



December 5, 2014

-Via email-

Board of Selectmen
Town of Ipswich
25 Green St.
Ipswich, MA 01938

Re: Ipswich Ascertainment Hearing Transcript

Dear Members of the Board:

Please find attached the transcript of the ascertainment hearing regarding the Cable Television License for the Town of Ipswich.

Please take note that due to copyright laws, this transcript cannot be copied and/or posted on the Internet without the prior consent of the court reporter.

If you have any questions regarding this transcript, please feel free to contact Jane Lyman, Comcast Sr. Government Relations Manager at (978) 927-5700, ext. 43024.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Wight". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelly Wight
Administrative Assistant

/kpw
Enclosure

cc: Cable Advisory Committee
William Hewig, III, Esq., Kopelman and Paige, P.C.
Jane Lyman, Comcast Sr. Manager of Government & Regulatory Affairs

Comcast Cable Communications
License Renewal Hearing

Town of Ipswich
25 Green Street
Room C
Ipswich, Massachusetts

Wednesday, November 12, 2014

7:04 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.

KAREN SMITH COURT REPORTING
10 Westview Circle
Peabody, Massachusetts 01960
Phone: 978.777.5802 ~ Fax: 978.777.5803

APPEARANCESTown of Ipswich Representatives:

Eric Krathwohl
Frank Antonucci
Bill Gallant
Jim Maloney
Beth Meyer
Rachel Roesler

William Hewig, III, Esq.
Kopelman and Paige, P.C.
101 Arch Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02110
(617) 556-0007
 Representing the Town of Ipswich

1 (7:04 p.m.)

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. I think we'll get
3 started; it's a few minutes after 7:00.

4 Good evening, my name is Eric Krathwohl,
5 I'm chairperson of the Cable Advisory Committee that
6 is assisting the Board of Selectmen in the efforts
7 regarding a potential renewal of the cable television
8 contracts with each of Comcast and Verizon.

9 Also with me this evening are the other
10 committee members: Jim Maloney, Bill Gallant, Rachel
11 Roesler, Frank Antonucci and Beth Meyer. Also
12 present as special cable counsel for the town, who's
13 assisting in this process, and I will give him the
14 floor shortly to explain a bit more about the process
15 of getting input from citizens who are customers of
16 Comcast or Verizon, and about the overall renewal
17 process.

18 At this time I'd ask the representatives of
19 Comcast and Verizon to identify themselves.

20 JILL REDDISH: Good evening, I am Jill
21 Reddish. I am with Verizon; franchise service
22 manager for FiOS TV.

23 (Brief pause.)

24 THE CHAIRMAN: We don't have a

1 representative of Comcast at this time?

2 (Hearing none.)

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

4 These public hearings are being held
5 pursuant to notice duly published on behalf of the
6 Board of Selectmen of the Town of Ipswich
7 Massachusetts as issuing authority for cable
8 television license under Massachusetts General Laws
9 Chapter 166A.

10 The purpose of this public hearing will be
11 to determine whether to issue a cable television
12 license to Verizon, and a simultaneous hearing with
13 respect to Comcast. All applications, reports,
14 statements, license drafts, and other materials to be
15 considered at the hearing that constitute public
16 records under state law are available for public
17 inspection during regular business hours and for
18 reproduction at a reasonable fee.

19 We have noticed the hearing for each of
20 Comcast and Verizon, both starting at 7:00 p.m.
21 The existing contract for Verizon expires on
22 July 9, 2016. And for Comcast, the existing contract
23 expires on June 10, 2017.

24 We are beginning the phase of the contract

1 renewal process, where we seek input from customers
2 of the cable company, primarily with respect to two
3 issues. First, whether the current cable operator is
4 in full compliance with its currently existing cable
5 license. And second, what are the town's future
6 community cable-related needs. An important part of
7 whether the cable company is in compliance with its
8 current license concerns the signal quality, and the
9 quality of service.

10 Particularly with respect to these issues,
11 we seek your input tonight. But we will keep the
12 ascertainment process open so that we can obtain
13 further information and input throughout the period
14 that a new contract is being negotiated, and
15 ultimately, licensed. The more information we can
16 get early in the process, the better that information
17 can be worked into the contract negotiations, and the
18 more helpful any comments will be.

19 We have also issued a survey, and we hope
20 that people are returning those, and we understand
21 that there has been a good response rate already.
22 There are certain limits on the authority of the
23 Board of Selectmen with respect to cable service
24 providers, which Attorney Hewig will describe, and

1 we'll try to keep the comments within those
2 parameters.

3 I first ask that we take comments from any
4 customers of Verizon, and then if there are customers
5 of Comcast, we'll get your comments as well. I think
6 we can hear everyone if they just stand, but I'll ask
7 that anybody who wishes to make comments identify
8 themselves and state their address.

