

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
CABLE COMMITTEE
April 2, 2012
MINUTES**

Present: Deb Boisvert, Harriet Cady, David Sakowich

Also Present: Kate Alexander

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:14 p.m. and Deb Boisvert was elected Chairperson of the Cable Committee.

Regular Business

Chairperson Boisvert gave a brief history of the current service provided by Metrocast and the work conducted by the previous Cable Committee.

Members decided that Cable Committee would meet every third Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm and the meeting should last no more than one hour. Additional meetings could be scheduled based on the work of the committee. Members also decided that a letter should be sent to Selectmen requesting what is expected of the committee.

Members began discussing areas they would like to look into as it relates to Metrocast service in the town of Deerfield. Discussion included:

- What is the total “income” the town receives from Metrocast each year?
- How is the “income” received by the town used?
- The current Metrocast contract calls for two Access Channels and a third at the completion of the rebuild. Is this the case?
- The current Metrocast contract says the franchisee shall train town officials, designees or school staff in the production of a community bulletin board at the Franchisee cost- was this training provided?
- Did Metrocast furnish any public access equipment to the town?

Members decided to request from Selectmen the number of homes in Deerfield that currently receive Metrocast services including cable, phone and internet. Members would like to know the numbers of homes and specific streets that currently are not wired to receive Metrocast. Is there a map that can be provided showing cable lines in the town? The committee also discussed having a representative from Metrocast attend a future Cable Committee meeting to discuss issues related to the contract.

Mrs. Cady said she would be in contact with Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission in regards to their broadband initiative.

Mr. Sakowich suggested that a page on the town website be dedicated to the Cable Committee to post the agenda, minutes and other information regarding the work of the committee including an online survey that will be developed in the future. The survey would allow residents to give input about Metrocast. The last survey was conducted in 2008. Members discussed posting the survey on “The Forum” website and information be placed in the “Communicator”.

Deerfield resident Kate Alexander expressed interest in serving on the Cable Committee. She has worked at various public access stations as a volunteer.

Committee members discussed the town's withdrawal from the Lakes Region Public Access network opting for a direct cable feed in the town for programming. Members discussed whether the direct feed from the George B. White Building could allow for expanded public access programming in the town.

Committee members discussed the quality of the current broadcast of Selectmen meetings. At times it is difficult to hear the discussion taking place.

Committee members discussed seeking information and/or meet with representatives from other cable companies to see if there is interest in purchasing Metrocast assets in the town.

Committee members discussed other issues that may be worth exploring at future meetings. The discussion included;

- Does Metrocast offer internet access to low-income students at a discounted rate? Comcast and other cable companies offer such a discounted service.
- Exploring internet speed that Metrocast offers communities. Chairperson Boisvert said Deerfield has the lowest internet speed compared to other towns that make up SAU #53.
- Can the USF (Universal Service Fund) be used by Metrocast to assist the town?

Committee members discussed the "Franchise Fee" paid to the town by Metrocast. The committee is interested in finding out if the fee is only paid based on cable television subscribers or is it also based on the number of Metrocast internet and phone subscribers?

The committee discussed section 5.3 of the Metrocast contract which deals with the "Institutional Network". The current contract includes \$10,000 for I-Net. Members want to know what the money was used for and which town buildings have been connected to the I-Net and do all town departments receive internet access?

Members discussed setting up an email address for residents to provide input about Metrocast service. Members also discussed whether a voicemail account could be set up for residents who don't have internet access and are interested in providing input on Metrocast services.

Harriet Cady was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Deerfield Cable Committee.

Meeting Adjourned

7:16pm

**Next Meeting May 15, 2012 at 6:00pm
George B. White Building**

The Minutes were Transcribed and Respectfully Submitted by David Sakowich
Pending Approval by the Deerfield Cable Committee