



# AGENDA

## CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Regular Meeting  
September 3, 2014

Meridian Township Municipal Building  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI

**Administrative Conference Room**

- A. Call Meeting to Order at 6:00 p.m.
- B. Public Remarks
- C. Approval of Agenda
- D. Approval of Minutes – August 6, 2014
- E. Communications/Announcements
- F. Old Business
  - 1. Audits
    - a. Comcast Franchise Fee Audit Discussion
    - b. AT&T Review Franchise Fee Audit Discussion
    - c. Technical Review Audit Discussion
    - d. Community Needs Assessment Discussion
- G. New Business / Discussion Items
- H. Reports
  - 1. Complaints/Compliments: Deborah Guthrie
  - 2. Video Service Provider(s):
  - 3. Communications Director Report: Deborah Guthrie
  - 4. Chair's Report: Walter Benenson
  - 5. Township Information: Ron Styka
  - 6. Programming: Deborah Guthrie
  - 7. Viewership/Promotions: Deborah Guthrie
  - 8. Finance: Deborah Guthrie
- I. Other Business & Announcements
- J. Public Remarks
- K. Adjournment

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact Meridian Township by writing or calling the following:  
Frank Walsh, Township Manager, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198 (517-349-1200, Ext. 308). Ten days notice required.

**Cable Communications Commission Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**DRAFT**

Administrative Conference Room  
Meridian Municipal Building, Okemos, MI  
August 6, 2014

**Present:** Commissioners: Patrick Crowley, Tunga Kiyak and Brian Seipel  
Staff: Deborah Guthrie  
Township: Ron Styka  
Comcast: John Gardner  
AT&T: None  
Haslett Schools: None  
Okemos Schools: None

**Call Meeting to Order:** Commissioner Kiyak (Acting Chair for absent Walter Benenson) called the meeting to order at **6:08 pm**.

**Public Remarks:**

No Public Present

**Approval of Agenda:**

Commissioner Crowley moved TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. Seconded by Commissioner Seipel.

Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Commissioner Crowley moved TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JULY 30, 2014 AS SUBMITTED. Seconded by Commissioner Seipel.

Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

**Communications/Announcements:**

Nothing to Report.

**Old Business:**

1. Cable Communications Needs Assessment RFP – Communications Director Deborah Guthrie recommended the Cable Communications Needs Assessment RFP be awarded to the Holly Hansen Consulting group at the last regular meeting and the commission requested Guthrie acquire verbal references for the Holly Hansen group and report her findings. Guthrie informed the commission that she received positive feedback from the references she contacted including, but not limited to the following comments: "Great job, thorough report, report relied on considerably for re-franchising, relied on heavily for capital equipment

needs, very beneficial analysis of what we need for renewal, knowledgeable, good technical background, easy to work with, highly organized and good facilitator. The references were all positive the commission was satisfied and the needs assessment survey will move forward.

2. FCC Monies Recommendation - The commission revisited the Comcast Transfer of Control and Midwest Cost to Review Memo dated July 23, 2014 and discussed whether or not to recommend approving \$75,000 for purposes of participating in a coalition to file comments with the FCC. The Commission agreed to not recommend using funds toward FCC filings or comments.

3. 2015 Budget Recommendation – The commission discussed the budget for next year and Guthrie informed the commission that Administrative Assistant II Kristi Schaeding will be transferring to the Police Department on August 25<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Crowley moved TO APPROVE THE 2015 BUDGET AS RECOMMENDED.  
Seconded by Chair Kiyak.

Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

**New Business:**

Nothing to Report.

**Reports:**

- Cable Compliments/Complaints: The Commission discussed the complaints included in the packet and Comcast Representative John Gardner stated that he makes sure all Comcast complaints have been followed through.
- Video Service Provider(s): Gardner announced that Comcast will include up to six months of complimentary service for any new family that has not yet applied for the Internet Essentials program. Families who are approved for Internet Essentials between August 4<sup>th</sup> and September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 will receive up to six months of Internet service. Gardner reported that Comcast is also offering an amnesty program for certain low-income families who could qualify for Internet Essentials, but have a past due balance. Guthrie requested Internet Essentials video promotions from Gardner to air on the HOMTV channel.
- Communications Director's Report: Guthrie reported that primary election night was one of the smoothest elections staff has done to date and everyone performed well. She stated that HOMTV provided good coverage for viewers and received kudos from township directors and staff.
- Chair's Report: Chair Walter Benenson was not present.