9 At this time I'd ask Attorney Hewig to
10 provide a bit more detail about the hearing and the
11 overall ascertainment process.

12 MR. HEWIG: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Good
13 evening Mr. Chairman, members of the committee and
14 members of the public. I usually begin a public
15 hearing such as this by saying that I have good news
16 and bad news for you.

17 I'll give you the bad news first. The
18 selectmen are not able to do anything about rates.
19 If you're coming to complain about rates, you can
20 complain about it to the folks in the back, but the
21 folks up here at this table, who are negotiating your
22 new licenses for you, will not be able to affect rates.
23 That's because rates are either regulated by an
24 authority other than the Board of Selectmen, which is

1 the Department of Telecommunications and Cable, or as
2 is the case here in Ipswich, there is competition;
3 and therefore, the rates are unregulated. So in any
4 event, whatever it is, the Selectmen have no power to
5 negotiate down your cable rates. That is something
6 determined by the market.

7 The second bit of bad news is, that if
8 you're here to talk about programming, again, the
9 folks at the back of the room would be happy to hear
10 you, but the Selectmen do not have any power to
11 dictate the programming or the channel selection or
12 any of the programming offerings that cable operators
13 are providing to the subscribers of Ipswich, from
14 either Comcast or Verizon. Once again, programming
15 is off the table. That's a rule established by the
16 FCC. And again, the purpose of that is that the
17 program offerings that are made available, to each
18 community, are supposed be determined by the local
19 market. Market factors are supposed to drive that.
20 So if you have complaints about the programming
21 offerings, the folks back here would be happy to hear
22 about them. Again, the Selectmen are not able to
23 negotiate any different program offerings for you.

24 Finally, the FCC has a limitation on

1 requiring technological specifications in order -- in
2 exchange for receiving a renewal license. The
3 selectmen cannot really negotiate technological
4 changes or improvements of certain types of equipment
5 or certain specifications, such as how many megahertz
6 the cable system will be offering you.

7 So that's the bad news. The good news is
8 -- well, I guess the question is: If you can't get
9 any of those things, why are we here at all? And the
10 answer to that is: We're here because we can get
11 money. We can get support for community access
12 within the town of Ipswich. You have a community
13 access provider in the form of a not-for-profit
14 access corporation, trained people that produce
15 programming. They are the access provider, and it
16 is, in part, to continue to support their activities
17 that we are here tonight, and that we will sit down
18 and negotiate new licenses for both Comcast and
19 Verizon.

20 There are other forms of community support
21 we are allowed to negotiate, and can and will
22 negotiate. There may be other areas where
23 cable-related equipment, cable-related services and
24 money can be put to use within the Town of Ipswich

1 for the benefit of school systems, public facilities,
2 libraries, senior citizens -- any form of public
3 organization or institution within the town may be
4 able to be benefitted by equipment and services. So
5 that's why we are here. We are here to negotiate
6 renewal licenses within those parameters, and what we
7 expect to be able to achieve and accomplish is to get
8 financial support for local access within the town;
9 and perhaps, some other things as well, such as
10 senior citizen benefits and some administrative
11 things in the license.

12 That essentially -- those are the ground
13 rules, within which your cable negotiators are going
14 to be negotiating. So I always like to make sure
15 that everybody understands the ground rules, so that
16 expectations are properly placed. You have a right
17 to expect your cable negotiators to negotiate a good
18 renewal license from each cable operator with respect
19 to money and financial benefits, and maybe some
20 administrative things. But there isn't anything we
21 can do about either programming or rates or technical
22 specifications as applied to the plant here in town.
23 Our hands are tied with respect to those three
24 things.

1 So, Mr. Chairman, that having been said,
2 I'll turn it back over to you. I'd be happy to
3 answer questions, legal questions, anybody might have
4 about the process or licenses at any point.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Hewig.

6 So at this point, we'll launch into hearing
7 from you folks; that's really the main purpose here.
8 So, recognizing the limits on what we can do relative
9 to the license negotiation process, we want to hear
10 from you and whatever you have to say about Verizon
11 first, and then -- first customers of Verizon, if
12 they can get up, identify themselves, and let us know
13 what any concerns, comments, facts, service-quality
14 issues, etc. that they have to talk about. And then
15 once we're through those customers, if there's any
16 Comcast customers, we want to hear from you as well.

17 So, is there anybody that would like to
18 speak?

19 BETH MEYER: May I make a comment?

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

21 BETH MEYER: Because I was actually going
22 to speak about the ascertainment, how he had spoke
23 about the community access. I'd like to speak about
24 that tonight. But would you like me to hold off

1 until after customers about their specific services,
2 or should I speak now?

