

Minutes from the Cable Committee

August 15, 2011

8:00 A.M City Hall

Present: Dennis Tsiaris, Bob Belmore, Bob Goldberg, Mike Micucci, Scott Smith, Bette Chamberlain

Absent: Lincoln Soldati, Bob Gibson

The minutes from the July 14, 2011 meeting were accepted.

After a brief discussion of services available through Bay Ring and Direct TV, the group again confirmed that Comcast is the only option for cable service in Somersworth at this time.

Discussion focused on the value of the list of equipment which Comcast has offered to the City. Both Bette and Dennis had made inquiries and both concluded that the equipment on the list is outdated and may or may not be of use. Scott noted that it may be items the City could use for replacement parts as most of it is identical to the equipment we already have and hope to update.

Dennis had received written responses from Dottie Grover and Bill Jennings of the State media Group. Clear advice was to NOT accept any of the listed equipment in lieu of money or new equipment. The value of listed property should not be deducted from any dollar amount requested from Comcast and should not be used as part of any future negotiations.

The City of Somersworth may want to join this State organization to receive its newsletter and other sources of information. Bob Belmore will investigate.

The group discussed and was in agreement that it made sense to contact an equipment vendor to visit both sites, the Career Tech Center area and City Hall, to help us determine the kind and cost of needed equipment. Dennis will contact the Consortium and set up such a visit. Hopefully, Pam Martin will be able to be part of this visit at the school site. Bette will contact her about this.

Dennis will also set up a conference call between Somersworth Cable Committee and the consortium to discuss a number of ideas. Bob Goldberg suggested and Mike Micucci agreed that perhaps we could work with a larger group to change some of the laws which favor the corporation in all cable matters such as prices and policies.

Bob Belmore will get an update from the attorney as to next steps and where we are in the process with Comcast...

Bob Goldberg raised the question of definition of “agreement” and “contract”. Bob Belmore and the committee agreed that in this case, even though the term used is “franchise agreement” it is indeed, a contract.

Before the committee can decide whether or not to recommend a pass through fee to the City Council we need:

1. More exact quotes for costs of needed equipment.
2. A dollar figure (and length of term) for any pass through request
3. Documentation or rationale for who will benefit from such a “grant” and why it is important to the City.

Dennis will let the committee members know by email about both the conference call with the State consortium and the vendor visit. The next meeting date will be set, also by email, when this information is available.

Motion to adjourn was unanimous at 9:05 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Bette Chamberlain