- Township Information: Township Liaison Ron Styka reported the township park millage passed.
- Programming: Guthrie informed the commission that she interviewed the Chair of the Community Resource Commission (CRC) Suzanne Brouse, to promote the upcoming Golf Fest fundraiser to help the emergency needs fund. She also stated the All Access Sports show will begin airing this week and the interns have worked diligently to produce the program on their own.
- Viewership/Promotions: Nothing to report.
- Finance: Nothing to report.

**Other Business & Announcements:**

Nothing to Report.

**Future Agenda Items:**

Nothing to Report.

**Public Remarks:**

No remarks from the public.

**Adjournment:**

Commissioner Seipel moved TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. Seconded by Chair Kiyak.

Hearing no objections, Chair Kiyak ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 7:08 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, September 3, 2014 in the Administrative Conference Room.

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN**

**CABLE COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

## Deborah Guthrie

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**From:** Marc Barrett <Marc.Barrett@twofour.co.uk>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 08, 2014 1:01 PM  
**To:** Deborah Guthrie  
**Subject:** Top of the Class footage licencing enquiry

Dear Deborah,

My name is Marc and I am a researcher for the UK-based production company, **Twofour Broadcast** ([www.twofour.co.uk](http://www.twofour.co.uk)). I left a message on your voicemail a few moments ago, but please find this email in support of the message.

I understand my colleague Erin Ross made contact with yourself a few months ago with regards to an episode of HOM-TV's *Top of the Class* series, which I believe was filmed in the late 1980s, featuring a Okemos High School student, Holly Tarr being interviewed by HOM-TV Reporter, Sue Teitle. Holly unfortunately was to be murdered while visiting her brother in San Diego in April 1990 by Cleophus Prince Jr, who we are making a documentary about for the crime series ***Born to Kill?*** or ***Twisted*** as it is known in the USA on the *Investigation Discovery* channel.

Erin has now left the company, so I am taking over some of her some of her projects hence my writing to you.

The series explores the cases of some of the world's most prolific killers, through the eyes of the people that knew them, their victims and the communities' best. The focus of the documentary is to answer the argument of the Nature vs. Nurture debate. We question the true impetus and drive of the crimes rather than glorifying or vilifying the acts and persons involved, along with commemorating the victims of the crimes and those who were instrumental in bringing the killer to justice.

We are interested in using some of Holly's interview that she gave in the programme when she gave an idea of all the things she would like to do in the future once she had graduated from school to illustrate Holly as the person she was and not be seen just as a victim .

I understand that HOM-TV were going to see if you still had the footage but in the meantime we have received a copy from the San Diego Courthouse and my writing to you is to seek permission to using **6 seconds** of the Holly's interview within our documentary? We ask for any licence to allow us usage to cover **10 Years, All Media, Worldwide**. I would be interested to know of any costs involved with the licencing of this footage. We do not require any footage from yourselves.

Our final online edit takes place on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August, and we would love to include this clip within the final documentary.

I can be contacted either by email: [marc.barrett@twofour.co.uk](mailto:marc.barrett@twofour.co.uk) or my direct office line is, Tel: **01144 1752 727673** (includes dial out and UK regional code).

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

*Marc*

Marc Barrett

## Deborah Guthrie

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**From:** Morgan Burke-Beyers <[mburke-beyers@liaa.org](mailto:mburke-beyers@liaa.org)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 17, 2014 11:36 PM  
**To:** Deborah Guthrie; Brandie Yates  
**Subject:** Public Access

Hello Deborah and Brandie,

My name is Morgan Burke-Beyers and I am the Station Manager/Program Coordinator for UpNorthTV in Traverse City. I just started in this position last November and have found myself working with a number of interns which was not something that was being done quite as much previously. For instance I had 5 college and 3 High School interns in the Winter/Spring Semester. Then over the summer I have had 3 College and 1 High School intern. I'm anticipating as many as 5 College interns, an AmeriCorp VISTA (a college work experience) and an unknown amount of High School interns this Fall.

