

NORTH METRO TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION MEETING

February 21, 2018
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. 1-16**
 - 2.1. Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting, December 20, 2017
 - 2.2. Approval of the December and January financial reports and bill lists
3. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD
4. NORTH METRO TV REPORT **pp. 17--31**
 - 4.1. Monthly update
5. REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE **pp. 32-36**
 - 5.1. 2017 Franchise Fee Disbursement to Cities
 - 5.2. Comcast Franchise Renewal
 - 5.3. 2018 Executive Committee
6. REPORT OF OPERATIONS COMMITTEE **p. 37**
7. REPORT OF LEGAL COUNSEL
 - 7.1. Franchise Renewal Resolution **pp.38-40**
 - 7.2. CenturyLink PRISM Combo Billing Memo **p. 41**
8. REPORT OF COMCAST
9. REPORT OF CENTURYLINK
10. NEW BUSINESS
11. OLD BUSINESS
12. REPORT OF DIRECTORS
13. COMMUNICATIONS **pp. 42-63**
14. ADJOURN

NORTH METRO TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Commission Meeting – December 20, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Chair M. Percy called the regular meeting of the North Metro Telecommunications Commission to order at 6:02 p.m. at the Spring Lake Park city offices.

ROLL CALL

Directors Present:

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

Directors Absent:

Others Present:

Heidi Arnson; Exec. Dir., Mike Bradley; Legal Counsel

Comcast Rep:

Kate Hensing, Manager Govt. Affairs

CenturyLink Rep:

CONSENT AGENDA

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

The October 18, 2017 minutes and October and November bill lists and financial reports were approved as presented. **Motion for approval made by C. Hansen. Second, A. Parranto. Motion passed unanimously.**

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

None present.

REPORT OF NORTH METRO TV

H. Arnson reviewed the North Metro TV report as presented in the packet. Topics included:

- The NMTV sports crew recorded the day-long North Metro Youth Football Championships. The second grade through sixth grade games were given the full treatment, including side-line interviews, announcers, professional graphics and instant replays. The programming is a favorite among

parents...as is the North Metro TV tradition of re-playing the games all day long on Thanksgiving.

- The hour-long Sports Den Fall Season Finale went out live on November 20th. Student athletes from Blaine, Centennial, and Spring Lake Park high schools were interviewed and given a copy of the show. The show also included highlights from all of the fall sports.
- The Veteran's Day program at Blaine High School was recorded with the new HD truck. NMTV also helped the school provide video and audio feeds for the overflow crowd.
- The news crew has created a new video series for the City Channels. It is called Meet Your Staff. The video segments highlight various City departments and staff. The intent is to give City staff the opportunity to educate the public regarding their jobs and how those jobs effect the community.
- The Lino Lakes HD upgrade is done. The City staff is undergoing training, and there will be a few things to work out, but the HD signal is coming into the North Metro head-end and it looks fantastic.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE/OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

D. Swanson reported on the following items:

- The Committee considered Comcast's request for approval of a 50 cent increase to the late fee. A cost study was provided by Comcast and reviewed. The request would raise the late fee from \$9.50 to \$10.00.

MOTION: To approve Comcast's request to increase the late fee from \$9.50 to \$10.00. **Motion made by D. Swanson. Second, A. Parranto. Motion passed 6 to 1.**

- The third quarter franchise and PEG fee reports were reviewed.
- The Closed Captioning study is moving forward. Staff requested a copy of each City's Summary Budget for 2017 to include in the initial data gathering.
- The Committee recommended that the January 3rd Executive Committee and the January 17th full Commission meetings be canceled.

MOTION: To cancel the January Executive Committee and Commission meetings.
Motion made by D. Swanson. Second, C. Hansen. Motion passed unanimously.

REPORT OF LEGAL COUNSEL

M. Bradley reported on the following items:

- Two memos were included in the packet. The first outlines an agreement between CenturyLink and the State of Minnesota related to the on-going litigation. The second presents the opinion that CenturyLink's new streaming service is a cable service and requires a franchise.
- The Closed Captioning Study is in the data gathering stage, but moving forward.
- There are some questions as to how CenturyLink is calculating the franchise fee. There will be more information at the February meeting.

REPORT OF COMCAST

K. Hensing reported on the following item.

- Comcast has upgraded its entire Twin Cities footprint to 1 gig internet service availability.

REPORT OF CENTURYLINK

No report was presented.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was presented.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was presented.

REPORT OF DIRECTORS

No report of directors was presented.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m. **The motion to adjourn was made by C. Hansen. Second, A. Parranto. Motion approved.**

The next meeting of the NMTC will be held on **Wednesday, February 21, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.** at the city offices of Spring Lake Park.

Mike Murphy; Secretary, NMTC

**NORTH METRO TELECOMMUNICATION
BILL LIST**

DECEMBER 2017

Date	Check #	Payee	Amount
DECEMBER	COMBINED	PAYROLL	36,153.49
DECEMBER	COMBINED	IRS/US PAYABLE	13,088.32
DECEMBER	COMBINED	MN REVENUE PAYABLE	2,310.77
DECEMBER	COMBINED	PERA PAYABLE	6,881.69
DECEMBER	COMBINED	PEACHTREE	43.20
DECEMBER	COMBINED	DISCOVERY BENEFITS	772.50
13199	12/4/17	Commercial Steam Team	478.98
13200	12/4/17	Coordinated Business Systems	155.00
13201	12/4/17	Richard D. Larson	300.00
13202	12/4/17	Floyd Security / SRSI	126.93
13203	12/7/17	Z Systems	622.92
13204	12/13/17	Artists del Norte	100.00
13205	12/13/17	Melissa S. Maher	135.00
13206	12/13/17	Michael A. Murphy	135.00
13207	12/13/17	Steve King	135.00
13208	12/13/17	Al Parranto	135.00
13209	12/13/17	Cindy A. Hansen	135.00
13210	12/15/17	Brian K. Carlson	750.00
13211	12/18/17	Bradley Law, LLC	6,172.59
13212	12/25/17	Benjamin Hayle	10.00
13213	12/25/17	Charles Siddons	250.00
13214	12/25/17	Lakes Marketing Group Inc	398.00
13215	12/30/17	Heidi Arnson	51.25
13216	12/31/17	Steve Weirich	150.00
13217	12/31/17	Siemens Industry, Inc	672.00
EFILE	12/1/17	Authorize.Net	32.80
EFILE	12/11/17	Chase Visa Card Services	3,990.61
EFILE	12/1/17	Virtual Merchant Credit Card	43.50
EPAY-01	12/1/17	Principal Financial Group	419.86
EPAY-02	12/1/17	T-Mobile	103.10
EPAY-03	12/3/17	SA Fleet-Wex Bank	222.64
EPAY-04	12/3/17	Federal Express	25.73
EPAY-05	12/3/17	Republic Services	133.49
EPAY-06	12/3/17	Comcast	285.92
EPAY-07	12/3/17	POPP TELECOM	832.81
EPAY-08	12/3/17	VERIZON WIRELESS	25.00
EPAY-09	12/7/17	Comcast Business 100M/100M	756.78
EPAY-10	12/7/17	HealthPartners	11,025.48
EPAY-11	12/12/17	AT&T Wireless	383.93
EPAY-12	12/14/17	CenterPoint Energy	171.23
EPAY-13	12/11/17	U.S. Bank Card Service	713.64
EPAY-14	12/13/17	City of Blaine-utilities	57.07
EPAY-15	12/17/17	Connexus Energy	2,004.76
EPAY-P01	12/13/17	Richard R. Swanson	135.00
EFILE	12/31/17	MN Dept. of Revenue	40.55

91,566.54

North Metro Telecommunications Commission

Balance Sheet December 31, 2017

ASSETS

Current Assets		
Cash - Checking Account	\$ 2,473,244.39	
Petty Cash	150.00	
A/R - NMTC	197,006.49	
Prepaid Insurance - NMTC	13,276.21	
Total Current Assets		2,683,677.09
Property and Equipment		
Office Equipment - NMTC	1,304,420.69	
Accum Deprec - NMTC	(1,920,164.39)	
Bond Equipment 2016	1,985,000.00	
Building-Polk/125	1,503,204.17	
Land-Polk/125	225,700.00	
Total Property and Equipment		3,098,160.47
Other Assets		
Deferred Out Related/Pension	347,614.00	
Total Other Assets		347,614.00
Total Assets	\$ 6,129,451.56	

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

Current Liabilities		
A/P - NMTC	\$ 1,260.00	
Accrued Payroll Taxes & W/H's	449.54	
Accrued Vacation	96,674.26	
Accrued Wages	24,551.60	
Franchise Fee App	924,284.15	
Due to City of Blaine	861,760.00	
Due to City of Centerville	53,440.00	
Due to City of Circle Pines	76,639.50	
Due to City of Ham Lake	223,360.00	
Due to City of Lexington	28,639.50	
Due to City of Lino Lakes	264,000.00	
Due to City of Spring Lake Par	92,160.00	
Deferred In Related/Pension	85,894.00	
Total Current Liabilities		2,733,112.55
Long-Term Liabilities		
Net Pension Liability	828,188.00	
Total Long-Term Liabilities		828,188.00
Total Liabilities		3,561,300.55
Capital		
Net Equity	294,086.36	
Net Equity - Media Ctr	(206,243.34)	
Net Equity - NMTC	2,517,656.37	
Net Income	(37,348.38)	
Total Capital		2,568,151.01
Total Liabilities & Capital	\$ 6,129,451.56	

Internally Prepared - For Management Use Only

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

Cash Receipts Journal

For the Period From Dec 1, 2017 to Dec 31, 2017

Date	Transaction Ref	Line Description	Debit Amnt	Credit Amnt
12/6/1	NOVEMBER PAYPAL	NOVEMBER PAYPAL PAYPAL	297.71	297.71
12/20/	TAPE DUBS-CASH	TAPE DUBS-CASH Miscellaneous receipts	260.00	260.00
12/20/	TAPE DUBS-CHECKS	TAPE DUBS-CHECKS Miscellaneous receipts	984.00	984.00
12/20/	2017 REFUND	2017 PROPERTY/CASUALTY DIVIDEND League of MN Cities	1,611.00	1,611.00
12/20/	REIMB-HEALTH	FAMILY COVERAGE-NOVEMBER FAMILY COVERAGE-DECEMBER Miscellaneous receipts	2,357.74	1,178.87 1,178.87
12/26/	PERA REFUND	PERA REFUND Public Employee Retirement	330.50	330.50
12/27/	DEC CC SALES-AUTH	DECEMBER CREDIT CARD SALES-AUTHORIZE.NET DECEMBER CREDIT CARD SALES-AUTHORIZE.NET FEE Credit Card Sales	2.18 72.82	75.00
12/28/	DEC CC SALES-VM	CREDIT CARD SALES - VIRTUAL MERCHANT Credit Card Sales	406.00	406.00
12/29/	INTEREST	INTEREST-COMMISSION CHECKING INTEREST - COMMISSION	1,993.40	1,993.40
			8,315.35	8,315.35

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

Check Register

For the Period From Dec 1, 2017 to Dec 31, 2017

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

Check #	Date	Payee	Amount
EFILE	12/1/17	Discovery Benefits	22.50
EFILE	12/1/17	Authorize.Net	32.80
EFILE	12/1/17	Virtual Merchant Credit Card	43.50
EPAY-02	12/1/17	T-Mobile	103.10
EPAY-01	12/1/17	Principal Financial Group	419.86
EFILE	12/2/17	Discovery Benefits	470.00
EPAY-03	12/3/17	SA Fleet-Wex Bank	222.64
EPAY-04	12/3/17	Federal Express	25.73
EPAY-05	12/3/17	Republic Services	133.49
EPAY-06	12/3/17	Comcast	285.92
EPAY-07	12/3/17	POPP TELECOM	832.81
EPAY-08	12/3/17	VERIZON WIRELESS	25.00
13199	12/4/17	Commercial Steam Team	478.98
13200	12/4/17	Coordinated Business Systems	155.00
13201	12/4/17	Richard D. Larson	300.00
13202	12/4/17	Floyd Security / SRSI	126.93
PEACH	12/6/17	Peachtree/Sage Software	19.20
EFILE	12/6/17	MN Dept. of Revenue	1,055.30
EFILE	12/6/17	Public Employees Retirement	3,388.78
EFILE	12/6/17	IRS/US BANK	6,186.88
EPAY-09	12/7/17	Comcast Business 100M/100M	756.78
EPAY-10	12/7/17	HealthPartners	11,025.48
NOV SALES TAX	12/7/17	MN Dept. of Revenue	190.00
13203	12/7/17	Z Systems	622.92
EPAY-13	12/11/17	U.S. Bank Card Service	713.64
EFILE	12/11/17	Chase Visa Card Services	3,990.61
EPAY-11	12/12/17	AT&T Wireless	383.93
EPAY-14	12/13/17	City of Blaine-utilities	57.07
13204	12/13/17	Artists del Norte	100.00

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

Check Register

For the Period From Dec 1, 2017 to Dec 31, 2017

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

Check #	Date	Payee	Amount
13205	12/13/17	Melissa S. Maher	135.00
13206	12/13/17	Michael A. Murphy	135.00
13207	12/13/17	Steve King	135.00
13208	12/13/17	Al Parranto	135.00
13209	12/13/17	Cindy A. Hansen	135.00
EPAY-P01	12/13/17	Richard R. Swanson	135.00
EPAY-12	12/14/17	CenterPoint Energy	171.23
13210	12/15/17	Brian K. Carlson	750.00
EFIL	12/16/17	Discovery Benefits	280.00
EPAY-15	12/17/17	Connexus Energy	2,004.76
13211	12/18/17	Bradley Law, LLC	6,172.59
PEACH	12/20/17	Peachtree/Sage Software	24.00
EFIL	12/20/17	MN Dept. of Revenue	1,065.47
EFIL	12/20/17	Public Employees Retirement	3,388.78
EFIL	12/20/17	IRS/US BANK	6,244.44
13212	12/25/17	Benjamin Hayle	10.00
13213	12/25/17	Charles Siddons	250.00
13214	12/25/17	Lakes Marketing Group Inc	398.00
13215	12/30/17	Heidi Arnson	51.25
EFIL	12/31/17	Public Employees Retirement	104.13
EFIL	12/31/17	MN Dept. of Revenue	40.55
EFIL	12/31/17	IRS/US BANK	657.00
13216	12/31/17	Steve Weirich	150.00
13217	12/31/17	Siemens Industry, Inc	672.00
Total			<u>55,413.05</u>

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

General Journal

For the Period From Dec 1, 2017 to Dec 31, 2017

Date	Reference	Trans Description	Debit Amt	Credit Amt
12/1/17	ACCRUED VAC/COM/SICK	ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK	100,862.72	100,862.72
12/1/17	ACCRUED WAGES	ACCRUED WAGES ACCRUED WAGES	21,163.32	21,163.32
12/30/17	ACCRUED DEPRECIATION	ACCRUED DEPRECIATION ACCRUED DEPRECIATION	12,900.00	12,900.00
12/30/17	ACCRUED VAC/COM/SICK	ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK	96,674.26	96,674.26
	Total		231,600.30	231,600.30

**NORTH METRO TELECOMMUNICATION
BILL LIST**

JANUARY 2018

Date	Check #	Payee	Amount
DECEMBER	COMBINED	PAYROLL	56,662.19
DECEMBER	COMBINED	IRS/US PAYABLE	19,563.51
DECEMBER	COMBINED	MN REVENUE PAYABLE	3,310.33
DECEMBER	COMBINED	PERA PAYABLE	10,441.60
DECEMBER	COMBINED	PEACHTREE	57.60
DECEMBER	COMBINED	DISCOVERY BENEFITS	1,410.00
13218	1/10/18	Comcast	61.08
13219	1/10/18	Richard D. Larson	395.00
13220	1/10/18	Corporate Mechanical	713.74
13221	1/10/18	DVS RENEWAL	209.00
13222	1/10/18	DVS RENEWAL	276.00
13223	1/10/18	DVS RENEWAL	115.00
13224	1/10/18	Grass Hopper Lawn & Snow	525.00
13225	1/23/18	Alpha Video & Audio, Inc	12,885.00
13226	1/23/18	Heights Theater	500.00
13227	1/23/18	Metro Sales, Inc.	668.36
13228	1/24/18	Nat. Assn Officers & Advisors	2,070.00
13229	1/24/18	MN Assoc Comm Tele Admin	2,625.00
13230	1/31/18	Michele J. Silvester	683.88
EFILE	1/1/18	Authorize.Net	25.90
EFILE	1/17/18	Chase Visa Card Services	2,682.34
EFILE	1/1/18	Discovery Benefits	22.50
EFILE	1/2/18	Discovery Benefits	20,000.00
EFILE	1/1/18	Virtual Merchant Credit Card	22.29
EPAY-01	1/2/18	POPP TELECOM	831.37
EPAY-02	1/3/18	Comcast	285.92
EPAY-03	1/3/18	T-Mobile	103.16
EPAY-04	1/4/18	Principal Financial Group	419.86
EPAY-05	1/8/18	SA Fleet-Wex Bank	84.65
EPAY-06	1/12/18	AT&T Wireless	383.93
EPAY-07	1/15/18	Republic Services	154.65
EPAY-08	1/15/18	CenterPoint Energy	271.30
EPAY-09	1/17/18	Comcast Business 100M/100M	2,281.69
EPAY-10	1/18/18	SA Fleet-Wex Bank	84.65
EPAY-11	1/22/18	HealthPartners	11,025.48
EPAY-12	1/22/18	U.S. Bank Card Service	865.80
EPAY-13	1/23/18	Comcast	54.22
EPAY-14	1/23/18	Dept of Empl and Eco Development	587.94
EPAY-15	1/26/18	City of Blaine-utilities	56.96
EPAY-16	1/27/18	Connexus Energy	1,680.69
EPAY-17	1/31/18	VERIZON WIRELESS	1.19
DEC SALES TAX	1/10/18	MN Dept. of Revenue	117.00