3 THE CHAIRMAN: You're speaking now, so why
4 don't you continue.

5 BETH MEYER: Okay. I'll do that. Thank
6 you.

7 All right. My name is Beth Meyer. I am a
8 resident of Ipswich, 38 Rosewood Drive. I'm also the
9 Executive Director for ICAM. And I've had -- to be
10 honest, I've had both Verizon -- currently I do have
11 Comcast. And I've been pretty happy, besides minor
12 technical issues with boxes here or there, they've
13 always been fixed within a 24-hour period. So I
14 don't have any issues with my services.

15 But saying that, my main reason to support
16 the cable advisory negotiations is not only just as a
17 resident, but also for our community center. I was
18 hired here a little over five years ago. And at that
19 time there really wasn't anything except for a small
20 room down the hallway to do the Selectmen's meeting.
21 What we -- we put in the Methodist Church service
22 manually, and the school committee meetings, and once
23 in a while a sporting event.

24 But since then, we have grown quite a bit.

1 We are located in the basement of this building right
2 now, which we have very much overgrown. But, we are
3 covering 12 different -- actually, more than 12
4 different meetings on a monthly basis; several
5 religious programs, several children's programs,
6 several Council on Aging programs. A wide variety of
7 things. So one of the things we are trying to
8 achieve here is continuing that service.

9 Since then, since five years ago, we have
10 added a 24/7 automated playback system. So we can
11 play things 24/7, all weekend long -- as long as we
12 don't have any power outages, and we do have a multi
13 -- three-camera multi-camera studio down stairs, with
14 a control room, three editing systems, and it's open
15 and free to the public. And I think probably a good
16 hundred people or so now are utilizing that, and
17 we've kind of outgrown that facility.

18 But in any case -- so currently we are
19 offering programs for youths from grades fourth
20 through twelfth grade. We have summer workshops,
21 after school programs, and for the first time this
22 year we just started doing a high school program,
23 within the high school, during school hours. So I
24 hope to get them involved.

1 We also offer field production and studio
2 production workshops for adults in the evening, and
3 sometimes during the day. Actually I've had several,
4 during the day, where people who are retired have
5 more time on their hands during the day than in the
6 evening to help and take these courses. All of these
7 programs, except for the summer club, has been free
8 and open to members of the community.

9 Other highlights, we've also updated all of
10 the equipment, Meeting Room A down the hall, at the
11 performing arts center, and at the high school
12 ensemble room, which they hold the school committee
13 meetings.

14 With all these programs we've increased
15 from about 120 a year five years ago, to over 500.
16 So we really have grown over the last few years. I
17 won't -- the list is very long of what we do right
18 now. But, for the future, what we are trying to do,
19 is expand our services. And to do that we also need
20 to expand our space and stay free for residents.

21 So, let's see, the size of our current
22 studio is limited and lacks the ability for a live
23 studio audience. And that's one of the things that
24 people have been asking for. Any major productions,

1 involving more than six people, we really can't hold
2 it. Also too, we only have three editing suites for
3 staff people and lots of volunteers. So a lot of
4 times it is very hard to get people to an editing
5 suite when they need it. So we're looking to do a
6 bigger space. We have been saving up for that, we
7 haven't quite got there yet. So this is one of our
8 pushes. We would like to keep -- maintain our
9 4 percent, at least, if not increase it to 5 percent.
10 We are also looking for capital equipment to get that
11 space.

12 And I think -- oh, other things that we are
13 looking for that I've heard from some people, the
14 Selectmen had brought up to me the last time I did a
15 presentation, to have HD channels, as well as post
16 our program guide on the cable station so that we can
17 actually see it instead of it just saying local
18 programming and have nothing next to it. Just so --
19 because I think now, when people channel surf, as the
20 majority of the time people are looking for a
21 program, that's the only way that they can see it.
22 It just says local programming. You don't even
23 necessarily see that it's from Ipswich. So we're
24 looking, trying to get some sort of service so they

1 can see what we are watching.

2 I think that's it for now.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Great. Thank you Beth.

4 Okay, are there any customers that would
5 like to speak? And please, again, identify yourself,
6 your cable operator to start with. Anybody from
7 Verizon, that has Verizon service, and your address.

8 ED COLLEY: I'll say something.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

10 ED COLLEY: I'm a customer. And I'd like
11 to tell you that I'm a relatively new member here in
12 the town. I've been here eight years. Ipswich is
13 the most unique town that I've ever lived in. It's
14 more like a village. People are warm and friendly.
15 And I have been one of the volunteers of your
16 program, and there's been exciting -- I love Verizon
17 and Comcast too.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Could you please state your
19 name and address?

20 ED COLLEY: Excuse me?

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Could you please state your
22 name and address?

23 ED COLLEY: No, I'm not going to give my
24 name or address. My name's Ed Colley and I live at

1 11 Blaisdell Terrace.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

3 ED COLLEY: Thank you.

4 DICK CHASE: Hi Dick Chase, North Ridge
5 Road. I would like to hear from the Verizon
6 representative if they feel that the program listing
7 and the guide reasonably.