I know you have a unique program for interns at HOMTV and I was curious if you could give me some feedback on how well it works for your station (It appears to be working well based on your employee backgrounds at HOMTV) and exactly how it works? For example are these officially internships through the local colleges and what kinds of projects do you use as these intern step up through your program?

I recently just started following ("Watching") the activity on your Facebook page. I wanted to let you know two things that seem to be working well for me is making sure to tag people and locations in the posts I make and instead of just posting links to the actual video I post :30-:60 sec video teases directly to Facebook. We currently only have about 550 "likes" and I would say the average post reaches maybe 60-80 people. The videos generally seem to reach between 150-300 with my record high being the Blue Angels video that hit 2800 with roughly 300 views, 33 likes and 22 shares (there were an estimated 500,000 to 1 million people in town to see them so still nothing mind blowing). Facebook has a lot of different ways to determine which posts get put at the top of the feeds and posting videos directly to Facebook seems to be one of the ways to get higher posting results. Plus the shorter videos generally play automatically when you scroll over them. I have not directly seen a correlation to views on our website but I need to study the analytics for our website more specifically to see if I can find program specific correlations. In Traverse City Facebook remains the dominant social media platform and there is very low activity on other platforms so I'm not sure if this is as major a focus in Lansing as it is in Northern Michigan. Just thought I would share some of my results.

Any information you can provide would be great.

Thanks,

Morgan Burke-Beyers  
[mburke-beyers@liaa.org](mailto:mburke-beyers@liaa.org)  
248-891-3460

## Deborah Guthrie

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**From:** Robert Gingerich-Jones  
**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2014 1:26 PM  
**To:** Deborah Guthrie  
**Cc:** Kristi Schaeding; Darkus Beasley  
**Subject:** Resident concern

Hey Deb. I just spoke with a Mr. Ron Romanowski (517-332-5383), he said that they have Comcast, and he noticed that channel 23 (Okemos schools) had no audio. I told him that I would let you know, and he asked me to have you call him.

After hanging up the phone, I checked the Okemos channel at Kristi's desk, and the school board meeting that is currently playing DOES have audio. So, I called Mr. Romanowski back, and he checked his television again, and he still does not have any audio levels on the Okemos channel (23). He does have audio on all other channels that he tried.

He said he will call Comcast about the issue, but he would still appreciate a phone call from you when you are able. I did tell him that you are out of the office today, so you wouldn't get my message until tomorrow.

I hope that I followed proper procedure for this matter. I figured that I should not call Comcast on his behalf, since it seems that the problem is at his location and not system-wide. Please let me know if there is anything else that I can do. Thanks.

-Rob



# CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN

Elizabeth Ann LeGoff  
Brett Dreyfus  
Julie Brixie  
Frank L. Walsh

Supervisor  
Clerk  
Treasurer  
Manager



Milton L. Scales  
Ronald J. Styka  
John Veenstra  
Angela Wilson

Trustee  
Trustee  
Trustee  
Trustee

August 22, 2014

John Gardner  
Senior Manager Government Affairs  
Comcast Heartland Region  
1401 E. Miller Rd.  
Lansing, MI 48911

Subject: Initial Information Request for Franchise Fee Review

Dear Mr. Gardner:

Meridian Township ("Meridian") has engaged Ashpaugh & Sculco, CPAs, PLC ("A&S") to review franchise fees paid by Comcast for the period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2014. Their initial request is attached. Please provide the response directly to A&S. If you have any questions concerning the request, please let A&S know as soon as possible. A&S will be contacting Comcast directly with any additional requests.

It is our intent that A&S perform this review quickly. As such, Comcast is requested to provide the responses to A&S by close of business September 5, 2014.

Meridian appreciates Comcast's assistance with this franchise fee review and asks that Comcast respond with all requested information in a timely manner. If you have any questions, please contact me at (517) 853-4380 or [Guthrie@meridian.mi.us](mailto:Guthrie@meridian.mi.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah Guthrie".