155,215.78

North Metro Telecommunications Commission

Balance Sheet

January 31, 2018

ASSETS

Current Assets		
Cash - Checking Account	\$ 2,822,684.90	
Petty Cash	150.00	
A/R - NMTC	197,006.49	
Prepaid Insurance - NMTC	13,276.21	
Total Current Assets		3,033,117.60
Property and Equipment		
Office Equipment - NMTC	1,304,420.69	
Accum Deprec - NMTC	(1,933,064.39)	
Bond Equipment 2016	1,985,000.00	
Building-Polk/125	1,503,204.17	
Land-Polk/125	225,700.00	
Total Property and Equipment		3,085,260.47
Other Assets		
Deferred Out Related/Pension	347,614.00	
Total Other Assets		347,614.00
Total Assets	\$	<u>6,465,992.07</u>

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

Current Liabilities		
A/P - NMTC	\$ 1,260.00	
Accrued Payroll Taxes & W/H's	449.54	
Accrued Vacation	100,697.96	
Accrued Wages	31,606.04	
Franchise Fee App	924,284.15	
Due to City of Blaine	861,760.00	
Due to City of Centerville	53,440.00	
Due to City of Circle Pines	76,639.50	
Due to City of Ham Lake	223,360.00	
Due to City of Lexington	28,639.50	
Due to City of Lino Lakes	264,000.00	
Due to City of Spring Lake Par	92,160.00	
Deferred In Related/Pension	85,894.00	
Total Current Liabilities		2,744,190.69
Long-Term Liabilities		
Net Pension Liability	828,188.00	
Total Long-Term Liabilities		828,188.00
Total Liabilities		3,572,378.69
Capital		
Net Equity	256,737.98	
Net Equity - Media Ctr	(206,243.34)	
Net Equity - NMTC	2,517,656.37	
Net Income	325,462.37	
Total Capital		<u>2,893,613.38</u>
Total Liabilities & Capital	\$	<u>6,465,992.07</u>

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

Cash Receipts Journal

For the Period From Jan 1, 2018 to Jan 31, 2018

Date	Transaction Ref	Line Description	Debit Amnt	Credit Amnt
1/10/1	DECEMBER PAYPAL	DECEMBER PAYPAL PAYPAL	52.80	52.80
1/24/1	TAPE DUBS-CASH	TAPE DUBS-CASH Miscellaneous receipts	300.00	300.00
1/24/1	TAPE DUBS-CHECKS	TAPE DUBS-CHECKS Miscellaneous receipts	575.00	575.00
1/24/1	COMP REIMB-BLAINE	MONITOR Miscellaneous receipts	94.27	94.27
1/27/1	JAN CC SALES-VM	CREDIT CARD SALES - VIRTUAL MERCHANT Credit Card Sales	30.00	30.00
1/28/1	JAN CC SALES-AUTH	JANUARY CREDIT CARD SALES-AUTHORIZE.NET JANUARY CREDIT CARD SALES-AUTHORIZE.NET-FEES Credit Card Sales	0.58 19.42	20.00
1/29/1	4TH QTR PEG FEES	4TH QTR PEG FEES CenturyLink-Peg	7,900.00	7,900.00
1/29/1	4TH QTR FRAN FEES	4TH QTR FRANCHISE FEES Comcast-Franchise	8,813.30	8,813.30
1/30/1	INTEREST	INTEREST-COMMISSION CHECKING INTEREST - COMMISSION	2,242.66	2,242.66
1/31/1	4TH QTR FRAN FEES	4TH QUARTER FRANCHISE FEES Comcast-Franchise	323,660.78	323,660.78
1/31/1	4TH QTR PEG FEES	4TH QUARTER PEG FEES Comcast-PEG Fees	160,968.06	160,968.06
			504,656.87	504,656.87

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

Check Register

For the Period From Jan 1, 2018 to Jan 31, 2018

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

Check #	Date	Payee	Amount
EFILE	1/17/18	Discovery Benefits	470.00
EPAY-09	1/17/18	Comcast Business 100M/100M	2,281.69
EFILE	1/17/18	Chase Visa Card Services	2,682.34
EPAY-10	1/18/18	SA Fleet-Wex Bank	84.65
EPAY-11	1/22/18	HealthPartners	11,025.48
EPAY-12	1/22/18	U.S. Bank Card Service	865.80
13225	1/23/18	Alpha Video & Audio, Inc	12,885.00
13226	1/23/18	Heights Theater	500.00
EPAY-13	1/23/18	Comcast	54.22
13227	1/23/18	Metro Sales, Inc.	668.36
EPAY-14	1/23/18	Dept of Empl and Eco Development	587.94
13228	1/24/18	Nat. Assn Officers & Advisors	2,070.00
13229	1/24/18	MN Assoc Comm Tele Admin	2,625.00
EPAY-15	1/26/18	City of Blaine-utilities	56.96
EPAY-16	1/27/18	Connexus Energy	1,680.69
PEACH	1/31/18	Peachtree/Sage Software	19.20
EFILE	1/31/18	MN Dept. of Revenue	1,084.31
EFILE	1/31/18	Public Employees Retirement	3,471.58
EFILE	1/31/18	IRS/US BANK	5,848.23
EFILE	1/31/18	Discovery Benefits	470.00
13230	1/31/18	Michele J. Silvester	683.88
EPAY-17	1/31/18	VERIZON WIRELESS	1.19
EFILE	1/31/18	Public Employees Retirement	125.56
EFILE	1/31/18	IRS/US BANK	1,171.42
EFILE	1/31/18	MN Dept. of Revenue	101.09
Total			98,553.59

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

Check Register

For the Period From Jan 1, 2018 to Jan 31, 2018

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

Check #	Date	Payee	Amount
EFILE	1/1/18	Discovery Benefits	22.50
EFILE	1/1/18	Authorize.Net	25.90
EFILE	1/1/18	Virtual Merchant Credit Card	22.29
EPAY-01	1/2/18	POPP TELECOM	831.37
EFILE	1/2/18	Discovery Benefits	20,000.00
PEACH	1/3/18	Peachtree/Sage Software	19.20
EFILE	1/3/18	MN Dept. of Revenue	1,041.34
EFILE	1/3/18	Public Employees Retirement	3,374.91
EFILE	1/3/18	IRS/US BANK	6,157.84
EPAY-02	1/3/18	Comcast	285.92
EFILE	1/3/18	Discovery Benefits	470.00
EPAY-03	1/3/18	T-Mobile	103.16
EPAY-04	1/4/18	Principal Financial Group	419.86
EPAY-05	1/8/18	SA Fleet-Wex Bank	84.65
13218	1/10/18	Comcast	61.08
13219	1/10/18	Richard D. Larson	395.00
13220	1/10/18	Corporate Mechanical	713.74
13221	1/10/18	DVS RENEWAL	209.00
13222	1/10/18	DVS RENEWAL	276.00
13223	1/10/18	DVS RENEWAL	115.00
13224	1/10/18	Grass Hopper Lawn & Snow	525.00
DEC SALES TAX	1/10/18	MN Dept. of Revenue	117.00
EPAY-06	1/12/18	AT&T Wireless	383.93
EPAY-07	1/15/18	Republic Services	154.65
EPAY-08	1/15/18	CenterPoint Energy	271.30
PEACH	1/17/18	Peachtree/Sage Software	19.20
EFILE	1/17/18	MN Dept. of Revenue	1,083.59
EFILE	1/17/18	Public Employees Retirement	3,469.55
EFILE	1/17/18	IRS/US BANK	6,386.02

North Metro Telecommunications Comm

General Journal

For the Period From Jan 1, 2018 to Jan 31, 2018

Date	Reference	Trans Description	Debit Amt	Credit Amt
1/1/18	ACCRUED VAC/COM/SICK	ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK	96,674.26	96,674.26
1/30/18	ACCRUED DEPRECIATION	ACCRUED DEPRECIATION ACCRUED DEPRECIATION	12,900.00	12,900.00
1/30/18	ACCRUED VAC/COM/SICK	ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK ACCRUED VAC/COMP/SICK	100,697.96	100,697.96
1/30/18	ACCRUED WAGES	ACCRUED WAGES ACCRUED WAGES	7,054.44	7,054.44
	Total		217,326.66	217,326.66

North Metro TV

December 2017 Update

Program Production

In December, a total of **77 new programs** were produced utilizing the North Metro facilities, funds, and services. This constitutes **57:45:00 hours of new programming**.

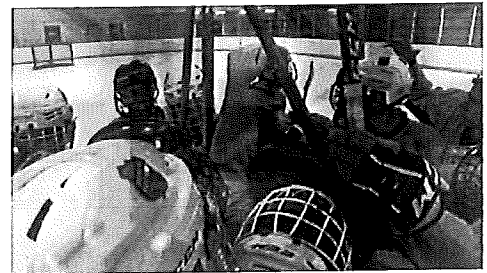
- 30 programs were produced by the public
- 30 programs were produced by NMTV staff
- 17 programs were produced by City staff



Van Shoots

The HD truck was used for **25:15:00** hours of production. Events produced live and recorded for additional playbacks include:

- Boys Hockey: Spring Lake Park vs. Blaine
- Girls Hockey: Blaine vs. Centennial
- Boys Hockey: Blaine vs. Centennial
- Boys Basketball: Blaine vs. Centennial



Workshops

Workshop	Instructor	Organization	Students
Special Production Series Class 10	Eric Houston	Blaine/Ham Lake Girl Scouts	9
Studio B	Eric Houston	General Public	2
Puzzled Taping	Eric Houston	Video Club	3
Special Production Series Class 11	Eric Houston	Blaine/Ham Lake Girl Scouts	9
Camera	Eric Houston	General Public	3
Special Production Series Class 12	Eric Houston	Blaine/Ham Lake Girl Scouts	12
Intro to NMTV	Eric Houston	General Public	1
Star Wars Holiday Special Lecture	Eric Houston	Video Club	14
Editing	Eric Houston	General Public	3
Special Production Series Class 13	Eric Houston	Blaine/Ham Lake Girl Scouts	9
10 Workshops			64 Students

Home Movie Transfers

Home movie transfers have become one of our most popular services. Residents can transfer their family videos themselves for free, or pay NMTV to do it. NMTV can also transfer film, slides, and photos for a fee.

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
May	192.25	81	58	16	473	\$215
June	207.5	70	26	65	0	\$274.50
July	179.25	83	5	41	208	\$545
August	132.5	59	69	17	0	\$838
September	166.75	61	45	22	30	\$484
October	301.25	75	150	60	2,881	\$737
November	281.5	99	124	17	3,416	\$1,581
December	222.75	97	64	74	1,388	\$604
TOTAL:	2,305.25	849	888	457	9,148	\$6,827.00

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.

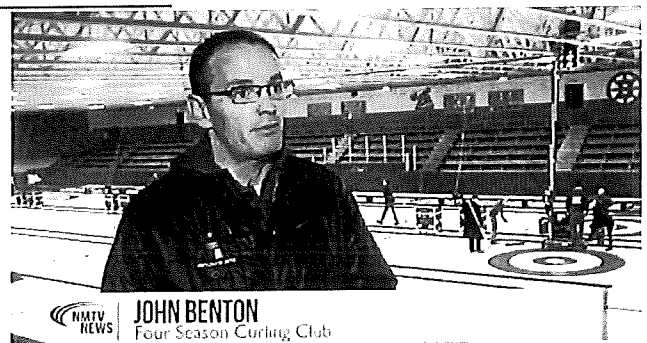
Month	Unique Individuals	Total Usage Hours
January	67	523.5
February	74	461.75
March	54	476.75
April	71	326.5
May	106	665
June	95	511.25
July	75	459.5
August	80	501.75
September	85	516.5
October	106	665.5
November	112	634.75
December	91	473.75
TOTAL PUBLIC USAGE:		6,216.50

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 December highlights include:

- Olympic Trials Come to Blaine
- Veteran Housing Now Open in Anoka
- Healing through Haircuts



- Stepping Stone Emergency Housing Makes Impact
- Reading Corps Tutors Needed
- Heroes and Helpers Bring Gifts and Cheer

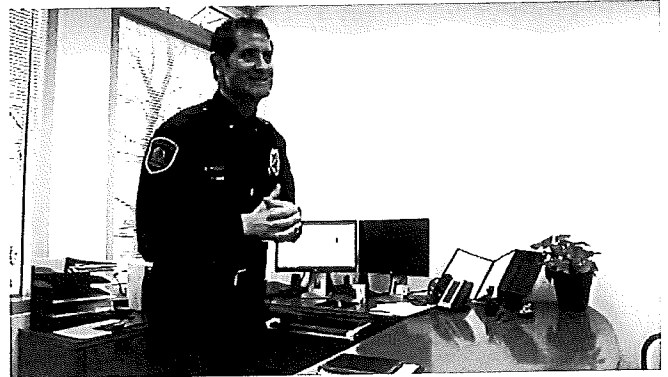
In addition to daily playbacks of North Metro TV News on the cable systems, there are over 447 local stories archived for viewers on the NMTV YouTube page. The page can be accessed through the northmetrotv.com website.

Candy Land

T.J. Tronson recorded the Centennial Middel School's performance of Candy Land in December. He recorded the play with several cameras and then edited the the final product. We can't put the plays on our channels due to copyright issues, but we do record them for the school and make copies available for students and parents.

Meet Your City Staff

News Team members Danika Peterson and Ben Hayle, continued to produce episodes of their new video series called "Meet Your City Staff." In December they introduced viewers new Centerville City Administrator, Mark Statz and new Blaine Police Chief Brian Podany. The intent is to give the public more insight into the people who make things happen and the processes for getting things done in their communities.



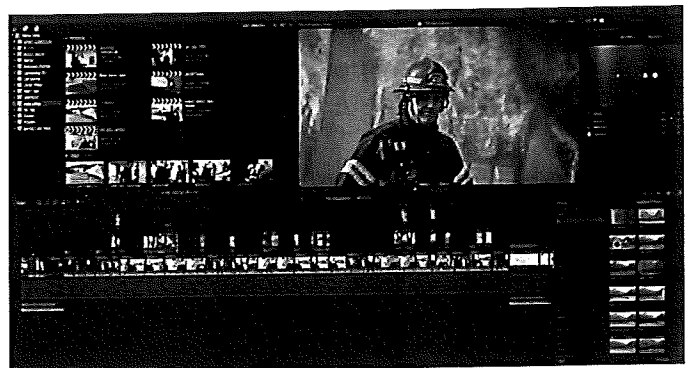
City HD Upgrade Update

The City of Lino Lakes has completed the technical part of its HD upgrade. Some work remains to be done on the dais, and final related connections, but the signal coming from City Hall is now HD. Once Alpha Video completed the install of the new equipment, NMTV Video Engineer, purchased and installed the HD transmission equipment. A Makito X encoder, Brightsign, the embedder, HDMI converter, and KanexPro 2x1 switch. This equipment transmits the live HD signal from City Hall to the NMTV head-end. After the equipment was installed, Matt worked with the City's Network Systems Engineer to obtain access to the system with an IP address and an assigned port. The system was tested and is functioning well. CenturyLink was notified of the change in signal from SD to HD and will include the Lino Lakes channel in its next signal sweep for providing an HD channel for Lino Lakes.

City Productions

Municipal Producer, Trevor Scholl, completed five projects in December, and put a lot of work into several ongoing projects.

