

## **FIVE TOWN CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Representing the Towns of Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Sheffield and Stockbridge

Minutes

December 10, 2019

6:30pm

CTSB Corporate Headquarters

40 Limestone Road

Lee, MA 01238

Members Present: Linda Miller –Lenox  
Michael Kernan – Great Barrington  
Rene Wood – Sheffield  
Jim Brown – Great Barrington

Others Present: Leo Mahoney – CTSB  
Richard Frederick – CTSB  
John Maher, Spectrum  
Klas Bergman – Great Barrington resident  
Evan Triantafilidis – Berkshire Record  
Denise Curtin – Recording Secretary

Prior to the meeting being called to order attendees that were there were given a tour of the CTSB facilities.

The walking tour was video taped and will be inserted into the recording of the meeting when the meeting airs on CTSB.

6:33pm Linda Miller called the meeting to order.  
Quorum was met. A quorum constitutes 3 towns represented.

**MINUTES:** Rene Wood moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes of September 10, 2019 as revised by the committee and to accept the minutes as submitted.  
Motion seconded by Jim Brown. Motion was passed unanimously.

### **CTSB REPORT:**

- Leo Mahoney addressed the committee and indicated that it was his last meeting he will attend as he is retiring.
- He thanked the committee for all the years working together and the accomplishments they made together.
- Leo Mahoney introduced the CTSB new Executive Director, Richard Frederick.
- Richard Frederick will be providing the CTSB report going forward.
- The committee thanked Leo for being so instrumental in creating the wonderful facility that they have now.
- Rene Wood said that it was such a pleasure to work with Leo and stated that he has set such a wonderful tone for the public.
- Rene Wood, along with the committee members, wish Leo nothing but the best in his retirement.
- Richard Frederick provided the CTSB report.

#### Shakespeare Fall Festival:

- This continues to be a huge success and DVDs and streaming services are being purchased and mailed out.
- Our new operations manager, Nathan Haney was hired 1 week prior to the launch of the festival and was instrumental in the success of this festival.
- Nathan is working on upgrading the remote boxes in the town halls and will have locking metal cabinets.

#### Town Select Board Meetings:

- CTSB has recorded 15 town Select Board meetings in November and 3 were broadcast live.
- We missed 1 meeting due to staffing issues. However, there are changes being made in how scheduling is done.

#### Membership:

- Membership remains at 127.

#### Training:

- Will resume in January.

#### 2020 Changes:

- We are working on implementing Saturday hours for members to work on projects on Saturdays.
- Website will be upgraded.
- Currently working on a new marketing campaign.
- Partnering with The Edge as a media partner.
- The Edge has created a new show that will address “The Creative Economy of the Berkshires”.
- Rene Wood and Richard Frederick have met and discussed plans to convey a census communication campaign in 2020 to let town residents know what they need to do to receive a census form and why it is so important to complete.

#### FCC/Spectrum Update:

- A recent meet and greet was held in Easthampton, MA with Mass Access which represents PEG stations and they discussed current concerns and urged PEG stations to have no direct contact with Spectrum until a check has been received with missing funds.
- Pittsfield station has received their 4<sup>th</sup> quarter funding and CTSB always receives their annual check in March.

#### Leo Mahoney Retirement Party:

- Leo’s retirement party will be held sometime in January. The committee will have a small thank you celebration at the conclusion of this meeting to thank Leo for his years of dedication and service.

#### CTSB Identification on Guide:

- Channels are located on 1301, 1302, 1303.
- Subscribers cannot find it. It is not in the guide and if you put in CTSB it does not come up.
- John Maher from Spectrum asked Leo Mahoney and Rich Frederick to look at this at the conclusion of the meeting.
- Michael Kernan asked if we could add a notice to the monthly bill letting subscribers know where to find it.

#### Public Service Announcement (PSA) for CTSB:

- John Maher provided dates and channels that these aired on in the Spectrum report.
- Linda Miller asked for a listing of the times that they ran on each channel.
- Rene Wood asked if it would be better for this information to be provided going forward to make sure it is being aired and asked John Maher to be more proactive and provide us with this information.
- Jim Brown asked if Spectrum did the ads and asked John Maher to provide a video of the spots that aired.
- Committee asked if it would be possible for CTSB to produce the spots as the purpose of the spots is to alert people about the offerings of CTSB.