Deborah Guthrie  
Communications Director, Meridian Township

Cc: Michael J. Watz, Esq., Kitch Drutchas Wagner Valitutti & Sherbrook  
Joseph Van Eaton, Esq. Best Best & Kreiger, L.L.P.  
Garth Ashpaugh, Ashpaugh & Sculco, CPAs, PLC  
Marc Lockard, Comcast ([Marc\\_Lockard@comcast.com](mailto:Marc_Lockard@comcast.com))

Enclosure

5151 MARSH ROAD, OKEMOS, MICHIGAN 48864-1198 (517) 853-4000

[www.meridian.mi.us](http://www.meridian.mi.us)



**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN**

**CABLE COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION**

**OLD  
BUSINESS**

## Deborah Guthrie

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**From:** Garth Ashpaugh <GAshpaugh@ASCPAS.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 20, 2014 4:06 PM  
**To:** Deborah Guthrie  
**Cc:** Carolyn Sculco  
**Subject:** AT&T Audit update

Deborah –

First, we are sorry for the delay in getting you this status update. AT&T has provided us a huge amount of data relative to Grand Rapids, our model for this review, to analyze and we are working our way through it. So far, Carolyn has found a number of categories of video revenues that were consistently excluded throughout the review period in the determination of franchise and PEG fees. Once we have finished identifying all of the categories excluded by AT&T, we will work with AT&T to obtain the associated revenues for these categories for the entire review period and determine the deficiency.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Garth

Garth Ashpaugh, CPA  
Ashpaugh & Sculco, CPAs, PLC  
300 N. New York Avenue, #879  
Winter Park, FL 32790  
P: 407.645.2020 x1  
F: 866.397.0871  
C: 407.484.0543

"Character is much easier kept than recovered." --Thomas Paine

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN**

**CABLE COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION**

**NEW  
BUSINESS**



**For the placement of fiber optic cable and ACD owned utility poles:**

**Route Description:**

**Southeast Corner of Haslett Rd. & Marsh Rd.**

See Map No. 16-791-7893

We propose to bore from a Consumers Energy pole (labeled pole no. 1) at the Southeast corner of Haslett Rd. & Marsh Rd. North approx. 110' along the East side of Marsh Rd. then East approx. 290' along the South side of Haslett Rd. then South on to Shop Town property to a Cell Tower located South of the shopping center at 1581 Haslett Rd. All cable will be buried within the road right of way and at a depth of 48"

**Intersection of Marsh Rd. & Central Park Dr.**

See Map No. 16-790-7889

We propose to bore from a Consumers Energy pole (labeled pole no. 14) located South of the intersection of Marsh Rd. & Central Park Dr. Northeast for approx. 247' to a Consumers Energy Pole (labeled pole no. 16). All cable will be buried within the road right of way and at a depth of 48".

**Northeast corner of Marsh Rd. & Central Park Dr.**

See Map No. 16-790-7889

We propose to bore from a surface mounted vault which will be located at the West corner of Marsh Rd. & Central Park Dr., Northeast, along and within the road right of way, of Marsh Rd. for approx. 470', then bore Northwest to an existing Cell tower located behind 5151 Marsh Rd., Okemos, MI. which is the Meridian Twp. Public Safety Bldg. All cable will be buried within the road right of way and at a depth of 48".

**South side of Central Park Dr. btwn. Okemos rd. & Columbus Rd.**

See Map No. 16-790-7889 & 16-791-7889

We plan to bore from a proposed ACD pole location (pole no. 436/11053) located approx. 1868' Northwest of the intersection of Marsh Rd. & Central Park Dr. along the South & West sides of Central Park Dr. to the Southwest corner of Central Park Dr. & Columbus Ave. Also, we plan to bore under Central Park Dr. from the Southwest corner to the Southeast corner, to a proposed ACD pole location (ACD pole no. 484/11050). All cable will be buried within the road right of way and at a depth of 48".