- Blaine Mayor's Mlnutes Winter 2017
- Lino Lakes Fire Recruitment
- Centerville Mayor's Mlnutes Winter 2017
- School Spotlight: Circle Pines and Centennial
- Lexington Mayor's Minutes Winter 2017



New and ongoing projects include:

- Lino Lakes corrections facility piece/slated for completion in January
- Ham Lake Snow Bowl
- Shot Animal Humane Society piece about volunteering
- Circle Pines road maintenance project
- A profile on a new juice bar/yoga studio opening in Blaine
- Contacted more local businesses regarding doing profiles

Trevor touches base with contacts on a regular basis and also encourages Cities to contact him whenever they have an idea for a new show.

Production equipment consulting for cities and schools

Blaine

- 12/5/17: Roark reported that the new system drawings have been delivered. NMTV has a link to the drawings and has printed them for a spare copy off-site.
- **Centerville**
- No equipment assistance requested or required.

Circle Pines

- 12/13/17: Tricaster issues. 12/12 meeting did not broadcast video due to system failure. The audio was transmitted so that was recorded for future playbacks with a technical difficulties slate. Swapped out with spare Tricaster from NMTV, but that didn't work either. Working to combine components of two Tricaster units to get a functioning "Frankencaster" for temporary use.
- 12/13/17: Contacted Z Systems to arrange meeting with Circle Pines to discuss a new HD system upgrade.
- 12/15/17: Re-installed repaired Tricaster. Replaced video card.
- 12/19/17: Met with Z Systems and Patrick Antonen regarding HD upgrade. Z Systems will get proposal to Patrick, based on meetings discussions by mid-January.

Ham Lake

- 12/4/17: Rebooted the Carousel unit. Every few days it seems that the unit either freezes or shuts down and won't reboot. Tightrope is working on the issue.
- 12/15/17: Got a message from Denise Webster about problems at Ham Lake. The office was closed for the weekend when Matt arrived to troubleshoot.
- 12/18/17: Denise reset the SCALA and fixed video problem. Went out to check on the audio problem and discovered the tuner was dead. Power supply not working. Replaced the tuner with a spare. Issue resolved.
- 12/18/17: Discussed meeting for the first week of the New Year to get things going for the HD upgrade.
- 12/18/17: Replaced Ham Lake Carousel Unit in master control.

Lexington

- No equipment assistance requested or required.

Lino Lakes

- 12/5/17: Sent a follow-up email to Alpha Video requesting new system drawings in advance of install. Originally requested one week ago but have not received. Alpha stated the drawings were not finished. Want to do a thorough examination of the drawings pre-install.
- 12/5/17: Jeff Karlson reported that the outlets are installed at the camera locations. The dais is not done yet, but Jeff will keep NMTV updated.
- 12/8/17: Received drawings for Lino upgrade. Sent copy to Jeff Karlson.
- 12/8/17: Emailed Alpha regarding Haivision encoder and decoder for Lino HD video transmissions. Gave him a deadline for delivery.
- 12/12/17: Completed tear-down of old equipment in the Lino Lakes control room. Kept most of the wires in place for Alpha to determine if re-usable. Three and a half hour project.
- 12/13/17: Went to Lino Lakes and checked on the progress of the install.
- 12/15/17: Went to Lino Lakes and checked on the progress of the install.
- 12/18/17: Check on install and commissioning. All equipment in working order except the wireless audio-assisted listening devices. They still must be installed.
- 12/19/17: Bought a TV for a return feed from Best Buy and a wall mount for a confidence monitor. Dropped off at City Hall.
- 12/19/17: Noted that Expressions training is not needed as NMTV will create and maintain graphics needed for meetings.
- 12/19/17: Installed Makito X Decoder and Frame Sync in master control for Lino Lakes HD transmissions.
- 12/19/17: Installed the Makito X encoder at Lino Lakes and provided network information.
- 12/19/17: Contacted network system engineer to get access from IP address through port for transmission of signal from Lino Lakes to NMTV head-end. The signal was tested and is operational.
- 12/19/17: Ordered an SDI/Analog audio embedder for Lino Lakes transmission.
- 12/21/17: Checked on project status at Lino Lakes. The project is complete with the exception of the dais and audio needs that must be done before the mics can be installed.
- 12/22/17: Checked on project status at Lino Lakes
- 12/27/17: Installed the transmission system at Lino Lakes. Installed the embedder, Brightsign, HDMI convertor, KanexPro 2x1 switch and Makito X in the cooled rack under the workstation. Checked transmission. All working. Checked cameras and made sure

the4 system was installed properly. Will need to come back and make adjustments to the cameras. Video levels not ideal. Will also have to check audio levels once whole system installation is complete.

Spring Lake Park

- 12/15/17: System outputting a frozen image but the audio is working. Will have to troubleshoot.
- 12/18/17: Reset the Makito X decoder and fixed the frozen image.

City Channel 16 Playback Stats

City	Number of Times Programs Played	Hours Programmed on Channel
Blaine	149	180:30:43
Centerville	37	61:28:48
Circle Pines	202	211:08:51
Ham Lake	68	46:14:54
Lexington	99	76:38:13
Lino Lakes	47	81:01:48
Spring Lake Park	94	101:45:12
Totals:	696 Program Playbacks	758:48:29 Hours of Video Programming on Channels

Programs Produced by the Public

Title	Producer	Runtime
Sticks on the Ice	Laurie Sigler	00:28:17
Behind the Ice	Laurie Sigler	00:24:42
Chit Chat: Abe Yorek	Sharon Carlson	00:24:47
Off Constantly: Weather Update	David Bauer	00:00:27
Off Constantly: Parking Ramps	David Bauer	00:21:27
Toastmasters Live! (2 episodes)	Lee Howard	01:27:18
It's Only Food with Chef John Politte ((6 episodes)	John Politte	00:53:12
Every Movie Ever Made (3 episodes)	Ben Daniels/Ryan Frieundschuh, Gavin Van Trease/Eric Houston	01:10:54
Puzzled	Video Club	06:06:22
Cornerstone Church	Rick Bostrom	00:29:00
The Power of Love (4 episodes)	Rick Larson	02:00:00
LovePower (2 episodes)	Ann Sandell	02:00:00
Rice Creek Watershed District Meeting	Theresa Stasica	02:58:00
Monday Motivation With Bukola (5 episodes)	Bukola Oriola	04:13:28
30 New Programs		22:57:34 New Hours

Programs Produced by NMTV Staff

Title	Producer	Runtime
Anoka County Board Meeting (12/08/17)	T.J. Tronson	00:23:46
Anoka County Board Meeting (12/19/17)	T.J. Tronson	01:18:35
North Metro Telecomm Mtg (12/20/17)	T.J. Tronson	00:14:24
Centennial Middle School's Candy Land	T.J. Tronson	01:00:12
NMTV News (3 episodes)	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle	01:17:44
Your City Staff: Mark Statz	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle	00:04:50
Your City Staff: Chief Brian Podany	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle	00:04:38
Lexington Mayor's Minutes Winter 2017	Trevor Scholl	00:05:35

Title cont.	Producer cont.	Runtime cont.
Blaine's Mayor's Minutes Winter 2017	Trevor Scholl	00:06:02
School Spotlight Circle Pines and Centennial	Trevor Scholl	00:11:28
Centerville's Mayor's Minutes Winter 2017	Trevor Scholl	00:06:50
Lino Lakes Fire Recruitment Video	Trevor Scholl	00:06:07
Boys Hockey: Spring Lake Park/Blaine	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:59:38
Girls Basketball: Centennial/Blaine	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:15:26
Girls Hockey: Blaine/Centennial	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:44:24
Boys Hockey: Blaine/Centennial	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	02:13:48
Boys Basketball: Blaine/Centennial	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:32:13
Coach & Captains: Centennial Football	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:02
Coach & Captains: Blaine Boys Hockey	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:41
Coach & Captains: Spring Lake Park Girls Basketball	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:35
Coach & Captains: Spring Lake Park Boys Basketball	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:02:35
Coach & Captains: Blaine Girls Basketball	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:44
Coach & Captains: Spring Lake Park/Irondale Gymnastics	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:07
Coach & Captains: Centennial Boys Basketball	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:18
Coach & Captains: Blaine Boys Basketball	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:18
Coach & Captains: Centennial Girls Basketball	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:51
Sports Den (2 episodes)	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:58:59
30 New Programs		15:14:55 New Hours

Programs Produced by City Staff

Title	Producer	Runtime
Blaine City Council Meeting (12/7/17)	Blaine Staff	02:28:37
Blaine Planning Commission Meeting (12/12/17)	Blaine Staff	00:13:36
Blaine Truth In Taxation Meeting (12/14/17)	Blaine Staff	01:07:08
Blaine Natural Resources Conservation Board Meeting (12/19/17)	Blaine Staff	00:32:59
Blaine City Council Meeting (12/21/17)	Blaine Staff	01:54:32
Centerville City Council Meeting (12/13/17)	Centerville Staff	02:11:26
Circle Pines City Council Meeting (12/12/17)	Circle Pines Staff	01:19:00
Circle Pines Planning Commission Meeting (12/18/17)	Circle Pines Staff	01:08:19
Circle Pines Utility Commission Meeting (12/20/17)	Circle Pines Staff	00:32:17
Circle Pines City Council Meeting (12/26/17)	Circle Pines Staff	01:45:17
Ham Lake City Council Meeting (12/4/17)	Ham Lake Staff	00:48:00
Ham Lake City Council Meeting (12/18/17)	Ham Lake Staff	00:23:42
Lexington City Council Meeting (12/7/17)	Lexington Staff	00:32:48
Lexington City Council Meeting (12/21/17)	Lexington Staff	00:54:47
Lino Lakes City Council Meeting (12/11/17)	Lino Lakes Staff	02:08:29
Spring Lake Park City Council Meeting (12/4/17)	Spring Lake Park Staff	01:08:57
Spring Lake Park City Council Meeting	Spring Lake Park Staff	01:03:32

(12/18/17)		
17 New Programs		20:10:26 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															17 Total	17 Average
Cablecast Programs	2550.00	2317.00	1852.00	2087.00	2537.00	5705.00	2165.00	2154.00	1684.00	2538.00	2516.00	2578.00	30683.00	2556.92		
Cablecast Hours	1851.00	1568.00	1322.50	1508.50	1842.50	2325.50	1575.50	1412.00	1558.50	1919.50	2024.00	2296.75	21204.25	1767.02		
Programs Produced - Public	27.00	23.00	25.00	31.00	25.00	37.00	16.00	16.00	33.00	26.00	26.00	24.00	309.00	25.75		
Program Hours Produced - Public	14.75	18.25	15.50	15.50	12.00	16.75	8.25	10.00	18.50	19.50	14.50	15.75	179.25	14.94		
Prog. Produced - Affiliated Public	6.00	8.00	9.00	9.00	8.00	3.00	9.00	15.00	13.00	5.00	12.00	6.00	103.00	8.58		
Prog. Hours Produced - Affil. Public	6.00	9.50	8.50	8.00	8.50	3.00	8.25	13.00	9.00	6.75	7.75	7.00	95.25	7.94		
Programs Produced - City Staff	21.00	20.00	20.00	24.00	22.00	19.00	21.00	22.00	25.00	23.00	23.00	17.00	257.00	21.42		
Prog. Hours Produced - City Staff	16.25	23.50	17.50	21.50	20.50	22.50	26.25	24.75	29.25	23.50	26.25	20.00	271.75	22.65		
Programs Produced - NMTV Staff	33.00	22.00	16.00	17.00	43.00	28.00	37.00	28.00	29.00	46.00	17.00	30.00	346.00	28.83		
Prog. Hours Produced - NMTV Staff	17.50	18.00	11.50	13.00	20.45	25.75	32.50	9.00	27.75	42.00	11.00	15.00	243.45	20.29		
Total Public Programs Produced	33.00	31.00	34.00	40.00	33.00	40.00	25.00	31.00	46.00	31.00	38.00	30.00	412.00	34.33		
Total Staff Programs Produced	54.00	42.00	36.00	41.00	65.00	47.00	58.00	50.00	54.00	69.00	40.00	47.00	603.00	50.25		
Total Internal Programs Produced	87.00	73.00	70.00	81.00	98.00	87.00	83.00	81.00	100.00	100.00	78.00	77.00	1015.00	84.58		
% Staff Produced Programs	62.07%	57.53%	51.43%	50.62%	66.33%	54.02%	69.88%	61.73%	54.00%	69.00%	51.28%	61.04%	59.41%	59.41%		
% Public Produced Programs	37.93%	42.47%	48.57%	49.38%	33.67%	45.98%	30.12%	38.27%	46.00%	31.00%	48.72%	38.96%	40.59%	40.59%		
External Programs Submitted	81.00	18.00	33.00	22.00	23.00	38.00	23.00	24.00	33.00	20.00	21.00	28.00	364.00	30.33		
External Program Hours	72.75	15.00	24.00	17.00	20.50	30.75	20.00	17.75	29.00	14.50	19.00	19.00	299.25	24.94		
Total New Programs	168.00	91.00	103.00	103.00	121.00	125.00	106.00	105.00	133.00	120.00	99.00	105.00	1379.00	114.92		
Equipment Usage Statistics																
Facility Hours Available	208.50	199.00	246.00	200.00	229.00	231.00	190.00	186.00	184.00	213.00	187.00	193.00	2486.50	205.54		
Public Field Equipment Uses	10.00	9.00	12.00	4.00	7.00	8.00	8.00	11.00	13.00	15.00	6.00	5.00	108.00	9.00		
Studio A	36.25	84.00	39.75	19.50	34.00	26.25	110.50	107.75	106.00	108.00	116.50	40.00	828.50	69.04		
% of Available Time	17.39%	42.21%	16.16%	9.75%	14.85%	11.36%	58.16%	57.93%	57.61%	50.70%	62.30%	20.73%	33.59%	33.59%		
Studio B	26.00	25.50	24.00	23.25	34.25	3.25	0.00	2.00	2.25	33.50	28.00	7.00	209.00	17.42		
% of Available Time	12.47%	12.81%	9.76%	11.63%	14.96%	1.41%	0.00%	1.08%	1.22%	15.73%	14.97%	3.63%	8.47%	8.47%		
Public MAC A Edit Suite	118.00	115.75	101.25	71.00	89.50	81.00	109.00	87.75	109.25	180.50	148.50	122.25	1333.75	111.15		
% of Available Time	56.59%	58.17%	41.16%	35.50%	39.08%	35.06%	57.37%	47.18%	59.38%	84.74%	79.41%	63.34%	54.07%	49.95%		
Public MAC B Edit Suite	111.50	114.75	108.00	105.25	89.00	94.75	101.25	101.50	75.00	100.75	102.00	87.50	1191.25	99.27		
% of Available Time	53.48%	57.66%	43.90%	52.63%	38.86%	41.02%	53.29%	54.57%	40.76%	47.30%	54.55%	45.34%	48.30%	48.30%		
Public MAC C Edit Suite	138.50	103.50	133.00	68.75	133.50	85.75	75.50	79.00	103.50	160.00	127.75	148.00	1356.75	113.06		
% of Available Time	66.43%	52.01%	54.07%	34.38%	58.30%	37.12%	39.74%	42.47%	56.25%	75.12%	68.32%	76.68%	55.01%	55.01%		
Production Van Statistics																
Production Hours	14.25	30.00	14.00	16.00	49.75	63.00	66.25	16.00	56.50	66.75	12.75	25.25	430.50	35.88		
Number of Van Shoots	2.00	4.00	2.00	3.00	8.00	10.00	8.00	3.00	8.00	9.00	2.00	4.00	63.00	5.25		
Average Hours Per Shoot	7.13	7.50	7.00	5.33	6.22	6.30	8.28	5.33	7.06	7.42	6.38	6.31	6.83	2.99		
Number of New Volunteers	2.00	3.00	0.00	2.00	5.00	7.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	0.00	1.00	35.00	2.92		
Volunteer Hours	14.00	22.00	11.00	14.00	113.00	166.00	47.00	11.00	46.00	41.00	8.00	5.00	498.00	41.50		
Public Access Statistics																
Number of Workshops	9.00	6.00	7.00	6.00	14.00	6.00	5.00	9.00	7.00	10.00	12.00	10.00	101.00	8.42		
Number of Students	31.00	24.00	45.00	25.00	68.00	65.00	41.00	63.00	54.00	97.00	66.00	64.00	643.00	53.58		
PAP Volunteer Hours	140.50	210.50	169.00	101.50	111.50	116.25	175.50	145.00	177.50	213.50	190.50	92.75	1844.00	153.67		
Total Public Facility Usage Hours	523.50	461.75	476.75	326.50	665.00	511.25	459.50	501.75	516.50	665.50	634.75	473.75	6216.50	518.04		
Tours	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.00	0.25		
Tour Attendees	0.00	0.00	0.00	26.00	0.00	19.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	3.75		

North Metro TV

January 2018 Update

Program Production

In January, a total of **79 new programs** were produced utilizing the North Metro facilities, funds, and services. This constitutes **59:15:00 hours of new programming**.