8 JILL REDDISH: Well, I'd just like to
9 explain that tonight I am only here to observe. That
10 this is a proceeding that the town has to -- for them
11 to formulate what their future cable needs. I'm sure
12 when we get down the road, to the negotiation table,
13 this will come up and we'll discuss it then.

14 DICK CHASE: So you're saying that it is
15 potentially negotiable?

16 JILL REDDISH: No, I'm saying that I am not
17 at liberty to discuss that here tonight, but it will
18 be something that I am sure the town will bring up --
19 or may bring up at the table when we get there. It's
20 just not the appropriate time right now.

21 DICK CHASE: Are you at liberty to talk
22 about anything?

23 JILL REDDISH: I'm really -- this is a
24 preceding that the town is holding to ascertain their

1 future needs. I'm really only here to observe. I'm
2 happy to be invited. I'm happy to hear all of your
3 comments firsthand. I will bring them back. But,
4 again, I'm not a participant at this time. Down the
5 road I will be.

6 DICK CHASE: Okay.

7 JILL REDDISH: Thank you.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: That's correct, we are
9 looking for customer comments.

10 TAMMY MURAWSKI: My name is Tammy Murawski,
11 and I'm speaking on behalf of my mother, Janet
12 Murawski, who lives up the neck. She's had both
13 cable companies; and she's not pleased with one of
14 them, she's pleased with the other. So I'll just say
15 that.

16 I just want to say that I grew up here
17 Ipswich, and I also started volunteering at ICAM
18 several years ago. And I have worked my way into a
19 part-time position. One of the things that I have
20 seen here, both as a volunteer and as a person who
21 works on the staff, is an incredible interest in the
22 children here. We did an animation camp that we
23 created a 20 minute movie, which took a long time to
24 make, but each week we got together and the kids went

1 from being 15, to maybe probably six or seven at the
2 end. They finished, and they were really excited
3 about that.

4 Now, out of that group we have had several
5 kids who are very interested in creating movies, and
6 even want to go out and visit, you know, the East --
7 the East Coast movie place down in, you know, towards
8 -- I don't know where it is. Down in Acton, in that
9 area.

10 So -- and I also see, you know -- my mother
11 is a senior citizen and she also is partially,
12 legally blind, so she depends a lot on the local
13 cable access TV station to preview government
14 meetings, which she can't get to because they are
15 late at night. In addition to seeing what goes on at
16 the senior center. So I find, you know, as a child,
17 my mother lives in this community, cable access TV
18 station here in Ipswich is a very valuable asset to
19 the Town of Ipswich. And as a resident, and as an
20 entire lineage of family members that have grown up
21 here, preserving these moments of archival history, I
22 think, is something that's going to be very valuable
23 to the future of Ipswich residents.

24 Thank you.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Murawski.
2 You did state that your mother was unhappy with one
3 of the providers. Do you want to comment on that?

4 TAMMY MURAWSKI: (Nodding head in the
5 negative).

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

7 BILL GALLANT: I'd like to say something.
8 Shall I get up, or shall I just sit here?

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, identify yourself
10 and --

11 BILL GALLANT: Bill Gallant. I live on
12 Dornell Road, and I am on the Cable Advisory
13 Committee.

14 I do a lot of sports for the high school.
15 I do video a lot of the sporting events that my kids
16 participate in. So I have the video from the camera,
17 which is HD video, and I watch it from a computer a
18 lot of times. And I also, at times, watch it on the
19 public access channels, and I was really struck by
20 the difference in quality between watching the HD
21 video off the camera, and then going to the public
22 access channels because they are not in HD. And
23 watching them on television, especially now that
24 everybody has much larger televisions, you can really

1 -- it is really striking, the difference if you can
2 compare HD video to the quality that we currently
3 have. So I think what's important to me is that ICAM
4 has the ability in the future to broadcast in high
5 definition. I think that's going to be very
6 important in the future.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Bill.

8 KERRIE BATES: Hi. My name is Kerrie
9 Bates. I'm a resident here in Ipswich. I live at 42
10 Summer Street. I'm also the Director of Recreation
11 and Culture for the Town of Ipswich. My office is
12 across the hall from the ICAM studios.

13 I am thrilled with the partnership that the
14 recreation and culture department enjoys with ICAM in
15 extending the reach of our culture activities to
16 people who aren't necessarily able to participate in
17 them while they are happening.

18 I was interested to learn tonight that in
19 some communities that cable rates are dictated by an
20 agency, but in our community this is not the case
21 because there's competition. I have no complaints
22 about the quality of my Verizon service. I feel like
23 I pay a fortune for that, and I do get good service.
24 And I am very interested in making sure that those

1 two companies, that I feel have somewhat of a
2 monopoly on, you know, Ipswich residents for cable
3 access, you know, that those corporations continue to
4 help our community to grow our cable access here in
5 Ipswich.