**Southeast corner of Central Park Dr. & Columbus Ave.**

See Map No. 16-791-7889

We propose to place an ACD owned pole (pole no. 484/11050) located at the Southeast corner of Central Park Dr & Columbus Ave. ACD pole will be placed within the road right of way.

**South of the intersection of Marsh Rd. & Central Park Dr.**

See Map No. 16-790-7889

We propose to place an ACD owned pole (pole no. 484/11051) approx. 28' Southeast of a Consumers Energy pole (labeled pole no. 10) which is located approx. 850' Southwest of the intersection of Marsh Rd. & Central Park Dr. (5 poles Southeast of intersection). Also, we propose to attach a fiber optic cable btwn, the two poles. ACD pole will be placed within the road right of way.

**North of the intersection of Marsh Rd. & W. Grand River Ave.**

See Map No. 16-790-7888

We propose to place an ACD owned pole (pole no. 436/11052) approx. 75' Southwest of Consumers Energy pole (labeled pole no. 3) which is located approx. 200' Northeast of the intersection of Marsh Rd. & W. Grand River Ave. (2 poles Northeast of intersection). Also, we propose to attach a fiber optic cable btwn. the two poles. ACD pole will be placed within the road right of way.

**South side of Central Park Dr. approx. 1868' Northwest of Marsh Rd.**

See Map No. 16-790-7889

We propose to place an ACD owned pole (pole no. 436/11053) approx. 1868' Northwest of Marsh Rd. on the South side of and within the road right of way of Central Park Dr.

**Southeast corner of W. Grand River Ave. & Washington Heights Ave.**

See Map No. 16-790-7888

We propose to place an ACD owned pole (pole no. 484/11054) approx. 131' South of the centerline of W. Grand River Ave. & 30' East of the centerline of Washington Heights Ave. Also, we propose to bore for the placement of a fiber optic cable placed in 1 1/4" conduit from said ACD pole to a Consumers Energy pole located approx. 124' East of the intersection of W, Grand River Ave. & 52' South of the intersection of Washington Heights Ave. ACD pole and underground cable will be placed within the road right of way. Cable depth will be 48".

**Southeast corner of W, Grand River Ave. & Okemos Rd.**

We propose to place an ACD pole (pole no. 436/11055) approx. 95' South of the centerline of W. Grand River Ave. & approx. 40' East of the centerline of Okemos Rd. Also, we propose to bore for the placement of a fiber optic cable in 1 ¼" conduit from said ACD pole to a Consumers Energy pole located approx. 207' East of the centerline of Okemos Rd. & approx. 57' South of the centerline of W. Grand River Ave. Pole and underground cable will be placed within the road right of way. Cable depth will be 48".

**East side of Marsh Rd. btwn. W, Grand River Ave. & Lake Dr.**

See Map No. 16-790-7888, 16-790-7889, 16-790-7890, 16-791-7890, 16-791-7891, 16-791-7893

We propose to attach a fiber optic cable to existing Consumers Energy poles which are located on the East side of, and within the road right of way, of Marsh Rd. From a pole located at the South corner of Marsh Rd & W. Grand river Ave. (labeled pole 1) to a pole (labeled pole 37) located in front of Haslett High School at 5450 Marsh Rd., Haslett, MI. Also, we propose to overlash six spans of new fiber optic cable to existing fiber optic cable, which are attached to existing Consumers Energy poles located btwn. Haslett Rd. & Lake Dr. (labeled pole nos. 1-6 on map no. 16-791-7893). We shall maintain proper clearances following Consumers Energy & Ingham county guidelines.

Proposed ACD owned poles will be Class 4 - 35' wood poles for the placement of a Distributed Antenna System (DAS) for a wireless provider.



**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN**

**CABLE COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION**

**COMPLAINTS/  
COMPLIMENTS**

## Deborah Guthrie

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**From:** Brandie Yates  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 06, 2014 1:03 PM  
**To:** Jane Greenway  
**Cc:** Deborah Guthrie  
**Subject:** RE: good job!

Thanks Jane!

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**From:** Jane Greenway  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 06, 2014 9:31 AM  
**To:** Brandie Yates  
**Cc:** Deborah Guthrie  
**Subject:** good job!