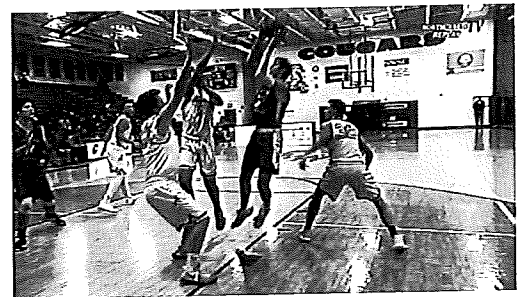
- 27 programs were produced by the public
- 31 programs were produced by NMTV staff
- 21 programs were produced by City staff



Van Shoots

The HD truck was used for **38:00:00** hours of production. Events produced live and recorded for additional playbacks include:

- Girls Basketball: Park Center vs. Centennial
- Boys Basketball: Andover vs. Centennial
- Boys Basketball: Coon Rapids vs. Spring Lake Park
- Girls Hockey: Centennial vs. Blaine
- Boys Hockey: Centennial vs. Blaine
- Girls Hockey: Spring Lake Park vs. Blaine



Workshops

Workshop	Instructor	Organization	Students
Studio A	Eric Houston	Blaine High School Business Professionals of America	4
Early Film Treasures Lecture	Eric Houston	Mary Ann Young Senior Center	13
Connecting Anoka County Taping	Eric Houston	Video Club	5
Intro to NMTV	Eric Houston	Northern Lights Home School Association	22
Bad Movie Bros Taping	Eric Houston	Video Club	2
Special Production Series Class 14	Eric Houston	Blaine/Ham Lake Girl Scouts	11
Camera	Eric Houston	General Public	2
Photoshop	Eric Houston	General Public	1
Special Production Series Class 15	Eric Houston	Blaine/Ham Lake Girl Scouts	13
Editing	Eric Houston	General Public	4
Photoshop	Eric Houston	General Public	1
11 Workshops			78 Students

Home Movie Transfers

Home movie transfers have become one of our most popular services. Residents can transfer their family videos themselves for free, or pay NMTV to do it. NMTV can also transfer film, slides, and photos for a fee.

Month	Hours Transferred	Tapes	Film Reels	DVDs	Photos/ Slides	Fees Paid
January	201.75	57	122	20	409	\$1,159.00
TOTAL:	201.75	57	122	20	409	\$1,159.00

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	111	460
TOTAL PUBLIC USAGE:		460.00

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 January highlights include:

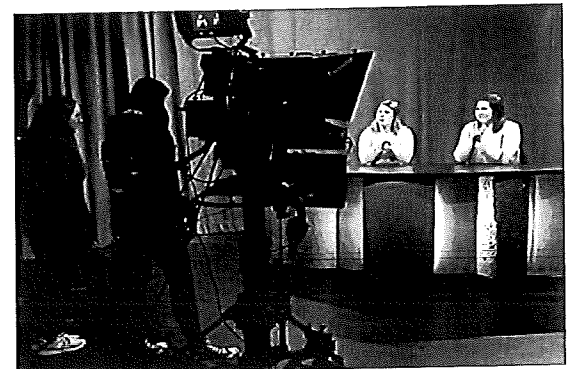
- Homeless Count in Anoka County
- Firefighters Ask for Help
- Snow Day at Wargo Nature Center
- National Radon Month
- Your County Staff: The Director of the Anoka County Library, Maggie Snow
- County Board Chair Previews 2018
- Focus on Your Community: Wellness Day
- Centennial High School's Top Secret Project Uncovers Hidden Dangers



In addition to daily playbacks of North Metro TV News on the cable systems, there are over 447 local stories archived for viewers on the NMTV YouTube page. The page can be accessed through the northmetrotv.com website.

Blaine High School Business Professionals of America

Studio Manager, Eric Houston, continued to work with four Blaine High School students involved in the Business Professionals of America program. The students participated in one formal class this month, and utilized the studio and edit suites to complete their project for a statewide broadcasting competition. The competition is at the beginning of February. Eric will continue to work with the students if they make it to the nationals.

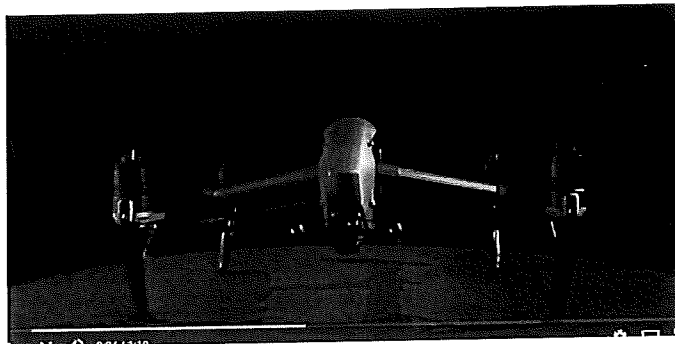


Class at Mary Ann Young Senior Center

Eric Houston presented his class "Early Film Treasures" at the Mary Ann Young Senior Center. During the workshop he played 20 very short films that were created between 1888 and 1901. The class included watching the films, Eric providing information about the way they were made, who starred in them, and their historical significance. The class participants were able to ask questions, and join in the discussion. The folks who attended the class were very enthusiastic and asked if Eric could come back and teach additional classes. He will be presenting the "Early Film Treasures" class at Spring Lake Park City Hall next month.

Drone Service

T.J. Tronson has been working over the past couple of months to flesh out a commercial drone service to be provided by North Metro TV. He shot video of the drone in Studio A for the intro to a video demo. The three minute demo highlights some of the video that has been shot utilizing the drone, and the drone itself. It ends with graphics advertising the various services that we can provide. The demo will be available on the NMTV website and YouTube channel. T.J. is also putting together a commercial for our channel and a FaceBook presence. He has been building a data base of various types of potential customers, from Cities, schools, other governmental agencies, businesses, golf courses, and other community television centers to create targeted emails demonstrating the services we can provide. In addition to the work being done to promote the commercial potential of the drone, it is being used often for programs produced for our Member Cities. It should be reiterated that Member Cities will never be charged for any drone coverage they request.



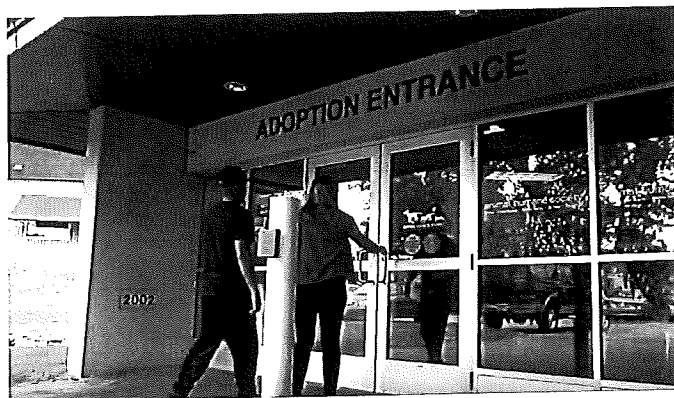
City Productions

Municipal Producer, Trevor Scholl, completed two projects in January, and worked on several more, including Ham Lake's Snow Bowl and the Lino Lakes annual Guns and Hoses game.

- Cities Sizzle
- AHS Volunteer Programs

New and ongoing projects include:

- Ham Lake Snow Bowl
- Finished the Lino Lakes Corrections Facility program, but waiting for approvals
- AHS dog walkers
- Lino Lakes Guns and Hoses game
- Open to Business, each Cities involvement
- Circle Pines road maintenance project
- Ham Lake senior dance day
- A profile on a new juice bar/yoga studio opening in Blaine
- Contacted more local businesses regarding doing profiles, QC Dance, Mathnasium, Exotic Pet Store



Trevor touches base with contacts on a regular basis and also encourages Cities to contact him whenever they have an idea for a new show.

Production equipment consulting for cities and schools

Blaine

- No equipment assistance requested or required.

Centerville

- 1/17/18: Problems with camera 2. Reseated the BNC connection and it came back.

Circle Pines

- 1/2/18: Talked with Alpha about HD upgrade for Circle Pines. Set date for site visit.
- 1/3/18: Checked with Patrick Antonen about sharing training days with Ham Lake to share costs and travel expenses.

Ham Lake

- 1/3/18: Met with Don Krueger and Denise Webster regarding HD upgrade at Ham Lake. Z Systems will be installer. Trying to find a way to reduce commissioning and training costs.
- 1/3/18: Spoke to Z Systems about purchase agreement. Making sure all the ducks are in a row.

Lexington

- No equipment assistance requested or required.

Lino Lakes

- 1/2/18: Received call from Alpha reporting problems with Lino Lakes mics. Matt asked whether gates to control the audio were set up but not being used. Matt was told no gates were on the Si Permormer audio board. Matt went to Lino Lakes to verify information. He found gates. Jeff Karlson requested gooseneck mics. The request was forwarded to Alpha.
- 1/2/18: Put in request to Alpha for live streaming server.
- 1/3/18: Made appointment to make the HD flip for Lino Lakes on CenturyLink.
- 1/5/18: Called Jeff Karlson to check on dais install.
- 1/5/18: Tested Lino Lakes HD feed.
- 1/5/18: Changed connection for CenturyLink to HD for Lino Lakes.
- 1/8/18: Makito X stops working. Tested in master control, no problem. Drove to Lino Lakes. Noticed Alpha had installed an incorrect converter. Alpha returned to fix. Matt installed a camera that had not been installed. Matt talked with City staff and showed him how to flip the signal to live from the brightsign player. Also went over the new system.
- 1/9/18: Spoke with Jeff Karlson about first council meeting taping since upgrade. Positive response. Jeff asked Matt to unplug everything around dais and podium so the construction company could work. Also asked for Matt's help with a lighting guy to tweak some of the lighting in the chambers.
- 1/10/18: Tore out the monitors and microphones for construction work.
- 1/17/18: Rusty requested that Matt stop by and give some instructions on the new system and answer questions.
- 1/23/18: Problems with meeting transmission. Found no fault with master control or Lino Lakes control room equipment. Contacted Jim, the Roseville IT department Coordinator, and he ran a few tests and checked a few things and then the signal was restored.

Spring Lake Park

- 1/2/18: Conducted speed test. Recommended increasing the upload speed to 12 mps. This should fix any live issues using the Makito X.
- 1/2/18: Conducted audio test.
- 1/2/18: Watched meeting to ensure quality on CenturyLink. Looked and sounded great. We can't see the Comcast feed of Spring Lake Park in Blaine.
- 1/9/18: Arranged date to troubleshoot camera issue.
- 1/11/18: Ran ethernet CAT6 cable to Camera 3. Ran new cable from camera 3, through the ceiling, to the control room and plugged it into port 1 on the netgear network switch. Works intermittently. Contacting Broadcast Pix to get them to resolve camera only responding 80 to 90% of the time.

City Channel 16 Playback Stats

City	Number of Times Programs Played	Hours Programmed on Channel
Blaine	160	192:55:02
Centerville	42	76:03:31
Circle Pines	259	222:05:58
Ham Lake	62	40:25:46
Lexington	97	45:58:12
Lino Lakes	53	63:20:37
Spring Lake Park	108	145:16:29
Totals:	781 Program Playbacks	786:05:35 Hours of Video Programming on Channels

Programs Produced by the Public

Title	Producer	Runtime
Toastmasters Live	Lee Howard	00:23:45
Connecting Anoka County: Anoka County Historical Society	Julie Jeppson/Eric Houston	00:13:04
Hey It's Opera	Ben Higginbotham	00:24:28
Do You Want to Hear A Joke?	Northern Lights Home School Ass./Eric Houston	00:01:43
Every Movie Ever Made (2 episodes)	Ben Daniels/Ryan Friendschuh, Gavin Van Trease/Eric Houston	00:44:02
Bad Movie Bros (2 episodes)	Video Club	01:23:42
The Power of Love (4 episodes)	Rick Larson	02:00:00
LovePower (7 episodes)	Ann Sandell	07:00:00
Rice Creek Watershed District Meeting (2 episodes)	Theresa Stasica	01:52:25
Oak Park Moments (5 episodes)	David Turnidge	02:41:33
Hope Church	Cindy Hardy	00:40:30
27 New Programs		17:25:22 New Hours

Programs Produced by NMTV Staff

Title	Producer	Runtime
Anoka County Board and Statutory Organizational Meeting (1/02/18)	T.J. Tronson	00:34:53
Anoka County Board Meeting (1/30/18)	T.J. Tronson	01:04:18
NMTV News (3 episodes)	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle	01:06:44
On Tap	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle/Trevor Scholl	00:29:54
Snow Day 2018	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle	00:02:36
Your County Staff: Maggie Snow	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle	00:04:36
Shovel Your Fire Hydrant	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle	00:02:33
Your City Staff: Shelley Johnson (2018 Cut)	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle	00:03:27
Your City Staff: Mark Statz (2018 recut)	Danika Peterson/Ben Hayle	00:04:44
Cities Sizzle	Trevor Scholl	00:03:00
AHS Volunteering	Trevor Scholl	00:05:59
Girls Basketball: Park Center/Centennial	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:24:45
Boys Basketball: Andover/Centennial	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:30:40
Boys Basketball: Coon Rapids/Spring Lake Park	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:47:38
Girls Hockey: Centennial/Blaine	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:43:23
Boys Hockey: Centennial/Blaine	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	02:07:40
Girls Hockey: Spring Lake Park/Blaine	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:59:57
Boys Basketball: Irondale/Blaine	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:18:57
Girls Hockey: Centennial/Spring Lake Park	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:17:17
Gymnastics: Blaine/Andover/Centennial	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	02:02:26
Coach & Captains: Spring Lake Park Girls Hockey	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:34
Coach & Captains: Centennial Girls Hockey	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:36
Coach & Captains: Blaine Dance Team	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:04:16
Coach & Captains: Centennial Boys Hockey	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:03:54
Coach & Captains: Spring Lake Park Dance Team	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	00:04:17
Sports Den (4 episodes)	Kenton Kipp/J. Millington	01:50:29
31 New Programs		21:05:03 New Hours

Programs Produced by City Staff

Title	Producer	Runtime
Blaine City Council Meeting (1/4/18)	Blaine Staff	00:51:00
Blaine Planning Commission Meeting (1/9/18)	Blaine Staff	01:37:57
Blaine Natural Resources Conservation Board Meeting (1/16/18)	Blaine Staff	00:58:46
Blaine City Council Meeting (1/18/18)	Blaine Staff	00:56:51
Blaine Park Board Meeting (1/23/18)	Blaine Staff	01:30:21
Centerville City Council Meeting (1/10/18)	Centerville Staff	01:49:30
Centerville City Council Meeting (1/24/18)	Centerville Staff	02:00:25
Circle Pines City Council Meeting (1/9/18)	Circle Pines Staff	01:18:19
Circle Pines Utility Commission Meeting (1/17/18)	Circle Pines Staff	00:43:49
Circle Pines City Council Meeting (1/23/18)	Circle Pines Staff	01:02:36
Ham Lake City Council Meeting (1/2/18)	Ham Lake Staff	00:22:30
Ham Lake Planning Commission Meeting (1/8/18)	Ham Lake Staff	00:23:43
Ham Lake City Council Meeting (1/16/18)	Ham Lake Staff	00:08:20
Ham Lake Planning Commission Meeting (1/8/18)	Ham Lake Staff	00:36:19
Lexington City Council Meeting (1/4/18)	Lexington Staff	00:19:35
Lexington City Council Meeting (1/18/18)	Lexington Staff	00:16:46
Lino Lakes City Council Meeting (1/4/18)	Lino Lakes Staff	00:45:37
Lino Lakes City Council Meeting (1/18/18)	Lino Lakes Staff	01:23:36
Spring Lake Park City Council Meeting (1/2/18)	Spring Lake Park Staff	00:45:05
Spring Lake Park City Council Meeting (1/16/18)	Spring Lake Park Staff	02:12:08
Spring Lake Park Planning Commission Meeting (1/22/18)	Spring Lake Park Staff	00:40:04
21 New Programs		20:43:17 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 2018