6 I'll echo Mrs. Murawski sentiments, in that
7 the schools, the young people in Ipswich, are very
8 excited by the resources that are made available to
9 them through ICAM, and the demand is growing all the
10 time.

11 Thank you.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Kim.

13 PAUL MENEHINI: This is the hot seat. Hi,
14 my name is Paul Meneghini and I live at 60 Prospect
15 Street in Ipswich. I'm not involved in any
16 committees, I'm not -- I am a taxpayer and a parent
17 of three children in the school system. And my
18 children have used these programs, specifically some
19 of the ones that Beth Meyer spoke about, and I want
20 to offer my support and concur that the programs are
21 very high quality, huge return, and growing in
22 popularity. I think as a taxpayer I'm very pleased
23 that it seems to me a huge value for the money, and
24 it is supported by a large volunteer, and supported

1 by the community widespread. As a taxpayer, I want
2 to put in my two cents, or a lot more than that
3 actually, that these are programs that we want to
4 expand, and we want to support them.

5 And that's all I have to say. Thank you.

6 STEVE MANLEY: Hello. My name is Steve
7 Manley, and I'm a Verizon subscriber, but I also
8 contribute to ICAM programming. And, frankly, I find
9 it frustrating when you cannot get the schedule
10 online, or on the screen. It is broadcast, of
11 course, but unless you are going to wait for that to
12 be -- to see it, you're going to have to subscribe to
13 the local paper, or you just don't know what's going
14 to come on. So I think to bring ICAM, the local
15 cable access, up to speed, I think the cable
16 companies deserve or owe it to the town to bring them
17 up to a level of broadcasting, including
18 high-definition. When you consider they are doing
19 this as a matter of routine for all of the
20 broadcasters, why would you scrimp on the
21 communities. I would think that there'd actually be
22 bad public relations not to provide those two things;
23 high-definition and on-screen programming information
24 the way they do with all of their other broadcasters.

1 Thank you.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

3 RACHEL ROESLER: Well, I promised some
4 people I would speak for them. Rachel Roesler, a
5 member of the Cable Advisory Committee, but -- well,
6 Ipswich resident, a parent of three children who have
7 been trained in cable production through ICAM and are
8 involved in some of the opportunities that are
9 afforded to school children. My kids have benefitted
10 and greatly enjoyed the public access programming
11 that has allowed them to participate and learn
12 production.

13 As a former school committee member, we
14 will often hold meetings that are empty in the
15 audience, and then I get tons of e-mails after the
16 meeting with comments and feedback because everyone
17 is watching on ICAM. So I cannot express enough how
18 important that is as a resource to the community.
19 The number of people in the audience is never a
20 reflection of the interest in the subject matter. It
21 allows people to stay engaged and involved in their
22 communities, but also be at home serving dinner or
23 watching it on their own time, which has been
24 tremendous with the streaming through the Internet.

1 So there are a few people who are not able to be here
2 tonight, who asked me to just express how important
3 of a service that is.

4 As a former school committee member, being
5 able to watch the Board of Selectmen meetings and
6 FINCOM meetings on cable has been invaluable to me to
7 stay involved and educated on the other boards issues
8 so that I can make more informed decisions as a
9 school committee member -- or so that I could make
10 more informed decisions as a school committee member.
11 Not having that programming on the program guide is
12 always a problem. I spend a lot of time responding
13 to e-mails from interested citizens wanting to know
14 when they can watch the school committee meetings, or
15 they heard about a meeting that occurred, how can
16 they see it. Or, when will be on again? So that
17 would be very helpful.

18 It's an invaluable service. It's growing
19 in popularity, and we need to continue to provide the
20 programming that people are looking for. So, there
21 are some people who asked me to share their views,
22 and I concur.

23 There was an event at the school yesterday,
24 an evening event. There's an event at the school

1 tonight, which is competing with people's ability to
2 be here. But, those events will be, you know, on
3 ICAM for anyone who is not able to be there. And
4 that's, you know, an incredible resource and
5 opportunity to keep everyone connected.

6 BETH MEYER: Here, here.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Rachel.

8 Anybody else?

9 DICK CHASE: Second round. One of the
10 things that I've been concerned with is, that I
11 thought that as a community resource it's unfortunate
12 that we don't have any real time capability. For
13 example, we've had -- over the years we've had a
14 number of incidents that happen in town, the Mother's
15 Day floods, very recently we had all of that -- the
16 Northeast storm. And it's a question often, when
17 things are going on, even somebody falls in a trench,
18 the kind of things that get the Boston station out
19 here with a truck. It seems to me we ought to be
20 able to handle, in some way, by ourselves. Even if
21 it started out as just a crawl.

