

FIVE TOWN CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Representing the Towns of Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Sheffield and Stockbridge  
Minutes  
June 8, 2021  
6:30pm

Lee Town Hall, Main Street, Lee, MA

MEETING WAS HELD IN PERSON FOLLOWING COVID PROTOCOLS

Members Present: Linda Miller –Lenox  
Dennis Arseneau - Lenox  
Tom Hatch – Great Barrington  
Jim Brown – Great Barrington  
(arrived @ 6:45pm after meeting called to order)  
Michael Kernan – Great Barrington

Others Present: John Maher - Charter  
George Doin - Charter  
Rich Frederick – CTSB  
Bill Matthews – Lee Resident  
Denise Curtin – Recording Secretary

6:34pm Linda Miller called the meeting to order.

MINUTES: Motion made by Tom Hatch to dispense with the reading of the minutes of March 9, 2021.  
Seconded by Tom Hatch.

AMENDMENT: Motion was made to amend the minutes of March 9, 2021 as such:  
Michael Kernan arrived 10 minutes late and wasn't there for roll call.  
Motion carried unanimously and minutes are hereby amended as such.

Vice-Chairman

- Linda Miller stated that as Chairman of the Committee she can appoint a Vice-Chairman without a vote.
  - Linda has appointed Dennis Arseneau as Vice-Chairman of the Five Town Cable Advisory Committee.
  - Dennis has accepted the appointment.

**SPECTRUM REPORT:**

- John Maher presented the Spectrum report.

Subscriber Complaints

- Please have customers call customer service with any issues.
- If any committee member receives any complaints you can also reach out to John Maher and he can further investigate.
- Linda Miller received a complaint from a subscriber that has Legacy Time Warner and wants to migrate to Spectrum to get benefit of certain things. The subscriber could not find someone to do this for her.
  - John Maher asked to have the information forwarded to him.

- John Maher told the committee that he was not able to get these channels renamed as requested.
- Linda Miller asked why and John Maher stated that he could not get a reason why.
- John Maher will ask again why they can't change it.

### Communication

- John Maher requested that any issues that are brought to the committee's attention that you reach out to him so that things can be resolved sooner than before each quarterly meeting.

### Emergency Broadband Benefit Program

- Charter Communications announced that they would be participating in the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program that will have millions of households across Charter's 41-state operating area to be eligible for a credit up to \$50 per month (up to \$75 for households on Tribal Lands) toward qualifying Spectrum Internet plans for the duration of the program.
- There are currently over 2 million customers signed up from many different internet providers, not just Charter.
- For non-Spectrum subscribers please visit [spectrum.com/getqualified](https://spectrum.com/getqualified) or call 1-855-662-9946.
- For current Spectrum subscribers please visit [spectrum.net/broadbandbenefit](https://spectrum.net/broadbandbenefit) to learn more.
- Households can qualify based on several criteria, comprising of income level and eligibility for the National School Lunch Program (or the Community Eligibility Provision of the NSLP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

### Billing

- Committee still continues to try and get this resolved.
- Most recent bills received arrived June 5<sup>th</sup> and are due June 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Bills are not being mailed on the date printed and they are being sent pre-sorted 1<sup>st</sup> class mail. Bills are probably coming from a mailing house.
- John Maher stated that there is plenty of time to pay the bills before they are considered late. He also stated that the best way to pay your bill is electronically.
- It was also brought up that each time you have to mail your payment to a different address.

### **CTSB REPORT:**

- Rich Frederick presented the CTSB report.
- Rich Frederick distributed the Annual Report, along with hats and stickers for the committee.

### Goals & Accomplishments

- At the last meeting it was requested to provide a list of goals and accomplishments for CTSB for 2021.
- New website, new logo, CTSB member store are just some of the highlights of our accomplishments.
- Our biggest challenge is how to let the community know we're here.
- Jim Brown asked about the ransomware scams that are happening and if CTSB is protected?
- Rich Frederick stated that everything is backed up to multiple hard drives. However, the old system is vulnerable and this is part of an upgrade to move to more security.
- Question was asked about archived recordings of town meetings and Rich Frederick stated that most are available on the website and you just have to type in (town of meeting, year) and that should be available.
- Linda Miller stated that if you watch this meeting and are interested in becoming a member of CTSB you should contact them. There is so much to learn, they are a wonderful resource in the community and provide many benefits to becoming a member.

## **LICENSE RENEWAL**

- License expires February 2023.
- States puts together an ascertainment process 36 months out.
- License renewal committee needs to set expectations.
- What's in scope; service, fees, programs.
- We can ask for resident input on Spectrum performance.
- Question was asked about the changing technology and at some point Charter may transition to 100% internet/streaming service.
- Once it becomes 100% streaming how does that change cable tv?
- How does it effect our contract - Do we want to sign 10 year contract with technology changing.
- Jim Brown is concerned about Spectrum business practices regarding broadcast fees.
- This committee cannot negotiate fees or programming, however we can ask the FCC to review.
- Our working group meets once a month on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month.
- Beginning next year we will begin meetings with both our committee and Spectrum.
- One of the requirements is a subscriber survey which is recommended by the state.
- The last survey we did was less than well done.
- The committee will draft the survey and turn over to John Maher prior to the next meeting.
- This survey is to be done separate from a bill insert.

## **NEW BUSINESS –**

- None.

## **OTHER BUSINESS –**

- Last week Linda Miller called with an issue and George Doin stated that his maintenance team has been working to correct the problem as quickly as possible.
- Tom Hatch wanted to let George know that one evening at 9:00pm Spectrum was at the house next door to his and was very impressed that they were working at that time of night to correct the issue.

## **CITIZEN SPEAK –**

- Bill Matthews – Lee resident came to the meeting tonight to see what this group is about.
- Bill indicated that he might be a potential representative from Lee as we currently do not have a rep from Lee.
- Linda Miller stated that each town is entitled to 3 representatives.
- Currently Great Barrington has 3, Lenox has 2, Sheffield has 1 and Stockbridge and Lee have none.

Motion made to adjourn by Michael Kernan, seconded by Tom Hatch, motion carried unanimously and meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.

**NEXT MEETING DATE** – Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 6:30pm in Stockbridge.

Respectfully submitted,  
Denise Curtin  
Recording Secretary