	J	F	M	A	M	J	JU	A	S	O	N	D	18 Total	18 Average
Programming Statistics														
Cablecast Programs	2644.00												2644.00	220.33
Cablecast Hours	2108.00												2108.00	175.67
Programs Produced - Public	19.00												19.00	1.58
Program Hours Produced - Public	12.25												12.25	1.02
Prog. Produced - Affiliated Public	8.00												8.00	0.67
Prog. Hours Produced - Affil. Public	5.25												5.25	0.44
Programs Produced - City Staff	21.00												21.00	1.75
Prog. Hours Produced - City Staff	20.75												20.75	1.73
Programs Produced - NIMTV Staff	31.00												31.00	2.58
Prog. Hours Produced - NIMTV Staff	21.00												21.00	1.75
Total Public Programs Produced	27.00												27.00	2.25
Total Staff Programs Produced	52.00												52.00	4.33
Total Internal Programs Produced	79.00												79.00	6.58
% Staff Produced Programs	65.82%												65.82%	65.82%
% Public Produced Programs	34.18%												34.18%	34.18%
External Programs Submitted	33.00												33.00	2.75
External Program Hours	24.50												24.50	2.04
Total New Programs	112.00												112.00	9.33
Equipment Usage Statistics														
Facility Hours Available	196.00												196.00	16.33
Public Field Equipment Uses	6.00												6.00	0.50
Studio A	73.75												73.75	6.15
% of Available Time	37.63%												37.63%	37.63%
Studio B	5.75												5.75	0.48
% of Available Time	2.93%												2.93%	2.93%
Public MAC A Edit Suite	102.75												102.75	8.56
% of Available Time	52.42%												52.42%	3.85%
Public MAC B Edit Suite	101.00												101.00	8.42
% of Available Time	51.53%												51.53%	51.53%
Public MAC C Edit Suite	79.75												79.75	6.65
% of Available Time	40.69%												40.69%	40.69%
Production Van Statistics														
Production Hours	38.00												38.00	3.17
Number of Van Shoots	6.00												6.00	0.50
Average Hours Per Shoot	6.33												6.33	0.26
Number of New Volunteers	3.00												3.00	0.25
Volunteer Hours	29.00												29.00	2.42
Public Access Statistics														
Number of Workshops	11.00												11.00	0.92
Number of Students	78.00												78.00	6.50
PAP Volunteer Hours	146.75												146.75	12.23
Total Public Facility Usage Hours	460.00												460.00	38.33
Tours	0.00												0.00	0.00
Tour Attendees	0.00												0.00	0.00

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Meeting of February 7, 2018

Executive Cmte. Present: Dick Swanson; Blaine, Mike Murphy; Lexington, Cindy Hansen;
Spring Lake Park

Absent:

Others Present: Heidi Arnson; Executive Director

CALL TO ORDER

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the December 6, 2017 Executive Committee meeting minutes was made by C. Hansen. Second, M. Murphy. Motion approved.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

- Staff reviewed materials related to the 2018 disbursement of 2017 franchise fees to Cities. The total amount of franchise fees collected increased over the previous year. The new percentages of individual City income related to total Member City income were noted. Franchise fees will be disbursed to Cities on Thursday, February 22nd.

MOTION: To approve disbursement of the 2017 franchise fees, retained by the Member Cities, as presented in the disbursement materials. **Motion made by C. Hansen. Second, M. Murphy. Motion approved.**

- The Commission and Member Cities have received letters from Comcast notifying us of the Company's interest in renewing the franchise. Legal Counsel, Mike Bradley will provide a resolution, for consideration at the full Commission meeting, that will signify that the Commission is starting the renewal process.
- The status of City HD upgrades was reported. Circle Pines and Ham Lake are both ready to move forward with their upgrades.

OLD BUSINESS

- There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

- Recommendations were made for members of the 2018 Executive Committee. At the meeting, Dick Swanson, Mike Murphy and Cindy Hansen indicated a willingness to serve. H. Arnson noted that in-coming Lino Lakes Commissioner, Dale Stoesz, had written that he would be interested in serving on the Executive Committee. If no other candidates express interest in the Committee, at the full Commission meeting, it is recommended that Dick Swanson serve as Chair, Mike Murphy serve as Vice Chair, Cindy Hansen serve as Treasurer. and Dale Stoesz serve as Secretary. It was reiterated that this is only a recommendation and that the positions are open and available to anyone who would like to run for them.

MOTION: To approve Dick Swanson as the Chair, Mike Murphy as the Vice Chair, Cindy Hansen as the Treasurer, and Dale Stoesz as the Secretary of the 2018 NMTV Cable Commission. **Motion made by C. Hansen. Second, M. Murphy. Motion approved.**

- A discussion regarding saving money on the packets ensued. Making double-sided copies and/or delivering the packets electronically were discussed. Staff will check with everyone on the Commission, at the full meeting to determine which route makes the most sense for individuals.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn made by C. Hansen. Second, M. Murphy. Motion approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

**DISBURSEMENT OF 2017 FRANCHISE FEES
RECEIVED BY CITIES IN 2018**

TABLE I

	MEMBER CITIES FRANCHISE FEES		2018 COMMISSION BUDGET AVAIL		FRANCHISE FEES RETAINED BY CITIES
TOTAL:	1,323,907	-	923,907	=	400,000

TABLE II

CITY	2017 CABLE COMPANY REVENUE BY CITY *		TOTAL SYSTEM REVENUE *		CITY REVENUE AS % OF SYSTEM REVENUE
Blaine	\$14,533,757	÷	\$26,474,669	=	54.89684%
Centerville	\$922,685	÷	\$26,474,669	=	3.48516%
Circle Pines	\$1,223,863	÷	\$26,474,669	=	4.62277%
Ham Lake	\$3,628,992	÷	\$26,474,669	=	13.70741%
Lexington	\$463,582	÷	\$26,474,669	=	1.75104%
Lino Lakes	\$4,239,047	÷	\$26,474,669	=	16.01171%
Spring Lake Park	\$1,462,743	÷	\$26,474,669	=	5.52507%
TOTAL:	\$26,474,669	÷	\$26,474,669	=	100.00000%

TABLE III

CITY	FRANCHISE FEES RETAINED BY CITIES		CITY REVENUE AS % OF SYSTEM REVENUE		TOTAL FRANCHISE FEES RETAINED BY CITY
Blaine	\$400,000	x	54.89684%	=	\$219,587.36
Centerville	\$400,000	x	3.48516%	=	\$13,940.64
Circle Pines	\$400,000	x	4.62277%	=	\$18,491.08
Ham Lake	\$400,000	x	13.70741%	=	\$54,829.64
Lexington	\$400,000	x	1.75104%	=	\$7,004.16
Lino Lakes	\$400,000	x	16.01171%	=	\$64,046.84
Spring Lake Park	\$400,000	x	5.52507%	=	\$22,100.27
TOTAL:	\$400,000	x	100.00000%	=	\$399,999.99

* All amounts are rounded to nearest dollar.



Comcast Twin Cities
10 River Park Plaza
St. Paul, MN 55107

January 3, 2018

CERTIFIED MAIL

Ms. Heidi Arnson
Cable Administrator
North Metro Telecommunications
12520 Polk St. NE
Blaine, MN 55434

Subject: FRANCHISE RENEWAL

Dear Ms. Arnson:


We at Comcast appreciate the opportunity to serve the citizens of North Metro area. It is our credo that *we will deliver a superior experience to our customers every day. Our products will be the best and we will offer the most customer-friendly and reliable services in the market.* In living our credo, we look forward to providing broadband services to our customers in the North Metro area for many years to come. Therefore, we are taking this step to ensure the renewal of our franchise with you.

The Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 ("the 1984 Cable Act") encourages franchisors and cable operators to reach renewal agreements at any time through an informal process of discussion. However, Section 626 of the 1984 Cable Act also provides for commencement of a formal renewal procedure. To preserve our statutory rights to this formal procedure, this letter is our official notice to you invoking that provision.

This letter is not intended to introduce a new formality into our discussions, nor is that the intention of the 1984 Cable Act. In fact, we prefer to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement through informal negotiations, thus making many of the 1984 Cable Act's formal procedures unnecessary.

I will be happy to discuss this matter with you, or provide any additional information that you may require. I look forward to meeting with you in the near future and to continuing a relationship that, we believe, benefits both the community and the residents of the North Metro area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KW', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Karly Werner
Director of Government Affairs

cc: Steve White, West Division President
Chris McDonald, West Division Vice President of Government Affairs
Michael Ruger, Senior Director of Government Affairs

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

Tuesday, February 6, 2018

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting began at 10:48 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT

H. Arnson

APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES

The meeting notes of November 30, 2017 were approved by consensus.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

- The 4th quarter franchise fee and PEG fee totals were reviewed. H. Arnson stated that there appeared to be an error on the CenturyLink 3rd quarter gross revenue report and an error on the Comcast 4th quarter PEG fee report. Both companies are looking into the issues. Franchise fees will be delivered to Cities on February 22nd.
- The Commission has received a letter from Comcast notifying the Commission of the Company's interest in renewing the franchise. The franchise renewal process was briefly reviewed.
- Circle Pines and Ham Lake are both ready to move forward with their HD upgrades.

OLD BUSINESS

- There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

- A tour of Blaine's new HD production system was given.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-01

A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE COMMENCEMENT OF RENEWAL PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE FEDERAL CABLE COMMUNICATIONS POLICY ACT OF 1984, AS AMENDED.

WHEREAS, the North Metro Telecommunications Commission (hereinafter “the Commission”) is a Joint Powers Commission organized pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 471.59, as amended, and includes the municipalities of Blaine, Centerville, Circle Pines, Ham Lake, Lexington, Lino Lakes and Spring Lake Park, Minnesota (hereinafter, the “Member Cities”); and

WHEREAS, the Member Cities have executed cable television franchise agreements (the “Franchises”) authorizing MediaOne North Central Communications Corp., Inc., d/b/a AT&T Broadband to construct, operate, and maintain a cable communications system within their respective municipal boundaries; and

WHEREAS, as a result of several transfers of the Franchises, Comcast of Minnesota, Inc. (“Comcast”) currently holds the Franchises; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has the authority to administer the Franchises on behalf of the Member Cities; and

WHEREAS, by letter dated January 3, 2018, from Comcast to the Commission, Comcast invoked the formal renewal procedure set forth in Section 626 of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984, as amended, 47 U.S.C. § 546 (the “Cable Act”); and

WHEREAS, Section 626(a)(1) of the Cable Act, 47 U.S.C. § 546(a)(1), provides that if an appropriate written renewal request is submitted by the cable operator during the 6-month period which begins with the 36th month before franchise expiration and ends with the 30th month prior to franchise expiration, a franchising authority shall, within six months of the request, commence a proceeding to identify the future cable-related community needs and interests, and to review the performance of the cable operator under the franchise during the then current franchise term; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is desirous of commencing the renewal proceedings specified in Section 626(a)(1) of the Cable Act, 47 U.S.C. § 546(a)(1), and, at the same time, of also considering the possibility of pursuing the informal renewal process with Comcast pursuant to Section 626(h) of the Cable Act, 47 U.S.C. § 546(h); and

WHEREAS, the Commission must provide the public with notice of, and an opportunity to participate in, proceedings under Section 626(a) of the Cable Act, and such proceedings may involve the collection and analysis of information from Comcast, City agencies and departments, the public and other interested parties and may require one or more public hearings; and

WHEREAS, the Commission desires that the proceedings under Section 626(a) of the Cable Act be managed and conducted by the Commission’s Executive Director, or its designee; and

WHEREAS, the Commission intends to authorize the Executive Director, or its designee, to take any and all steps required or desired to comply with the requirements of the Cable Act, the Franchise Ordinance and the Franchise.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the North Metro Telecommunications Commission as follows:

1. The Commission hereby commences formal franchise renewal ascertainment and past performance proceedings under Section 626(a)(1) of the Cable Act, 47 U.S.C. § 546(a)(1), concerning Comcast.
2. The Executive Director, or its designee, is authorized to manage and conduct proceedings in accordance with Section 626(a)(1) of the Cable Act, 47 U.S.C. § 546(a)(1), and to take all steps and actions necessary or desired to conduct such proceedings and to comply with applicable laws, regulations, orders and decisions. The Executive Director, or its designee, may conduct such hearings, surveys and meetings deemed necessary or appropriate to assess community cable-related needs and interests, evaluate Comcast's past performance, and enable the public to participate in formal Franchise renewal proceedings.
3. The Executive Director, or its designee, may explore with Comcast the possibility of pursuing the informal renewal process under Section 626(h) of the Cable Act, 47 U.S.C. § 546(h). If the Commission and Comcast decide to utilize the informal renewal process, the Executive Director, or its designee, is authorized to negotiate with Comcast concerning matters relating to the renewal or extension of the Franchise, to prepare informal renewal proposals and to respond to informal renewal proposals from Comcast, and to take all other steps and actions necessary or desired to engage in the informal Franchise renewal process and/or to comply with applicable laws, regulations, orders and decisions.
4. The Executive Director, or its designee, shall provide the public with notice of, and an opportunity to participate in, proceedings conducted under Section 626(a)(1) of the Cable Act, 47 U.S.C. § 546(a)(1).
5. The Executive Director, or its designee, may establish procedures and dates for the conduct of any hearings, meetings and/or surveys related to the Section 626(a) proceedings and may establish procedures and dates for the submission of testimony and other information in connection with the proceeding.
6. The Executive Director, or its designee, is authorized to request Comcast and its affiliates and subsidiaries to submit such information as may be deemed appropriate in connection with the Section 626(a) proceedings or the informal Franchise renewal process under Section 626(h), gather such other information from other persons, agencies, or sources as may be deemed appropriate, and to take such further steps as may be needed or desired to ensure the Commission's and the public's interests are fully protected and the cable-related needs and interests of the Commission are satisfied consistent with applicable law.
7. The Commission, on behalf of its Member Cities, reserves, to the full extent permitted by law, all of its rights with respect to determining whether to renew the Franchise.

8. The Executive Director, or its designee, shall keep the Commission and its Member Cities fully apprised of the status and progress of franchise renewal proceedings and negotiations.

Passed and adopted this 21st day of February, 2018.

NORTH METRO TELECOMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION

By: _____
Its Chair

ATTEST:



Kirstin Sersland
Director, State & Local
Government Affairs
Phone 612-663-7911

To: Twin Cities CenturyLink LFAs
From: Kirstin Sersland
Date: February, 2017
Re: PRISM Combo Billing Issue / 2Q 2017 Revenue

As you all saw in 3Q2017 quarterly meetings, revenue dropped substantially for many of the cities in the Twin Cities franchise area resulting in lower franchise fees for both LFAs and cities.

CenturyLink bills PRISM service out of one system, ENSEMBLE, and all other products such as home phone service and HSI on another system CRIS. In order to provide one combined bill to our subscribers in the Twin Cities, we combine the Prism charges from one system into another to send one document to print for bill presentation to our customers. It is this combination billing, which caused this issue, and is only in the CRIS footprint (most of the Twin Cities). Due to the many system and process issues, we had PRISM customers that were no longer receiving service and printed bills were ceased (in CRIS), but monthly billings were still processing in the initial system (Ensemble). A clean up of the PRISM customer base found the discrepancy between Ensemble and what looked like live accounts in CRIS, but had been disconnected.

Since this issue dates back as far as 2016, millions in AR balances accumulated. To correct this, in August and September of 2017, we backed out any billing that occurred after the customer stopped using the service with a large mass adjustment that reversed revenue. CenturyLink additionally used this clean up to write off substantial bad debt related to non-pay customers.

200 South 5th Street, Floor 23
Minneapolis, MN 55402
www.centurylink.com

Why Broadband Competition at Faster Speeds is Virtually Nonexistent

Phone companies won't upgrade DSL lines, and cable companies won't expand their service maps.

Karl Bode

Feb 14 2018, 8:36am

New FCC data indicates that competition in the broadband market is virtually nonexistent at faster speeds.

Most people are intimately familiar with their lack of alternatives to unpopular incumbent ISPs like Comcast. The inability to vote with your wallet is a major reason U.S. broadband customers pay some of the highest prices in the developed world, and these companies sport some of the worst customer satisfaction ratings of any industry in America.

And while the scattered deployment of Google Fiber and other gigabit connections tend to grab headlines that make us feel good about progress on this front, the reality is that in a large number of American markets the problem is actually getting worse.

According to the FCC's new Internet Access Services Report, 13 percent of "developed census blocks" can't get broadband at all at the FCC's standard "broadband" definition of 25 Mbps down, 3 Mbps up. While 56 percent of census blocks can get those speeds from at least two ISPs, 44 percent of census blocks have access to 25 Mbps speeds from *just one ISP*.

And the faster the broadband speeds get, the more obvious the lack of competition becomes.

According to the FCC's data, 44 percent of census blocks have no access to speeds of 100 Mbps or greater, and 41 percent of census blocks can only get those speeds from just one provider. In other words, 85 percent of U.S. census blocks either can't get 100 Mbps speeds from any ISP, or only have the option of getting 100 Mbps from just one provider.