22 I think a lot of people -- well, when they
23 lose power one thing. But, if, you know, the water
24 starts turning gray, or whatever, they often call the

1 police department. And I think that if we had some
2 kind of a liaison so that we could get on the air
3 what's happening in a more real-time basis. In other
4 words, a liaison with the emergency management
5 department, and a way to broadcast what's actually
6 happening, what streets are close. Where shouldn't
7 people go gawking. What should we avoid. If you
8 need to get out of town, how do you do it. Because I
9 recall I had to do that during the Mother's Day
10 floods, and took a lot of turns and finally had to go
11 up to "495" to get down to the South Shore. And that
12 would be useful and everybody, usually when is a big
13 storm and lots going on, people want to know. And if
14 nothing else, it might build some interest in the
15 cable system.

16 So how that affects what you negotiate, or
17 if it makes a difference, but I would think that it
18 should be an item that should be looked at in terms
19 of how the effect some time of real-time reporting.
20 Either stick somebody down there, or have the police
21 chief come on, or the fire chief, or whoever, public
22 works, have the ability to have them bring us up to
23 date. Now clearly, if everybody's out of power and
24 they don't have TV, then that's not a great way to

1 communicate. But absent that, I think we should give
2 it a try.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Anybody else?

4 (Hearing none.)

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well to wrap up then,
6 I want to thank everyone that did come here tonight,
7 especially those who shared their thoughts and gave
8 their comments, and I think everybody who may watch
9 this on cable TV as well. We are not closing the
10 hearing. We are actually just adjourning this part
11 of the process now. The ascertainment process will
12 continue through the entire period of contract
13 license negotiations, and there could even be
14 additional hearings. And the record upon which
15 decisions will be made, will stay open during the
16 entire process.

17 I noted before, that the Cable Advisory
18 Committee had prepared and distributed a survey, both
19 electronically and in paper forms. If anybody here
20 or watching has completed the survey and gotten it
21 back to us, thank you very much. If people haven't,
22 please just take a few minutes and send that in.
23 Your responses and the information and your thoughts
24 will be very helpful input to us in this renewal

1 process.

2 And finally, the negotiations themselves,
3 the meetings where we are talking about the license,
4 the contract, what we are looking for, will be open
5 public hearings. I don't know if Mr. Hewig has
6 anything to add on that.

7 MR. HEWIG: Only that ascertainment
8 encompasses not only a public hearing, but
9 negotiating meetings and meetings of your Cable
10 Advisory Committee and negotiating team at which they
11 will continue to welcome public input. So those of
12 you who may be watching tonight, or watching when
13 this is aired again, if you didn't get a chance to
14 attend the public hearing, please feel free to submit
15 your comments in writing to the cable committee or
16 the Selectmen or send e-mails in, or come to the
17 future meetings. Watch for the town meetings that
18 will be posted and come to those meetings and share
19 your thoughts with your cable negotiating team at
20 this future meetings.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Hewig.

22 I have nothing more, unless there's
23 anything from any of my fellow members. Mr.
24 Antonucci?

1 FRANK ANTONUCCI: I'd like to just mention
2 to everybody, that if you do want to do the survey,
3 there are paper copies out in the back, if you want
4 to just grab one, there's a box back there. If you
5 want to turn it in now, you can always turn it into
6 the purchasing office, which is down the hall, which
7 is my office, and I will take that. It is something
8 that is anonymous, so you don't have to put your name
9 on it.

10 And then, also, electronically it's on
11 Survey Monkey, and that link is on the town website.
12 It's also on the utilities website, and it has also
13 been put on a couple of the various Facebook pages
14 out there, as well. So if you are interested in
15 doing it electronically, you can just go to the town
16 website, the main, sort of, page and it's right there
17 and you can just click on that.

18 Thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

20 I see one request for a comment, so --

21 UNIDENTIFIED: Where would we email
22 comments?

23 THE CHAIRMAN: I think that if you do it
24 electronically, through the Survey Monkey, that's how

1 it's done. I suppose if you wanted to -- and that's
2 probably the easiest way. I suppose you could fill
3 it out in paper, scan it, and then e-mail it,
4 perhaps, to Mr. Antonucci.

5 FRANK ANTONUCCI: Right. The survey
6 actually does have some open-ended questions on it,
7 so the last question pretty much is just open ended
8 and you can write anything in there. If that's not
9 enough space for you, you can send that to the Board
10 of Selectmen. I'm happy to give you my card, if you
11 want to get my e-mail, you send it to me. There's
12 many different ways that you can provide input. We
13 want to make it as easy as possible for people to
14 participate in the process.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: And, of course, if you want
16 to provide comments other than what's there in the
17 survey, we welcome those as well. And if you want to
18 do that by e-mail, perhaps to Mr. Antonucci would be
19 the easiest way.