Hi guys,

I watched HOM TV live last night (since we don't have cable at home) and the production was fantastic! Brandie, you looked and sounded great. I'll bet you are all very tired right now.

☺ Jane

Jane L. Greenway, RLA  
Parks and Land Management Coordinator  
Meridian Charter Township  
Phone 517-853-4610  
Email [greenway@meridian.mi.us](mailto:greenway@meridian.mi.us)

*"Creating Community Through People, Parks, and Programs"*

## Deborah Guthrie

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**From:** LuAnn Maisner  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 06, 2014 3:50 PM  
**To:** Deborah Guthrie  
**Subject:** great job last night

Hi Deb,

Your staff did a great job covering the park millage last night. I especially liked the exit interviews regarding their feelings on the park millage. Your interns did a nice job with the park stories as well.

LuAnn Maisner, CPRP  
Director of Parks and Recreation  
Charter Township of Meridian  
517-853-4604

## **Kristi Schaeding**

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**From:** Frank Walsh  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 06, 2014 7:55 AM  
**To:** Deborah Guthrie  
**Cc:** Kristi Schaeding; Robert Gingerich-Jones; Darkus Beasley; Brandie Yates  
**Subject:** HOM TV COVERAGE

Please pass on my appreciation to the entire HOM TV team for their outstanding election coverage last night. I realize what you accomplished took great effort by many. Our residents were well served by your attention to detail.

Frank

Sent from my iPhone

## Deborah Guthrie

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**From:** josh@medianetworkofwaterford.org  
**Sent:** Monday, August 11, 2014 6:25 PM  
**To:** Robert Gingerich-Jones  
**Cc:** Deborah Guthrie  
**Subject:** RE: Equipment donation to Media Network of Waterford

Deb, Rob,

Just a quick note to say thanks again for the generous donation of equipment to the Media Network of Waterford. We have already implemented some of the equipment in to our work flow already.

I am using one of the DVC pro decks in our production office to capture DVCpro and miniDV tape via firewire to computer. We no longer have to tie up the studio to capture tape from the field. (yes we still shoot tape and use the studio to capture it)

The news desk is amazing. I already have two volunteers that will give it a little touch up. We didn't have to take any doors off to get it in to our studio :)

A volunteer currently using some of the smith victor lights down the hall to shoot his sitcom.

I hung the studio lights up in our studio. This will give us much more lighting options with out moving our current 4 fixtures around. They work fine on our grid.

We are going to use the DVCpro cameras on our truck as extra feed cameras. We have tripod plates and power supplies that will fit those cameras.

Again, thank you, thank you!! We really appreciate it!

Josh Bowren  
Executive Director  
Media Network of Waterford WTV10

## Kristi Schaeding

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**From:** Deborah Guthrie  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 13, 2014 6:50 PM  
**To:** Kristi Schaeding  
**Subject:** FW: Kind words from Aditya Sharma to me

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**From:** Brandie Yates  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 13, 2014 4:48 PM  
**To:** Deborah Guthrie  
**Subject:** FW: Kind words from Aditya Sharma to me

Kudos for Erica from her story source! I will put in her folder, she did an amazing job on this story.

Thanks,  
Brandie

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**From:** Erica Francis [<mailto:ericafrancis8@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 13, 2014 4:42 PM  
**To:** Brandie Yates  
**Subject:** Kind words from Aditya Sharma to me

On Wednesday, August 13, 2014 6:05 AM, Aditya <[aditya@comcast.net](mailto:aditya@comcast.net)> wrote:

Hi Erica,  
Job well done.  
Your parents must be very proud of you.  
Your talents will take you the top in time to come and I wish you well .  
Please let me know when you are coming over for Indian dinner at my house.  
Thank you.....Aditya

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 12, 2014, at 11:03 PM, Erica Francis <[ericafrancis8@yahoo.com](mailto:ericafrancis8@yahoo.com)> wrote:

Hello Aditya,

Here is the story! Thanks for all of your help.