The backhaul connectivity that feed these wireless networks are all monopolized by just a handful of companies

With no competitive motivation, ISPs in these areas will routinely jack up prices with little to no real repercussions. In many instances, this lack of competition opens the door

to arbitrary and unnecessary usage caps and overage fees, which makes both the cost of the connection and the ability to use competing streaming services far more expensive.

And the problem is actually worse than this data suggests. For years the FCC has been criticized for the census block approach to measuring deployment and competition. Under the FCC's current measurement model, a census block is considered "served" if just one home in the census area has access to broadband at those speeds.

Efforts to shift this model toward a more accurate address-based approach have popped up over the years, but are routinely shot down by ISP lobbyists, who don't want the nation's deployment and competition shortcomings being highlighted.

This failure to map broadband availability accurately was painfully mirrored by the FCC's broadband availability map. The now defunct map, built with \$300 million in taxpayer dollars, historically overrepresented both broadband availability and speed. And thanks to ISP lobbying pressure, excluded mentioning pricing whatsoever.

Large ISPs like Comcast and AT&T are nervous that if someone were to more accurately map broadband availability and competition, somebody *might just get the funny idea to actually do something about it*.

Instead of fixing the problem, the government tends to buckle to ISP efforts to make the data seem rosier than it actually is. Especially when the FCC is suffering from the kind of regulatory capture enjoyed under revolving door regulators like current FCC boss Ajit Pai, whose net neutrality repeal has made him one of the least popular men in America.

These companies are so saddled with debt from repeated mergers and acquisitions, upgrading their networks at scale is now impossible

A large reason for the nation's lack of competition at faster speeds is the country's phone companies, for whom residential broadband isn't profitable enough, quickly enough for investors' liking. Verizon, for example, has all but given up on expanding its FiOS fiber footprint to focus on making inroads in the wireless video and advertising markets.

Smaller telcos, like Windstream, CenturyLink, and Frontier, have similarly shifted their focus toward enterprise services, and tend to only upgrade aging DSL lines in the most profitable areas. In many instances, these companies are so saddled with debt from repeated mergers and acquisitions, upgrading their networks at scale is now impossible.

As a result, the nation's cable broadband providers are running away with a greater monopoly over broadband than ever before across countless U.S. markets, gobbling up the lion's share of broadband subscribers while the nation's telcos hemorrhage frustrated DSL users at an alarming rate.

Data from Leichtman Research Group indicates that during the first three quarters of last year, the nation's cable providers added roughly 2 million broadband subscribers. In

contrast, the nation's phone companies lost around 430,000 subscribers, most of them users tired of waiting for broadband upgrades that were never delivered.

And while many try to argue that wireless networks (especially the 5G standard) will somehow fix this lack of competition, that ignores a few unsightly realities.

For one, the backhaul connectivity that feed these wireless networks are all monopolized by just a handful of companies (traditionally Verizon, CenturyLink, or AT&T), keeping prices high. And wireless remains particularly undercooked in rural areas, where users have lately found themselves kicked off the network for treating wireless connections like their wired counterparts.

5G networks should help in this regard to some degree, but the wireless industry has never been known for its bargain-basement pricing, and it will take years before 5G is a suitable replacement for fixed-line networks, especially in more rural areas.

This lack of competition is a major reason why more and more towns and cities are now building their own broadband networks. But that in turn is why ISP lobbyists have successfully passed protectionist laws in more than 21 states designed to stop that from happening. It's a ridiculous cycle of corruption and dysfunction that shows no sign of abating anytime soon.

Wireless internet to the rescue? New tech could help close connectivity gap

Business Mark Steil · Slayton, Minn. · Feb 12, 2018

On a windswept hill near the town of Slayton in southwest Minnesota, Terry Nelson nods toward a steel communications tower. He points to a spot high above the ground.

"We have our equipment about 250 feet up on top the tower," he said.

That equipment is part of the area's fixed wireless internet service. Here's how it works: A radio signal — instead of the more traditional fiber-optic cable line — delivers a high-speed internet link to area homes. Woodstock Communications built the system.

Google stunned the internet world in 2016 by investing in wireless internet technology and scaling back on its plans to connect customers with fiber optic lines. Wireless advocates like Nelson, Woodstock Communications' vice president and general manager, say Minnesota should do the same.

"We see this as the solution," he said.

Nelson's company has built a wireless system using more than a dozen towers to cover most of two southwestern Minnesota counties. Other companies are doing the same in other parts of the state.

Most state dollars still go to fiber-optic projects, but Nelson and other players in the wireless industry say they're ready to take on more of the funding pie.

"We can reach out about 6 to 7 miles with our wireless internet," said Nelson, the company's vice president and general manager. "And we're picking up customers at 50-meg speeds. It's worked well for us."

That 50-megs Nelson's talking about is 50 megabits per second — double the speed that the state of Minnesota hopes all residents will have by 2022.

Nelson said he believes wireless technology can play a major role in reaching the state's connectivity goals. And unlike some wireless services of the past, he said, the low-frequency radio signal is unaffected by fluctuations in the weather.

But the best part of fixed wireless internet may be its cost. Nelson said fiber optic lines cost about \$20,000 a mile to install. That's a big expense. But instead of running fiber lines to individual houses, Woodstock Communications' strategy is to run them to a wireless tower, and then use a radio signal to deliver the wireless internet to homes.

With that approach, Nelson said, his company can connect homes to the internet with wireless at a tenth of the cost of fiber.

"It's fantastic," said Jeff Salmon, one of Nelson's customers. "It's consistent and smooth and so far. [I] haven't had any downtime with it."

That enthusiasm for wireless is not yet matched at the state level. Last year, Minnesota's Office of Broadband Development distributed more than three dozen grants totaling about \$26 million to boost high-speed internet service across the state. Nearly all of those grants went to fiber line projects. That upset some wireless companies.

"Unfortunately the state has turned a cold shoulder to fixed wireless," said Corey Hauer, CEO of wireless provider LTD Broadband.

But the head of the state's broadband department pushes back on that notion. Danna MacKenzie attributes the lag in state funding for wireless to the rapid technological changes happening in the industry.

"When we first started four years ago, the wireless projects that were out there were having a hard time meeting the state's speed goal," MacKenzie, executive director of the Office of Broadband Development, said.

That technology gap, she added, has by now all but disappeared.

"As wireless continues to improve, they're going to be continually more well-represented in the mix of funding," she said.

That addition could be important in accomplishing the state's goal of bringing adequate broadband speeds to all state residents in the next four years. Right now, nearly 90 percent of Minnesota households have access to high-speed internet.

Most of the areas still lagging behind are in the state's more rural regions, where wireless has the opportunity to thrive.

"We leverage the low cost and rapid deployment of fixed wireless to bring it to areas that no one else has really bothered to invest in," Hauer said.

And, he added, the farming areas of southern and western Minnesota are especially well-suited for wireless internet coverage, because the technology works best in flatter, less-forested regions.

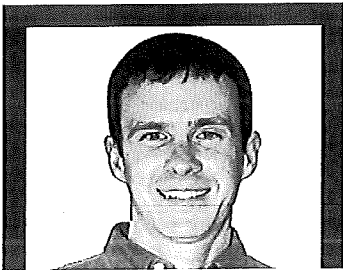
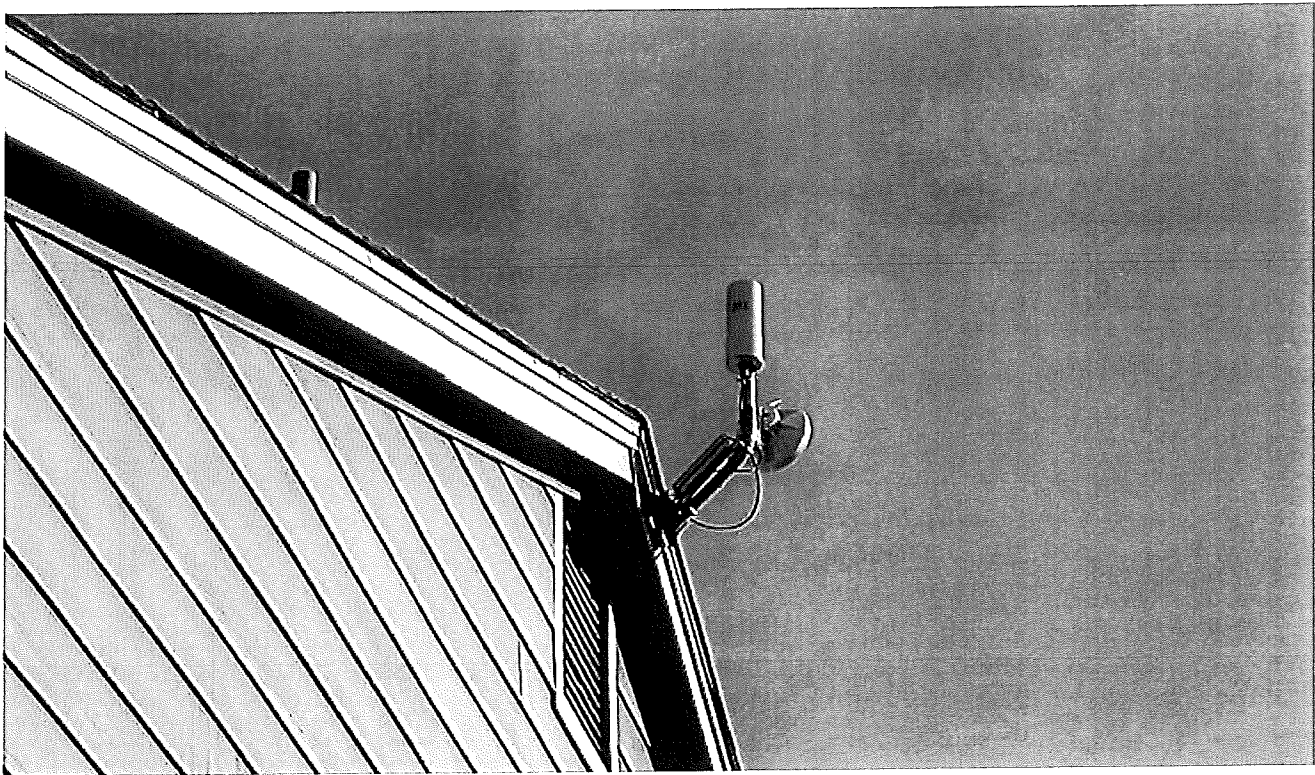
The state Legislature will decide whether to fund the broadband program for another year in its upcoming session. Wireless advocates will be on hand to make their case for a bigger role in fulfilling Minnesota's high-speed internet ambitions.



Wireless

Editor's Corner—Fixed wireless is a big deal. Here's why

by Mike Dano | Feb 15, 2018 4:00am



The fixed wireless wave is coming. And by all indications, it's going to be big.

Although the technology has been around for a long time (wireless local loop anyone?) things in the space today appear to be finding much more solid footing. And all indications are that fixed wireless is poised to begin accelerating in the near future, at a dramatic pace.

Why?

Companies across the gamut—from giant telecoms like Verizon to startups like Starry—are investing in new fixed wireless services. And government money aimed at bridging the digital divide could help fund further fixed

**EDITOR'S CORNER**
MIKE DANO

Let me reiterate that last point: Despite all the noise around 5G, the fixed wireless market is propelling a noteworthy amount of innovation in wireless.

But here's why I'm personally interested in the current noise around fixed wireless: The technology is opening the door to new, startup ISPs in both rural and urban areas. And that's a big deal because wired ISPs rarely face serious competition, given the high cost of entry into the market (it's those expenses that in part stymied Google Fiber's buildout). Indeed, that lack of competition could also be part of the reason why internet service providers have some of the lowest customer satisfaction metrics of almost any sector of the U.S. economy.

Thus, fixed wireless providers have the opportunity to enter rural and urban markets at about a tenth of the cost of laying physical fiber in order to provide services to customers who are clearly fed up with their existing, wired options. The stage may well be set for serious disruption.

Verizon's fixed wireless strategy

To be clear, the fixed wireless opportunity is no secret. After all, the nation's largest wireless network operator decided the opportunity was so compelling that it invested billions of dollars into buying millimeter-wave spectrum from XO and Straight Path while concurrently developing its own proprietary transmission standard called V5GTF, all to offer fixed wireless access (or FWA for those who love industry acronyms). Verizon formed the Verizon 5G Technology Forum in late 2015 with Cisco, Ericsson, Intel, LG, Nokia, Qualcomm and Samsung to create "a common and extendable platform for Verizon's 28/39 GHz fixed wireless access trials and deployments."

The result? After testing the technology in 11 cities, Verizon plans to deploy it in 3 to 5 cities this year with an eventual goal of expanding it to around 30 million households. (Verizon's CEO recently admitted though that the company would eventually have to replace its proprietary V5GTF equipment with 5G equipment that adheres to the 3GPP's recently completed 5G standard.)

And what will Verizon's fixed wireless service look like? The company said its transmissions will reach around 2,000 feet and provide each of its customers with 1 Gbps services. That means Verizon is poised to use its V5GTF fixed wireless service to directly counter wired ISPs with "wireless fiber."

Open Broadband and other fixed startups

While Verizon's fixed wireless service clearly sits at the high end of the market, it's not the only game in town. And that's the truly striking aspect of the fixed wireless industry: There's room for tiny startups too.

"We can really accomplish a lot with a very small core team," said Alan Fitzpatrick, CEO of Open Broadband. The company, founded in 2016, counts six full time employees alongside a handful of other associated contractors and freelancers. It operates fixed wireless services in four communities in North Carolina, and is working to expand into South Carolina, Virginia and elsewhere.

Although Fitzpatrick declined to provide Open Broadband's customer numbers, he said the company has operated financially from a "breakeven or better" standpoint. "We are simultaneously building a network and signing up customers," he said. "We only build where we have sales."

So, what exactly is Open Broadband building? The company's deployment process is representative of most other fixed wireless providers. First Open Broadband finds tall things to attach its antennas to. Fitzpatrick said that tower companies like Crown Castle will charge up to \$2,000 per month for access to their towers, but "we like places that are a lot less." Fitzpatrick said sometimes the company is able to ink a deal with a city or county to use a tower or other structure for its antennas, and sometimes it's able to find a nearby farmer with a tall grainery who is willing to put some antennas on it.

After finding a suitable location for its antennas, Open Broadband then obtains backhaul for the site, either fiber directly or a high-bandwidth wireless connection to nearby fiber. "We take fiber as deep into the territory as we can," Fitzpatrick said.

After that, Fitzpatrick selects an available and suitable spectrum band: The company has used everything from 5 GHz to 11 GHz to 24 GHz to 60 GHz to 80 GHz. After that, the company installs compatible antenna equipment from whatever vendor makes sense. "There's a variety of hardware vendors out there today," he said, explaining Open Broadband has used equipment from vendors including Siklu, Mimosa, Ubiquiti Networks, IgniteNet and Cambium Networks. "We have them all in our network," he said.

Open Broadband typically pays \$300 for antennas that can serve around 50 total customers with speeds of 25 or 50 Mbps, up and down. Customers typically pay around \$30 per month for their service and their usage is not throttled or capped. But customers must install a \$150 receiver outside their office or house, like they have to do with satellite TV.

Fitzpatrick added that Open Broadband can raise its speeds to 1 Gbps if customers are within around 1,800 feet of an antenna and have a clear line of sight to it. But Fitzpatrick said that kind of equipment costs more—like \$1,000—and the monthly price to customers can be around \$350 per month.

If Verizon is representative of the fixed wireless wave on the high end, Open Broadband certainly represents it on the low end. But there are an absolute ton of players in the middle. For example:

- AT&T plans to use fixed wireless services to deliver services to more than 1.1 million rural locations by 2020 as part of its commitments to the FCC's Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF-II). Frontier and Windstream may do the same.
- C Spire expects to use fixed wireless to eventually cover 200,000 consumers and businesses in Mississippi.



- Rise Broadband is probably the country's largest fixed wireless provider with around 200,000 customers in rural locations in a number of states across the country.
- And the trend isn't exclusive to the United States. For example, in England BT's EE said it will use fixed wireless equipment from Panorama Antennas to offer 100 Mbps service to up to 580,000 homes.

WISPA, the trade association representing the fixed wireless internet service provider industry in the United States, works for around 800 members and recently counted 2,000 FWA providers in all 50 states, with an average of 1,200 customers each.

A wild west of fixed wireless standards

The official 5G standard was ratified in December, but Verizon isn't the only company pursuing proprietary network technology to target the fixed wireless space.

"The collective approach has really not figured out how to do" fixed wireless, said Steven Glapa, VP of marketing for wireless technology startup Tarana Wireless. Glapa said the company is developing massive MIMO technology it believes will dramatically improve fixed wireless transmissions in spectrum bands between 1 and 10 GHz.