20 TAMMY MURAWSKI: So I just wanted to say
21 that a lot of elderly people in Ipswich are not on
22 any kind of a computer, and can't take the survey in
23 the Survey Monkey, whatever. So where are they able
24 to pick up one of these surveys? How are you going

1 to -- you know, is it possible to get a lot of these
2 surveys out to the elderly people, because they are a
3 lot of the community that do watch a lot of TV.

4 FRANK ANTONUCCI: Right. I will drop some
5 surveys off at Council on Aging, which is down the --
6 downstairs. And I've also talked about post offices,
7 as well.

8 TAMMY MURAWSKI: What about the Cable
9 Gardens? There's a lot of people over there.

10 FRANK ANTONUCCI: I'm happy to deliver it,
11 if we need to deliver to people. So we want to make
12 -- we want to have as many people participate in this
13 process as possible. That's the reason why we did a
14 paper survey, and not just electronically, because we
15 want everyone to participate.

16 So if you want to take copies for people.
17 If you know folks who want to participate, they can
18 mail them back to us, the purchasing office at 25
19 Green Street. So there are several different ways
20 that people can participate.

21 KEN SHEA: Will there ever be a time when
22 you can talk to Verizon or Comcast representatives?
23 Is there a meeting set up for us to -- because she
24 said she can't really comment on anything today at

1 all. Is there a way that we can interact with them?

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, Mr. Hewig will address
3 that.

4 MR. HEWIG: Comcast and Verizon are not
5 here tonight to negotiate. It's not fair to ask them
6 to agree or disagree any more so than it would be to
7 ask the cable advisers, you know, what are you going
8 to demand?

9 This is a public hearing where we are the
10 ears of the public, and we want to hear what you have
11 got to say. The negotiating meetings will be
12 substantive, and there will be positions exchanged,
13 and there will be bargaining going on there. You are
14 welcome to attend those meetings. They are public
15 meetings.

16 If you have specific questions for the
17 representatives of either Comcast or Verizon, who are
18 present -- they won't be the same, there will be
19 certain meetings with Comcast and certain meetings
20 for Verizon. They won't both be together at the same
21 meeting. But if you have questions for them, it's a
22 public meeting, and you're welcome to ask those
23 questions. I cannot guarantee you that they will be
24 able to answer, but my experiences with these things

1 has been that if they don't have an answer, they will
2 want to get back to you. They'll want to find a way
3 to communicate the answer back either through the
4 cable committee or directly to you.

5 So that's how the process works.

6 KEN SHEA: I see tonight -- we just came
7 here just to see if we enjoyed our service, if we
8 like Verizon or if we like Comcast.

9 I'm more concerned with funding that's
10 coming from these companies for our public access
11 channels. So when will we find out about that? Is
12 there -- who can we talk to about are they going to
13 increase the funding? Are they going to take the
14 funding away?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, certainly there are
16 frequent meetings of the Cable Advisory Committee
17 going on. Those are noticed. You can come. We have
18 -- the first segment of those meetings is always for
19 public comment. You know, you can express your
20 views. I'm sure that we'd be happy to have, you
21 know, an interactive conversation as to what we would
22 be seeking ultimately. But it is a fairly long
23 process, over many months, but those are certainly
24 opportunities where those things --

1 KEN SHEA: Right --

2 THE CHAIRMAN: (Inaudible - simultaneous
3 speech).

4 KEN SHEA: -- that's why I'm here today, my
5 concern is that the public funding would be either
6 taken away or reduced. I'd like to see it increased.

7 UNIDENTIFIED: Is there a deadline when
8 this has to be resolved, a date?

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, the current license
10 for Verizon expires, I understand, on July 9, 2016.
11 So it does seem a long ways off, though it is a
12 time-consuming process and we have tried to get
13 started on the process early. And the Comcast one is
14 actually just about a year after that.

15 UNIDENTIFIED: That early. Thank you.

16 BILL GALLANT: Anybody else can stop me,
17 but you say "public funding." It's really paid by
18 the customers. It's not paid for by the cable
19 company, the subscribers --

20 KEN SHEA: -- right, myself and other
21 people.

22 BILL GALLANT: Right. So you're paying for
23 whatever you get, essentially.

24 KEN SHEA: Well, I guess, to clarify even

1 -- who decides what that number is, and will we have
2 any input into that at all?

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly you have input by
4 giving your views to us, as a committee.

5 MR. HEWIG: Can I just address something?

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure, please.

7 MR. HEWIG: That's a good question. And I
8 think what you're really asking is what the process
9 looks like, how it works. The way it works is, your
10 cable committee, your cable negotiators will put
11 together a plan. They will -- based on
12 ascertainment, based on input from you folks and
13 consultation from, perhaps, other members of the
14 community, they put together a plan of what they
15 want. It'll be like a business plan. They'll say,
16 all right, Verizon we want 5 percent, 4.5 percent
17 gross annual revenues and we want \$250,000, or we
18 want \$200,000 or we want "X" amount. That will be a
19 starting position. We'll sit down with Verizon and
20 we'll negotiate.