[Hindu Temple Moves Toward An Energy Efficient Future](#)

Hindu Temple Moves Toward An Energy Efficient  
Future

-----Original Message-----

From: Jordanne Jaskiw [mailto:[jordanne.jaskiw@gmail.com](mailto:jordanne.jaskiw@gmail.com)]

Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 3:04 PM

To: Brandie Yates

Subject: Fwd: Pat Cannon's Story On Life After Going Blind | HOMtv :: Meridian Township, Michigan

Hey Brandie,

I just received this email from Pat Cannon and he was really happy with the story. I loved doing this story.

Sincerely,

Jordanne

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> Nicely done, Jordanne! Thank you for sharing the link with us and,  
> most especially, I thank you for taking the time to visit our home to  
> provide an opportunity for Janeile and me to share our story.  
>  
> I have had numerous opportunities for such interviews over the past 30  
> years or so and found our time with you to be particularly enjoyable.  
> You have an easy going manner, Jordanne, a knack for putting people at  
> ease and the capacity to gather information and succinctly tell a  
> story. I am impressed with how well you write and enjoy your very comfortable on-camera presence.  
> Undoubtedly, Jordanne, you are a talented, capable individual whom I  
> believe will be successful in any endeavor you choose to pursue.  
>  
> Please feel free to keep in touch, Jordanne, and call upon me at any  
> time if there's ever anything I may do to assist you in any manner.  
> In the meantime, take care and be well.

> Best always,

> Pat Cannon

> 1769 Pine Creek Circle

> Haslett, Michigan 48840

> [pat.cannon@comcast.net](mailto:pat.cannon@comcast.net)

> 517-339-1869 - Home

> 517-243-6988 - Cell

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Jordanne Jaskiw [mailto:[jordanne.jaskiw@gmail.com](mailto:jordanne.jaskiw@gmail.com)]

> Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 11:04 AM

> To: [pat.cannon@comcast.net](mailto:pat.cannon@comcast.net)

> Subject: Pat Cannon's Story On Life After Going Blind | HOMtv ::

> Meridian Township, Michigan

> Good morning Pat,

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN**

**CABLE COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION**

**COMMUNICATIONS  
DIRECTOR  
REPORT**



# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Cable Communications Commission

**FROM:**

  
Deborah Guthrie, Communications Director

**DATE:** 7/31/2014

**RE:** Revised and Approved 2014 Cable Communications Commission Regular Meeting Schedule for the Remainder of the Year

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The Cable Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian recommends the adoption of the 2014 regular meeting schedule as follows:

Wednesday, August 6, 2014	6:00 pm	Administrative Conference Room
Wednesday, September 3, 2014	6:00 pm	Administrative Conference Room
Wednesday, October 8, 2014	6:00 pm	Planning Conference Room
Wednesday, November 5, 2014	6:00 pm	Administrative Conference Room
Wednesday, December 3, 2014	6:00 pm	Administrative Conference Room

## Deborah Guthrie

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**From:** members-bounces@lists.natoa.org on behalf of Tonya Rideout <TRideout@natoa.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 31, 2014 12:16 PM  
**To:** 'members@lists.natoa.org' (members@lists.natoa.org)  
**Subject:** [Members] NEW eNATOA on Election Programming for Local Governments, 8/11, 2:00 PM Eastern  
**Attachments:** 2014 eNATOA Registration Form.doc; ATT00001.txt

NATOA Members:

Based on the recent NATOA listserv discussion and inquiries, we've added a SPECIAL eNATOA on Monday, August 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM Eastern on **Election Programming for Local Governments**. Get your questions answered on the workings of this election season! Register today.

[Click here to register](#) or complete the attached registration form. Registration closes August 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Monday, August 11, 2:00 PM Eastern**

*This is a newly added eNATOA and is not included in any previously purchased packages.*

### **Election Programming for Local Governments**

Rules, rules and more rules! Get your questions answered regarding the policies and procedures relating to "equal time" rules, guidelines for broadcast channels vs. PEG channels, candidate "approval" statements and how the rules carry over to social media. Don't miss this timely session packed with the information you need to successfully navigate this election season.