"What we've done is taken the approach that for fixed access, what you want to do is distribute the massive part in between the base station and the end device," he said. "The CPE [customer premise equipment] gets to play a more intelligent role in the network."

The company, which is currently testing its technology with various carriers in Europe and the United States, hopes to develop technology for 1 Gbps peak speeds and 100 Mbps sustained speeds across distances of 500 meters to a couple of kilometers, supporting "hundreds and hundreds" of subscribers.

Tarana isn't alone. Startup Hammer Fiber partnered with a European technology company to develop a "wireless DOCSIS" transmission technology that the company is using to build out a fixed wireless service in Atlantic City and elsewhere.

"DOCSIS is a unique approach," said Hammer Fiber CEO Mark Stogdill, explaining that DOCSIS is a global standard for cable services that Hammer Fiber is using for its wireless transmissions. "I think it's maybe the secret sauce to the equation."

Continued Stogdill of the company's technology: "It's capable of bonding small, non-contiguous channels, and it can do that across various spectrum allocations. And it can bond into one contiguous channel that can be as large as 450 MHz wide."

He added that, by using DOCSIS, Hammer Fiber can leverage existing, low-cost cable equipment and established video transmission technologies.

With its technology, Stogdill said Hammer Fiber is currently delivering 25 to 150 Mbps services to customers up to 3.5 miles away. The company hopes to acquire 1,000 customers this year, and is concurrently working to sell its platform and technology to other wireless ISPs.

Tarana's massive MIMO technology and Hammer Fiber's wireless DOCSIS are just two examples of the glut of wireless technologies at play in fixed wireless. For example, Common Networks and Starry both use varieties of the 802.11 Wi-Fi standard for their respective fixed wireless services.

And Rise, the nation's largest fixed wireless provider, uses a number of different proprietary technologies in its network, but is relying on LTE for most of its current and future deployments. "Rise prefers to use LTE in markets of higher population densities because of its ability to efficiently serve more customers from a single tower (providing greater capacity) while delivering speeds up to 100 Mbps," said Jeff Kohler, Rise's co-founder and chief development officer.

Contrast this surfeit of wireless technologies in fixed wireless with the mobile wireless industry. Mobile providers like AT&T, Verizon and others have – without exception – coalesced around a single, global standard: LTE, moving to 5G.

The reasons behind the fixed wireless push

So, what's driving the fixed sector forward? There are a number of reasons it appears to be gaining momentum:

1. It's cheap. "The value is just very, very apparent," said Jaime Fink, co-founder and chief product officer at Mimosa Networks, which sells equipment for fixed wireless services that runs on the company's own proprietary transmission technology. Fink said Mimosa's equipment costs in some cases a third of what LTE equipment costs and can in general provide faster services over farther distances.

"We've created our own TDD-based scheme that is OFDM-based, so it looks a ton like what you see with LTE today," he said. "It's hard to really see much of a performance difference on the LTE side, and you're seeing a lot more cost. Or, as the telcos call it, the 'Qualcomm tax.'" (For its part, Qualcomm is only one of many companies that hold patents on LTE technology, though it does operate a significant patent-licensing business.)

Hammer's Stogdill agreed. "LTE can be expensive. So, I think cost is probably a large reason why LTE hasn't been as widely adopted for fixed wireless as it should have been, outside of some of the larger operators."

2. It works in a closed system. In a mobile network, everything needs to work in concert. Smartphones from one vendor need to connect to networks from other vendors. And mobile service providers need to make sure that smartphone users can take their phone with them anywhere, including to places where competitors might be offering service. That's a big reason the industry has coalesced around the LTE standard.

Things are different in fixed wireless. The only concern in FWA is the connection between the base station and a stationary receiver.



3. It's getting more usable spectrum. For years mobile network operators gobbled up most of the nation's usable spectrum at prices that smaller companies couldn't even begin to consider. After all, the FCC's AWS-3 auction in 2015 raised an astounding \$44.9 billion in bids.

But the spectrum situation is changing. First, millimeter wave spectrum, long considered largely unusable, is increasingly seen as a viable place to compete thanks to technologies like beamforming and massive MIMO.

But more importantly, the FCC is moving forward with plans to release spectrum in a wide range of bands from 3 GHz on up, both licensed and unlicensed. Indeed, much of the noise around the 3.5 GHz CBRS band is coming from companies hoping to use it to provide fixed wireless services.

Spectrum was once a scarce resource in the United States, but that seems to be changing.

4. It meets a demand. Before starting Open Broadband, Fitzpatrick said he looked at the FCC's statistics for internet service in rural areas. The result? 48% of residents had access to only provider, and around 70% had access to either one or none.

And providers without any competition aren't being pushed to improve their services.

"People are clamoring for faster speeds," Fitzpatrick said. "That was sort of the whole genesis of the idea. We saw a huge market opportunity. ... It was one of those things where we thought we could make money on a business where we were also doing something good for society as well."

Reality check: Fixed wireless boils down to simple economics

To be clear, the fixed wireless market isn't all sunshine and rainbows. For example, Google acquired fixed wireless provider Webpass in 2016, but in the intervening months Webpass' chief executive Charles Barr left the company and Webpass withdrew from the Boston market.

Separately, Australia's big fixed wireless project, NBN, said recently it won't be able to offer 100 Mbps services as promised because such offerings would overtax its network.

But these two examples highlight the fact that fixed wireless boils down to basic economics. Does the technology and spectrum you have cover enough people at prices and speeds that would make it profitable, in a place where you could gain market share? Webpass couldn't make that equation work in Boston, but Starry apparently could.

And really, that's kind of the beauty of fixed wireless. It's probably not going to work everywhere—for example, in places where high-speed wired connections are readily available and where geography and household density make effective wireless coverage difficult. But in other places—where households are close together and DSL is still prevalent—fixed wireless makes a lot of sense. And thanks to new wireless technologies, more available spectrum, government money for rural broadband, and customers increasingly dissatisfied with their wired providers, the potential market for fixed wireless appears set to grow.

But don't take my word for it. Just ask CommScope, a longtime telecom equipment vendor, which just announced this week it's going to get into the market for fixed wireless antennas.—Mike | @mikeddano

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Subject: [Members] A Winning Strategy for Superfast Broadband

From: Ken Fellman <kfellman@kandf.com>

Date: 1/31/2018 2:45 PM

To: "'policy@lists.natoa.org'" <policy@lists.natoa.org>, "members@lists.natoa.org" <members@lists.natoa.org>

Colleagues,

Yesterday, former NATOA President Joanne Hovis testified at the House communications subcommittee hearing on closing the digital divide. Her written position statement is about the best piece of advocacy I have seen to date, describing why what the feds are doing today is wrong, and suggesting the correct path forward. To NATOA's Board and staff, is there some way we can get a link to this on the website? It's a great resource. Congratulations and thanks to Joanne for her great work yesterday and continuing to be active in ways that help all of our membership. Please read this, and I'm sure you'll find tidbits that you can use in your own advocacy efforts. Thanks!

Ken

A Winning Strategy for Superfast Broadband

Testimony of Joanne S. Hovis

President, CTC Technology & Energy

before the

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce

Subcommittee on Communications and Technology

"Closing the Digital Divide: Broadband Infrastructure Solutions"

January 30, 2018

(as prepared for delivery)

As we look forward to Super Bowl Sunday, I suggest today that our country's drive to bridge the digital divide is a critical test of our ability to develop a winning strategy on one of the most important playing fields of the 21st century.

My comments focus on two critical questions about this essential effort. My first question is, do we actually have a winning strategy? Much of the current discussion here in Washington seems premised on the idea that a winning broadband strategy will smash so-called barriers, such as environmental permitting, local process, and costs of access to public facilities.

The premise is wrong. In reality, the fundamental reason we do not see comprehensive broadband deployment throughout the United States is that areas with high infrastructure costs per user, particularly rural areas, fail to attract private capital. This is not surprising. Nor is it a value judgment. It is simply how private investment works. If return on investment is low or nonexistent, the investment will not be made.

To solve this, state, local, and federal governments can take steps to improve the economics of broadband deployment in areas where investment has been insufficient. These areas include not only rural communities, but also underserved urban areas such as small business locations in cities and suburbs, as well as low-income areas where adoption is low and incumbents see no return that justifies network upgrades. Particular attention and support must be directed to those areas; without such efforts, private dollars will continue to flow primarily to the most profitable areas.

A better game-plan would involve these plays:

- First, support public-private partnerships that ease the economic challenges of constructing rural and urban infrastructure
- Second, incent local efforts to build infrastructure—ones that private service providers can use—by making bonding and other financing strategies more feasible, potentially through reduced interest

payments or expanded use of tax-exempt bonds

- Third, target meaningful infrastructure capital support to rural and urban broadband deserts, not only to attract private capital but also to stimulate private efforts to gain or retain competitive advantage
- Fourth, empower local governments to pursue broadband solutions of all types, including use of public assets to attract and shape private investment patterns, so as to leverage taxpayer-funded property and create competitive dynamics that attract incumbent investment
- Fifth, require all entities that benefit from public subsidy, including access to public assets, to make enforceable commitments to build in areas that are historically unserved or underserved
- And, maximize the benefits of competition by requiring that all federal subsidy programs are offered on a competitive and neutral basis for bid by any qualified entity

Such strategies directly address the core reason the digital divide persists: lack of return on investment in many areas of the country.

Let me be very clear why the current strategy doesn't squarely face the challenge. Current efforts are focused on reducing the private sector's costs of doing business, such as by removing local processes, waiving environmental protections, and forcing local communities to subsidize carrier access to public property. All of this simply makes more profitable the already profitable areas of the country. Reducing those requirements does not fundamentally change the economics of broadband deployment in areas where return-on-investment is challenging—because the local processes and environmental and historic protections are such a small part of the economics of reaching and serving a rural area.¹ Rather, at best, these efforts tinker at the margins of broadband economics; at worst, they distract from the key issues and misdirect resources.

If we want to solve deployment issues in rural and low-income areas, we must target our solutions to those areas, and the solutions we choose must be adequate to the task. One-size-fits-all approaches will not bridge the digital divide because they effectively provide most of their benefit to providers in better-served areas that don't need incentives, without requiring the providers to invest some of their windfalls in more challenging areas. In other words, legislation or regulatory activity that purports to remove so-called barriers like local processes and fees may make for more profitable carriers in well-served areas. But they won't be sufficient to incent deployment in rural and urban broadband deserts.

Furthermore, if these strategies are premised on the idea that removing so-called barriers will lead to rural deployment of the emerging wireless technologies known as "5G," it's critical to know that no credible engineer, market analyst, or carrier is claiming that 5G deployment is planned or technically appropriate for rural areas. This is because 5G, which is still in developmental stages, is a wireless technology for very fast communications over very short distances. No wireless carrier would use 5G to serve low-density rural areas, any more than a team would focus on short-yard plays when far from the end zone, behind at the end of the fourth-quarter. If the goal is to attract private capital to rural communities, making wireless deployment more profitable in high-return metropolitan markets is exactly the wrong way to do it.

In summary: Doubling down on existing broadband investment patterns by making them even more profitable will not close this nation's digital divide. Rather, this approach is like moving the ball a few inches and calling it a touchdown.

My second question about our digital divide strategy is: Do we have the right players on the field? Let me suggest that local governments have proven themselves most valuable players in creating and incenting broadband deployment for many years—and that it's counterproductive to vilify localities based on the evidence-free assertion that local efforts and local processes restrict or disincent private deployment.

The assumption that the federal government is more **motivated** to enable deployment of this critical economic development infrastructure ignores the immediacy of the broadband need and the digital divide for local officials. And the assumption that the federal government is more **competent** to develop strategies to incent broadband deployment ignores the experience of the past decade, which demonstrates that local governments, given the opportunity, will apply creativity, local resources, physical assets, and diligence to try to solve broadband problems. For example, when Google Fiber first got started, more than 1,100 communities offered access to infrastructure, data, and other help to try and attract the company.

And they are not alone. Hundreds of localities have reached out to companies like AT&T and other incumbents, C-Spire, Ting Internet, Metronet, ALLO Communications, and many others to offer what amount to economic

development packages and other incentives in return for commitments to deploy broadband infrastructure. Local collaborations are in formation between public and private sectors in hundreds of communities, to the benefit of both. The federal and state governments should not disrupt them.

Make no mistake: It is in areas where localities have been free to use their creativity, public assets, and legal authority to incent opportunity where we have seen some of the most robust broadband deployment. Observe the small towns in the Tennessee Valley that are connected with ubiquitous community-owned fiber optics; the Google Fiber cities where incumbents, led by AT&T, have greatly increased their upgrade investments to react to the threat of competition; the communities in Mississippi that competed to attract C-Spire investment; the Indiana towns that developed economic development packages to attract Metronet; and so many others. The data are clear: The areas of the country with the best infrastructure and the liveliest competition are areas where localities have been able to engage in addressing their broadband needs based on local strategies and local needs.

Is it wise or appropriate for the federal government to interfere with those and many other potential local initiatives? Is the federal government better able to understand how to work with companies to meet both private and community needs? And is it really accurate to assume that industry giants like AT&T and Verizon cannot ably negotiate with localities—and require the intervention of the federal government to protect them? Broadband is an existential issue for many local governments. No one recognizes better than an elected local official the importance of broadband to the economic vitality of a community, and its attractiveness for residents, workers, and businesses.

In short, it's counter-productive to tie the hands of the public officials—the very people who have the greatest incentive to solve these problems effectively and efficiently.

Let me share a few examples of the local motivation and creativity I see throughout the country:

- In Spring Hill, Kansas and Pikeville, Kentucky, local communities are seeking to deploy fiber optic infrastructure to enable private sector service provision and competition as part of a broader economic development strategy. In Pikeville, the goal is to replace the declining coal economy with a coding economy, which is possible only with robust and plentiful broadband.
- Seattle has sought ideas from the private sector and has developed strategies for enabling wireless broadband service to low-income communities and users; the City is considering strategies to incent companies to serve lower-income parts of the City.
- In Gallup, New Mexico, the city's utility seeks to deploy infrastructure for public safety that will also enable private sector services in an area where private sector infrastructure deployment has not emerged.
- San Francisco is considering establishing an innovative public-private partnership that would ensure deployment and provision of ubiquitous best-in-class services with particularly attractive and affordable pricing for the 150,000 San Francisco residents who are not currently able to purchase existing high bandwidth products.
- In Michigan, a number of rural townships that are unserved with broadband are seeking to build broadband infrastructure in their rights-of-way and partner with private entities for service provision. A local non-profit, the Michigan Broadband Cooperative, formed to work with and coordinate among the townships so that they can learn from each other and build sustainable partnership strategies.
- In Sublette County, Wyoming, and Huntington, West Virginia, the local governments are seeking to deploy infrastructure to business districts to enable private sector services in an area where private sector infrastructure deployment has not emerged. Bowling Green, Kentucky has done exactly that: the city built fiber infrastructure to businesses and has enabled local companies to compete in the global marketplace.
- Boston has developed an innovative partnership with an open access fiber and wireless infrastructure provider in which the City incented new, open fiber deployment by leveraging the needs of schools and public safety facilities for fiber-based services.
- Rural Queen Anne's County, Maryland has been working with local incumbents seeking partnership opportunities to support broadband deployment.
- New York City late last year released a request for information seeking industry ideas for how the city and private entities can collaborate to bridge the considerable digital divide in which low-income New Yorkers

have fewer broadband choices and challenges affording high bandwidth options where they exist. In a clear indication of the potential for city-led public-private collaboration, the city received more than three dozen substantive responses.

- In Wilson, North Carolina, the public utility extended gigabit internet to rural areas in its electric footprint. It enabled a large family farm to export its sweet potatoes to the European market by meeting Europe's high food monitoring requirements. At the same time, the utility was the only carrier to help the 600-home rural town of Pinetops with free connectivity to the local church and shelter during the 2016 flood following Hurricane Matthew.
- In Lafayette, Louisiana, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and dozens of other communities, local governments have developed their own advanced communications networks after finding the incumbent providers unwilling or unable to upgrade their networks in a timely manner to meet local needs.

Blaming localities for the digital infrastructure divide ignores these and thousands of other local efforts. At the same time, tying the hands of localities reduces their ability and incentive to work creatively with partners of all sorts to solve these problems. And preempting local authority over infrastructure assets such as light poles removes from the local toolkit incentives that localities can use to attract and shape private broadband deployment.

In short: Preempting local efforts and authority is not a winning strategy; it simply removes from the playing field one of the most important players: local government. Let me suggest that the urgency of this task, bridging the infrastructure digital divide, calls for all players to take the field.