#### Volunteers and Members needed:

- We are always looking for volunteers and new members at CTSB. The cost for a membership is \$15.00 per year.
- Jim Brown wanted to let everyone know that being here at CTSB has been impressive and that the equipment here is of the caliber that people make motion pictures with. For \$15.00 a year it is huge, as other facilities charge hundreds of dollars for a production facility as well equipped as this.

#### **SPECTRUM REPORT:**

- John Maher present to give the report.
- John Maher thanked Leo for his 16 years of service and welcomed Rich Frederick.
- Price Adjustment:
  - John Maher sent to the committee the notices that were sent to the five towns regarding the rate increases.
  - Billing due date changes were sent to subscribers in February and March.
  - Linda Miller indicated that bills are still not arriving on a timely basis.
    - They are arriving from 2 days before the due date to sometimes days after.
    - John Maher said that late fees are not assessed until 30 days after due date.
  - Committee requested John Maher to find out if bills are generated and mailed out on the same day.
  - The Committee asked that subscribers please let the committee know if you are receiving bills close, or after the due dates.
  - Rene Wood asked that Linda Miller send to John Maher some pdf examples of receipt date and due date of bills.
- “Peg Fee” pass through –
  - As per Spectrum report: As of December 2019, \$102,862 remaining to be recouped by Charter of the initial \$212K grant.
  - Linda Miller indicated that we need to resolve the “recoup” vs. “grant” language.
- Status of WCVB and WWLP –
  - There are no plans to bring these out of market stations back onto the Berkshire channel lineup.
  - WSHM is being carried in market in HD.

- Spectrum News 1:
  - Soft launch of new programming on December 4<sup>th</sup>
  - Viewers will now be able to get MA state house news and coverage of the Berkshires.
  - There will be a reporter located in Pittsfield to cover Berkshire news and sports and a reporter located in Chicopee.
  - The channel is based out of Worcester.
  - Rene Wood asked if the new reporter for Berkshire County could come to the next meeting in March and learn about the community.
    - Rene also thanked Spectrum for providing this coverage for the Berkshires.
- FCC proposed changes relating to Franchise Fees –
  - As stated in Spectrum report: Charter is evaluating the 621 Report and Order issued 8/2/19. The Order is not yet effective. More information regarding the Order will be communicated after it becomes effective.
- Berkshire 2019 Survey Results -
  - Survey was sent in June and included in the bill.
  - As stated in Spectrum report: Results attached.
  - The committee submitted a sample of how the questionnaire that should have been sent out and Spectrum changed it and took out the quantitative ratings.
  - All answers as received are hard to quantify.
  - John Maher indicated that he put together the rating #'s as:
    - 101 replies
    - Satisfied – 37
    - Neutral – 28
    - Not satisfied – 23
- Klas Bergman, a subscriber at the meeting, requested a copy of the survey results.
  - Linda Miller will email him the results.
- Michael Kernan has asked, yet again, if the zip code for Great Barrington listed on billing statements could be changed so that mail is sent correctly to the town office. The correct zip code for Great Barrington is 01230.
- Linda Miller stated that the committee sent a letter to the DTC about the lack of a Spectrum presence at our last meeting.
- After a discussion with Sean Carroll we will let this go this time.
- Linda Miller gave John Maher a schedule for the next 5 years of CAC Meetings.
- It was conveyed to John Maher that meeting rooms in our towns are very hard to schedule and to try to change a meeting last minute is very difficult.
- Jim Brown asked about how we refer to Charter/Spectrum in the minutes of our reports.
- It was stated that Charter is the parent company and Spectrum is the brand.
- John Maher is employed by Charter but works as Spectrum.
- The cable service we are using will be referred to as Spectrum.

**NEW BUSINESS –**

- Klas Bergman, a subscriber who resides in Great Barrington who is a former journalist indicated that he has never watched CTSB because he cannot find it.
- He indicated that he came from Washington, DC and now resides in Massachusetts but feels that he's in New York State based on TV channel line-up.
- He is very frustrated that he cannot get Massachusetts channels.
- The committee told him that this is not a new issue; it is an FCC issue and we continue to fight to get this changed.

**OLD BUSINESS –**

- None

**NEXT MEETING –**

- March 10, 2020 to be held in Stockbridge, MA.

Motion to adjourn was made by Linda Miller. Motion carried unanimously.

- Meeting adjourned 7:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Curtin

Recording Secretary