

Wakefield Cable TV Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes 11/29/2023

Meeting held by Zoom. All votes by roll call.

Meeting started at 7pm

Members Present:

Daniel Lieber

Shane McCarthy (taking minutes)

William "Bill" Reading

Eric Reid

Brian McCoubrey

Brendan Connell

Agenda:

- Public questions/feedback: none
- Shane moved to approve the minutes from 6/21/23
- Eric seconded the motion.
- Unanimous approval of the prior minutes
- Daniel explained some requirements as Chair of this committee.
- Updates on funding for WCAT:
- Bill joined town council meeting on Monday 11/27/23 and was officially sworn in as being a "communication member" for us.
- Brian (speaking) was on the board at WCAT, but currently a volunteer.
- Mr. Ryan Boyd took over for Mr. Tom Stapleton at the end of 2019 for Executive Director
- Ian McDemott is the new Executive Director
- Looking for the 5th person to hire now.
- There is a meeting for WCAT scheduled for 12/13/2023
- People can do a quick tour if they like.
- 2 Federal level notes
 - o Protecting community television act
 - Cable companies can NOT reduce their fees.
 - o HR3557 proposes to make Broadband more accessible.
 - Cable Companies can cancel their agreements but still provide service to towns.

- This would have detrimental effects
 - State Level
 - Streaming companies new taxes
 - 40% to Municipalities
 - Rest to local access station
 - New tax most likely to consumers
 - Went to committee.
 - No 2nd meeting scheduled yet.
 - Couple of other bills “floating around”
 - All meetings have to be “hybrid”
 - And/OR all meetings must be “remote”
 - Not a lot of movement on these two
 - Bills have to be discharged by committee by 2/7/2024
 - Question as to why there were 9 members named but only 8 official members now
 - Dan mentioned we want to get as much funding as possible for WCAT or equivalent to provide these services.
 - WCAT is listed as a separate account now, which is a good thing.
 - Still discussion on how to fund WCAT
 - Taxes from town
 - Additional taxes from streaming services
 - WCAT benefits the town
 - We don’t want to lose their service
 - Shane mentioned that WCAT is important for many events (sporting, committees, etc)
 - Inflation is causing costs to rise not go down.
 - Bill feels ready for meeting in a couple of weeks.
 - We look forward to Bill’s feedback.
 - We want to schedule our next meeting close enough to get accurate and timely feedback from Bill
 - April time frame is the discussion at this point.
 - April 22, 2024, 7pm
 - Agreed upon date
 - Shane to write up summary for annual report.
 - Dan brought up the motion (2nd by Shane) and Dan will oversee and approve the summary
 - Shane makes motion to adjourn meeting at 7:50pm—Eric seconds it.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:51pm

Minutes approved April 25, 2024.