Joanne Hovis is president of CTC Technology & Energy, where she heads the firm's work in network business planning, market analysis, financial modeling, policy, and strategy. Joanne advises cities and states regarding how to build strategy and opportunity for public-private partnerships in broadband. She led the CTC teams that developed first-of-their-kind partnerships for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the City of Westminster, MD, and the Urbana-Champaign Big Broadband consortium. Joanne is a former president of the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) and serves on the boards of the Fiber Broadband Association and the Benton Foundation.

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Reader Opinion: Wireless Should Partner, Not Bulldoze Muni's Over Siting

This section allows others to contribute their opinions. The content does not necessarily represent the views of, or endorsement by Inside Towers.

Robert Stapleton, CEO of towerco National Wireless Ventures, wrote to us in response to our items ([here](#) and [here](#)) last week on the FCC's Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee struggles over wireless infrastructure siting and permitting fees. Here, the 30-year industry representative who's also a past president of the Illinois Wireless Association, gives readers insight into how municipalities view those fees.

1. Zoning and land use are principal tools communities have to deal with the balance between the business community needs and for the health, safety and welfare of the residential community. It's there for a reason, to protect both sides from confrontational developments.
2. Giving one segment of the business community a right over all other segments of the community is fundamentally wrong. It's one thing if the utilities were the primary focus or applicants, but that's not the case.

No one should be able to hold the public Right-of-Way (ROW) hostage. Negotiate the right to use the ROW. The ROWs in this country are for the health, safety and welfare of all of the public. They are there for gas, electric, water, telephone, traffic control, cable etc. The use is granted through some form of municipal franchise agreement.

3. I look at the Highway Beautification Act, which promulgated rules and regulations relating to the placement of signage adjacent to the national highway system. It created a plan, but the one thing it did not do was preempt local control. It established a national policy, however it still placed the regulation process to the states and down to local government. In doing so, it created a partnership and a plan for a future. That future has been profitable for the outdoor advertising industry.
4. The push to bypass local control will damage this industry's credibility and reverse a lot of the positive movement this industry has achieved. When we push the communities to accept some of the installations on a communities' ROW we should question if that would be something we would want in our front yards.
5. The technology advances that come from this country have been great. At the same time, those technological advances have come with rules and balance. So this industry needs to work within a give and take atmosphere. We need to be partners with our communities and not adversaries. In the final analysis, the wireless industry should be a partner not a predator. We just need to work harder and smarter.

Mayor quits FCC committee, says it favors ISPs over the public interest

Ajit Pai accused of tilting broadband committee toward industry representatives.

Jon Brodtkin - 1/25/2018, 3:11 PM

A broadband deployment advisory group organized by the Federal Communications Commission is trying to make it harder for cities and towns to build and operate their own Internet services.

The Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee (BDAC) was set up by the FCC last year and is now releasing draft versions of its recommendations. One member—the mayor of San Jose, California—quit the group today out of frustration that the recommendations favor the interests of private industry over municipalities.

The problem "became particularly apparent at our most recent meeting in Washington, DC," San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo told FCC Chairman Ajit Pai in his resignation letter.

Liccardo continued:

One working group, which did not have a single municipal representative among its 30+ participants, created a draft model state code that included provisions to eliminate all municipal control over when, how, and whether to accept industry applications for infrastructure deployment. Another working group had an industry representative dramatically re-write its draft municipal code in the 11th hour, pushing aside the product of months of the working group's deliberations. The result, in each case, were provisions that plainly prioritized industry interests.

It has become abundantly clear that, despite the good intentions of several participants, the industry-heavy makeup of BDAC will simply relegate the body to being a vehicle for advancing the interests of the telecommunications industry over those of the public. The apparent goal is to create a set of rules that will provide industry with easy access to publicly-funded infrastructure at taxpayer-subsidized rates, without any obligation to provide broadband access to underserved residents.

FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn also criticized the recommendations.

"It is regrettable that the concerns of localities do not appear to have been fully addressed," Clyburn, one of two Democrats on the Republican-controlled FCC, told the advisory committee yesterday. "While I appreciate the BDAC's acknowledgement that public-private partnerships may provide solutions to bridge those divides, I noticed that

there was an expressed preference for industry over municipalities in broadband deployment efforts. As I have said many, many times before, one size does not fit all, and private industry infrastructure investments do not always flow to communities that are most in need."

Clyburn expressed further dismay today after hearing of Liccardo's resignation. "It is deeply disappointing to me that it has reached the point that San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo felt compelled to resign," she said. "Disregarding an elected official representing one of the largest US cities in the nation is unconscionable."

Pai did not respond directly to Liccardo's and Clyburn's accusations.

"The Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee and its working groups have brought together 101 participants from a range of perspectives to recommend strategies to promote better, faster, and cheaper broadband," Pai said in a statement provided to Ars. "Bridging the digital divide continues to be my top priority, and I look forward to continuing to work with the BDAC and many others to remove regulatory barriers to broadband deployment and to extend digital opportunity to all Americans."

Little focus on underserved areas

San Jose officials were disappointed that the BDAC focused on unserved rural areas to the exclusion of underserved areas where broadband exists but is insufficient, San Jose Chief Innovation Officer Shireen Santosham told Ars.

BDAC recommendations could reduce municipal control over the public rights-of-way used for broadband infrastructure, Santosham said. And while final details are still being worked out, Santosham is concerned that telecoms could get easements to the private property of homeowners without having to negotiate directly with the property owners. That would let ISPs pay lower rates and have the same access rights as utilities without being regulated as utilities, she said.

Another problem is that "there's literally nothing in the model code for municipalities around digital inclusion; making sure that we're getting [broadband] to all Americans is just not there," Santosham said.

Liccardo served as vice-chair of the BDAC working group that drafted the model broadband deployment code for municipalities. It was chaired by a representative of the New York State Wireless Association, a lobby group for wireless ISPs.

Among others, the municipal working group included representatives of AT&T, Mimosa Networks, the City of New York, Cox Communications, the USTelecom industry lobby group, T-Mobile, and Google Fiber.

The working group that created a model code for states included representatives of Comcast, the CTIA mobile industry lobby group, the Fiber Broadband Association lobby

group, Facebook, the Satellite Industry Association, the Utah governor's office, and others.

The model code for states discourages city-owned and operated networks.

Model state code discourages city-run networks

When contacted by Ars, Clyburn's office said it was concerned about language in the draft of the state model code, which is meant to be adopted by individual states as their public policies for encouraging broadband deployment.

Further Reading

ISP lobby has already won limits on public broadband in 20 states

"The preference of the State is that municipal Broadband networks be built, owned, and operated by private industry," the model code says.

The code doesn't totally rule out city-owned and operated networks in rural areas that lack broadband, saying:

But the State also recognizes that in Rural areas the economics of building such networks may be economically less viable, relative to other areas of the State, such that private industry interest in deploying Broadband Facilities may not exist in a timeframe or at a price to the consumer that the municipality finds reasonably acceptable.

But the code requires cities and towns to conduct extensive analyses of all other options before constructing and operating their own networks. If states make this code binding on municipalities, a private ISP could sue a city or town if the private ISP claims the municipality didn't follow every requirement.

The model code could thus further tip the balance toward privately built networks. About 20 states already have laws restricting the growth of municipal broadband.

Even if a city or town jumps through all the hoops listed in the model state code in order to build its own network, it would have to make the network resources available to private providers. This would ensure that private ISPs benefit even if cities and towns pay for all construction.

jump to endpage 1 of 2

What the code would require

The code recommends five possible deployment strategies for rural areas where private ISPs won't deploy broadband without government assistance. The code lists the strategies in order of preference, and the 'networks owned and operated by cities and towns' strategy is listed last among the five.

The first option is for cities and towns to help private ISPs with their deployments and is described as follows:

Private-led Investment with Public Assistance. In which a privately-owned entity constructs, maintains, and operates the Broadband network and the municipality assists by facilitating permitting, granting, and customer sign-ups and ensures that the Broadband service is not discriminatory in its service standards or areas served.

Next are "public-private partnerships" in which a rural municipality "provides all or some of the necessary capital funds to construct the network, and one selected service provider is granted an exclusive franchise agreement for a finite period of time sufficient for the Broadband provider to recover its capital investment."

After the exclusivity period, the network would shift to an open-access model that allows other ISPs to lease network access and resell Internet service to customers. The private ISP would maintain responsibility for system maintenance and operations.

Third among the five options is a community-owned open-access network that leases access to one or more private providers.

Fourth is "public-led contracting," in which "the community serves as the lead entity and Broadband provider by constructing, financing, and owning the network infrastructure with a private sector partner providing crucial network operations or other duties specifically negotiated."

The fifth and last option is a network fully funded and operated by the municipality. The city or town "designs, builds, operates, and manages a community-wide ISP, and the Rural municipality is responsible for all aspects of the network, including customer support and installations."

Cities and towns that want to pursue the fourth or fifth option would be required to pass several tests first. Before beginning to plan or deploy a municipal broadband network, cities or towns would have to "solicit and accept proposals to deploy a Broadband network from private Communications Providers."

The municipality would also have to perform an evaluation to determine three things: "That the benefits associated with purchasing or constructing the facilities outweigh the costs; that the project is both feasible and sustainable; and that the purchase and construction of the facilities is in the interest of the general public."

Further Reading

City-owned Internet services offer cheaper and more transparent pricing

"If, and only if, the Rural municipality receives no reasonable and credible proposal from a private Communications Provider to build a Broadband network and otherwise determines that none of the first three options in Article 12(b) are viable and if, and only if, the Rural municipality makes a positive determination of costs, feasibility, sustainability, and that the action is in the interest of the general public may the Rural municipality invest in a Fully Public Funded and Operated Network and/or engage in Public-Led Contracting," the model state code says.

Finally, even if the city or town builds its own network using its own money, it has to give private ISPs a chance to use that infrastructure.

"Any facilities constructed or purchased... must be made available to private entities on a non-discriminatory basis," the model code says.

Benefits of municipal broadband

Municipal broadband networks generally offer cheaper entry-level prices than private Internet providers, and the city-run networks also make it easier for customers to find out the real price of service, a study from Harvard University researchers recently found.

Municipal networks are generally financed by selling bonds that are paid back by network revenues.

"Local decision-makers must engage in due diligence before committing to a major investment; in our experience, they do," the Institute for Local Self-Reliance said in a recent report. "They look into the finances of existing municipal networks and find that, in most cases, they are able to pay their operating cost and debts while generating important benefits for the community."

Private Internet providers will surely be pleased with the FCC's model codes, but Liccardo says that nine months of deliberation and negotiation did not "actually further the goal of equitable broadband deployment."

"I joined the BDAC cognizant that the composition of the panel heavily favored the industry, with more than three-quarters of the membership representing telecommunications companies or interests closely aligned with those companies," Liccardo told Pai in his resignation letter. "I'd hoped that through our work, we would be able to engage in constructive dialogue with the industry about how to bridge the digital divide, which you identified as your 'top priority.'"

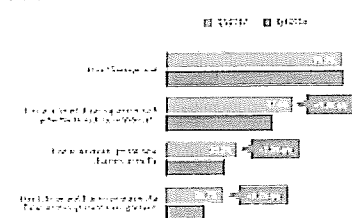
Analyst: New Year's Cable Rate Hikes 'Self Sabotaging'

by Karl Bode

Wednesday Jan 17 2018 10:00 EST

A prominent broadband and cable TV sector analyst believes that the industry's massive new year price hikes are self-sabotaging. As we've been noting, Dish, DirecTV, Cox, Comcast, and AT&T all notably raised rates in the new year, resulting in consumers paying more money than ever for broadband, TV, DVR fees, modem rental, and late fees.

TOP FACTORS FOR CUTTING PAY-TV SERVICE
Q4 2017: 10% Q4 2016: 10%



These new year rate hikes are a bit of a tradition in the sector, but they're also a major reason that users are looking to cut costs wherever possible (usually by either cutting the TV cord, or cutting bundled VoIP services and going wireless only).

With the slow but steady increase in cord cutting, telecom sector analyst Craig Moffett told Fierce Cable that the lack of moderation in this year's hikes are worse than "self-defeating."

"We've long since passed the point where programmer price increases are self-defeating," MoffettNathanson analyst Craig Moffett said of the latest hikes. "The biggest driver of cord cutting is that prices are too high. But the solution of too many programmers is to raise prices even faster to compensate. It's like a car that is headed for a cliff, with a driver that believes the only solution is to step on the gas."

Programmers aren't the only culprit in this equation. Cable operators not only pass on those hikes, but include many hikes of their own on everything from broadband and hardware rental fees, to the cost of paying your bill over the phone.

Of course Moffett has been arguing that these kind of endless rate hikes aren't sustainable since at least 2010, yet here we are. In fact, according to S&P Global Market Intelligence, consumer cable and satellite TV bills have increased 53% since 2007, to an average of \$100.98 per month in 2017. And US subscribers pay more for broadband, phone and television than a long list of other developed countries, thanks to the one-two punch of revolving-door regulators and a lack of meaningful competition in many areas.

Even with the rise of streaming video and cord cutting, carriers have still embraced such rate hikes, figuring that if users cut the cord on TV to escape higher prices there, they can simply be hit with higher rates for broadband (most frequently via arbitrary and unnecessary usage caps).

In fact, many Wall Street analysts have been arguing that thanks to a lack of competition, there's still plenty of room to raise prices on subscribers (especially on stand alone broadband), so even higher prices are on the horizon. A consumer's only real options? Either cut the cord if you're tired of TV price hikes, or support local owned and operated community broadband networks if you're tired of skyrocketing broadband prices.

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January 11, 2018

The Crowded MVPD Market

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(<https://potsandpansbyccg.com/2016/11/11/espn-and-the-cable-industry/espn/#main>)The virtual MVPD (Multichannel Video Programming Distributor) market is already full of providers and is going to become even more crowded this year. Already today there is a marketing war developing between DirecTV Now, Playstation Vue, Sling TV, Hulu Live, YouTube TV, CBS All Access, fuboTV and Layer3 TV. There are also now a lot of ad-supported networks offering free movies and programming such as Crackle and TubiTV. All of these services tout themselves as an alternative to traditional cable TV.



This year will see some new competitors in the market. ESPN is getting ready to launch its sports-oriented MVPD offering. The network has been steadily losing subscribers from cord cutting and cord shaving. While the company is gaining some customers from other MVPD platforms they believe they have a strong enough brand name to go it alone.

The ESPN offering is likely to eventually be augmented by the announcement that Disney, the ESPN parent company, is buying 21st Century Fox programming assets, including 22 regional sports networks. But this purchase won't be implemented in time to influence the initial ESPN launch.

Another big player entering the game this year is Verizon which is going to launch a service to compete with the offerings of competitors like DirecTV Now and Sling TV. This product launch has been rumored since 2015 but the company now seems poised to finally launch. Speculation is the company will use the platform much like AT&T uses DirecTV Now – as an alternative to customers who want to cut the cord as well as a way to add new customers outside the traditional footprint.

There was also announcement last quarter by T-Mobile CEO John Legere that the company will be

launching an MVPD product in early 2018. While aimed at video customers the product will be also marketed to cord cutters. The T-Mobile announcement has puzzled many industry analysts who are wondering if there is any room for a new provider in the now-crowded MVPD market. The MVPD market as a whole added almost a million customers in the third quarter of 2017. But the majority of those new customers went to a few of the largest providers and the big question now is if this market is already oversaturated.

On top of the proliferation of MVPD providers there are the other big players in the online industry to consider. Netflix has announced it is spending an astronomical \$8 billion on new programming during the next year. While Amazon doesn't announce their specific plans they are also spending a few billion dollars per year. Netflix alone now has more customers than the entire traditional US cable industry.

I would imagine that we haven't seen the end of new entrants. Now that the programmers have accepted the idea of streaming their content online, anybody with deep enough pockets to work through the launch can become an MVPD. There have already been a few early failures in the field and we've seen Seeso and Fullscreen bow out of the market. The big question now is if all of the players in the crowded field can survive the competition. Everything I've read suggests that margins are tight for this sector as the providers hold down prices to build market share.

I have already tried a number of the services including Sling TV, fuboTV, DirecTV Now and Playstation Vue. There honestly is not that much noticeable difference between the platforms. None of them have yet developed an easy-to-use channel guide and they feel like the way cable felt a decade ago. But each keeps adding features that is making them easier to use over time. While each has a slightly different channel line-up, there are many common networks carried on most of the platforms. I'm likely to try the other platforms during the coming year and it will be interesting to see if one of them finds a way to distinguish themselves from the pack.

This proliferation of online options spells increased pressure for traditional cable providers. With the normal January price increases now hitting there will be millions of homes considering the shift to online.

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