead, the short-term effect of giving the federal government broad control over the internet has produced exactly the opposite results. In a recent speech, FCC chairman Ajit Pai noted how big and small internet service providers have been negatively affected, with plans for investment and innovation curtailed. When that happens, consumers lose out on better services and options.

Closing the digital divide is a top priority of mine as chairman of the Senate Commerce Subcommittee that oversees internet issues. To do so, ISPs need the confidence and certainty to invest in our nation's most rural areas. A restrictive regulatory framework that chills growth and jeopardizes investment could hold back our underserved communities, stifling the potential for jobs and economic development with it.

Moreover, the Obama-era decision by the FCC to classify broadband service as a "common carrier" under Title II of the Communications Act of 1934 simply does not make sense. Title II is supposed to apply to telephone and utility companies. It was intended for the Ma Bell monopoly of the Great Depression — a market much different from the broadband landscape of the 21st century. A heavy-handed regulatory structure does more harm than good in an environment that has succeeded because competition was allowed to flourish there.

This is not to suggest the need for a completely hands-off regulatory approach. For example, protecting consumer privacy is of the utmost importance. In addition, internet providers should not be able to block legal content or prioritize certain network traffic.

But a light-touch regulatory system has created the online experience Americans enjoy today.

The FCC's action also offers Congress an opportunity to do more to ensure a free and open internet for all Americans. Lawmakers from both political parties can agree that broadband internet should be accessible, affordable and reliable. At the heart of the issue is how to put a free and open internet into practice while protecting consumers and their online experience.

The FCC's announcement that it seeks to reverse the utility-style classification lays the groundwork for a legislative solution. The time is ripe for Congress to find a way to balance proper regulatory oversight without stifling the freedom of internet service providers to grow and innovate.

Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) is chairman of the Senate Communications Subcommittee.

CenturyLink-Level 3 Deal Gets More State Approvals

Companies are hoping to close by the end of Q3 4/12/2017 10:25 AM Eastern

By: John Eggerton

Three more states, and a district, have joined nine others in approving the merger of CenturyLink and Level 3 Communications.

The latest to give it the thumbs up were Delaware, Maryland, Hawaii and Washington, D.C., joining Georgia, Ohio, Utah, West Virginia, Texas, Connecticut, Indiana, Louisiana and Nevada.

The district may be OK with the merger, but regulators in D.C. are still vetting the deal.

CenturyLink filed merger proposal with the FCC and Justice in December. Just two weeks ago the FCC asked for more information from the companies about where they compete in the delivery of business broadband services. Such requests for additional data are not unusual, particularly in this case since the FCC is trying to come up with a list of competitive BDS counties as it preps a vote on deregulating Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers (ILECs), of which CenturyLink is one.

“These additional approvals show that regulators understand the CenturyLink-Level 3 merger will bring substantial service benefits to our customers, employees and communities,” said CenturyLink SVP John F. Jones of the latest state sign-offs. “The combined company will have a stronger and larger network that will help drive economic growth and connect consumers and businesses to the power of the digital world.”

The merger is valued at \$34 billion including debt.

Along with the AT&T-Time Warner merger, it will be one of the first big media mergers to be vetted primarily under the Trump administration. Trump has talked about reducing regs, but also about blocking consolidation among media outlets.