21 So the answer to your question: Do you
22 have any input? How will you know? You'll know and
23 you will have input if you come to the negotiating
24 meetings, because that's basically what we're talking

1 about, money.

2 And your cable negotiators will put
3 together a plan. If they say they want \$250,000,
4 they'll show you why, and they'll show the cable
5 company why. They will say we want equipment, we
6 want facilities, we want space, we want salaries, we
7 want insurance; whatever all the components are of
8 the financial demands that will be made on the cable
9 company will be justified and supported by the cable
10 committee. So that's how you'll know. That's what
11 the process looks like. We're at one place, they're
12 in another place; we negotiate until we come to an
13 agreement for both licenses.

14 DICK CHASE: What are the parameters? I
15 mean, we don't just make up a budget and say, let's
16 see, we'd like three TV trucks and a broadcast
17 studio. There's got to be some parameters here on
18 the money. I mean, Verizon might want to give us a
19 dollar and a half; we might want a million. But
20 somewhere in there there's some numbers, aren't
21 there, that dictate how much we get?

22 MR. HEWIG: Well, the answer to that is,
23 that's the job of the cable negotiators and ICAM and
24 the other communities of interest, to put together,

1 and come together and prepare the town's plan,
2 business plan, that will be presented to the cable
3 operators.

4 And the way that your committee will
5 determine the numbers will be what the needs of the
6 community are; what ICAM wants, what other
7 departments, the school -- the town, such as the
8 school department, the Selectmen, the library, senior
9 center, what all of those communities of interest may
10 want. So you ask what the parameters are, I mean,
11 the parameters will be whatever the negotiating teams
12 determine is a reasonable amount of money to ask for
13 on a renewal license. That'll be their starting
14 point, and then they'll hear what Verizon and Comcast
15 have to say.

16 Right now, the licenses provide for
17 4 percent with respect to one, and 5 percent with
18 respect to the other on gross annual revenues for
19 annual income. And Comcast's provided \$100,000 in
20 capital, and Verizon provided for 200,000 in capital.
21 So, you know, it's unlikely the numbers are going to
22 be lower than that. I suspect that they will either
23 be equal to or higher than that, and it's our job,
24 and your committee's job to figure out what the right

1 number is that the town will want, and to negotiate
2 towards that number.

3 BETH MEYER: Just to make a correction,
4 it's 4 percent from both.

5 MR. HEWIG: Four percent from both?

6 BETH MEYER: Yeah.

7 MR. HEWIG: Four percent for both.

8 KEN SHEA: So if they give us this money,
9 that gives them another contract with the town; is
10 that correct?

11 MR. HEWIG: The selectmen are the issuing
12 authority, and your cable negotiators will report out
13 a recommendation to the Selectmen. If the cable
14 committee and the cable negotiators come to an
15 agreement with Comcast and Verizon, and I believe
16 that they will do so, that agreement will be reported
17 out, and it's up to the Selectmen. They are the
18 issuing authority, so they have the thumbs-up, or the
19 thumbs-down. It's their license. That's how it
20 works. Both licenses can be no longer than 10 years.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Anything else?

22 TAMMY MURAWSKI: I have one more thing. I
23 understand that the first real negotiation is in June
24 of 2016. And so what I was wondering is, what is the

1 deadline for the cable committee putting together the
2 package to present at negotiations?

3 THE CHAIRMAN: I think it depends on -- I
4 mean, the absolute deadline could be a week before,
5 but as a practical matter you are going to have to
6 have time and negotiation going back and forth, and,
7 you know, time for each side to consider its
8 position. So as a practical matter, I think we
9 really want to get it going and allow for well over
10 six months for the negotiation process.

11 I know Mr. Maloney was involved with the
12 prior negotiation for one of the contracts. I don't
13 know if you want to add anything to that.

14 JIM MALONEY: It does. It takes a while;
15 it's going back and forth. But, you know, I think we
16 should come to some conclusion before that date -- I
17 think well before that date.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. If there's nothing
19 more, I will call this meeting and hearing adjourned,
20 and the record will remain open, and the committee
21 will remain eager to receive comments from any
22 interested parties.

23 Thank you.

24 (Whereupon, public meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.)* * *

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

I, Wendy L. Thomas, Professional Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify that the foregoing record, Pages 1 to 39, inclusive, is a true and accurate transcript of my system tapes to the best of my knowledge, skill and ability.

I am not connected by blood or marriage with any of the said parties, nor interested directly or indirectly in the matter in controversy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and Notary Seal this 3rd day of December 2014.



WENDY L. THOMAS, Notary Public
My Commission expires: 2/9/2018

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