This session will be moderated by NATOA Board Member **Keith Reeves**, Station Manager, ATXN, City of Austin, TX. Speakers include **Brian Grogan**, Shareholder, Moss & Barnett, PA; **Jim Horwood**, Partner, Spiegel & McDiarmid LLP and **Deborah Guthrie**, Communications Director, Charter Township of Meridian.



# Meridian

CHARTER TOWNSHIP

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## Administrative Assistant II - Communications Department

August 07, 2014 - August 21, 2014

**Location:** Okemos, MI

**Salary Range:** \$14.62 - 15.91 per labor agreement

**Exempt/Non-Exempt:** Non-Exempt

**Benefits:** Medical, dental & vision insurance, paid time off, LTD & Life Ins., MERS pension, retiree health savings account, etc.

**Employment Type:** Full Time

**Department:** Communications

**Description:** OPEN UNTIL FILLED - MUST APPLY USING ONLINE APPLICATION SYSTEM ONLY.

Under the supervision of the Communications Director, performs a variety of high-level administrative and support functions related to the daily operations of the Communications Department. May coordinate and monitor purchasing and work scheduling, process payroll, maintain inventory, records and procedures, and interact with the public and other departments.





- Duties:**
1. Receives, screens, and directs telephone calls, correspondence and visitors to the department. Responds to inquiries and provides information.
  2. Assists in the development and/or the preparation of the departmental budget. May engage in accounting activities such as generating billings, reconciling statements, processing payroll, and other similar activities.
  3. Drafts correspondence, reports, memos, and other items. Types, enters data, copies, files, correspondence.
  4. Schedules appointments and makes arrangements for administrative meetings and conferences.
  5. Maintains inventory of supplies and equipment. Places orders and makes purchases according to established procurement procedures and within budgetary guidelines.
  6. Establishes and maintains concise and comprehensive filing and records systems. Assembles data and processes various reports, generates monthly and year-end statistical reports, and others as requested.
  7. Performs special projects as assigned.
  8. Attends various meetings and records and transcribes minutes as necessary.
  9. Keeps abreast of new developments in the field and new techniques, through continued education and professional growth.
  10. Performs related work as required.

**Qualifications:** Requirements include the following:

- A high school diploma or equivalent supplemented by additional coursework in business management, office management, secretarial science, or a related field. Associate's Degree or Bachelor's Degree preferred.
- Four or more years experience in an office setting.
- Knowledge in the areas of budgeting, public relations, project management, bidding quotes, purchase orders, numerous reports, and newsletter publication.
- Knowledge of the structure, policies, procedures, and regulations of municipal government.
- Considerable knowledge of general office operations and administrative support procedures and practices.
- Thorough knowledge of modern office procedures and skill in applying them.

- Ability to effectively train others and assign, coordinate, and evaluate the work of staff.
- Ability to operate general office equipment and machines, personal computer and word processing software, typewriter, calculator, copier, and fax machine.
- Ability to gather data and prepare accurate and timely records, reports, notices, memos, and letters.
- Ability to convey and understand information effectively and promptly through speaking, hearing, reading, and writing.
- Ability to critically assess situations, solve problems, and work effectively within deadlines, and changing work priorities.
- Ability to establish effective working relationships and use good judgment, initiative and resourcefulness when dealing with other departments, the media, the public, Township officials, other employees, and representatives of other governmental units.
- Coordination of fundraising events; work with local businesses for sponsorships and contributions.
- Technology software used in this position:  
 Microsoft Word 2010  
 Microsoft Excel 2010  
 Microsoft Access Database 2010  
 Microsoft Outlook 2010  
 Adobe Photoshop CS6  
 Adobe In-Design CS6  
 Adobe Acrobat Pro X  
 ADP Timesheet System/Payroll System

**Apply Now**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Share this Job:</b></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">         email     </div> <div style="text-align: center;">       Share     </div> <div style="text-align: center;">       Share     </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">         twitter     </div> <div style="text-align: center;">         Linked     </div> <div style="text-align: center;">         Pinit     </div> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sign Up for Job Alerts</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <input type="text" value="First Name"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <input type="text" value="Email"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <input type="button" value="Send Me Jobs"/> </div> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">powered by JobPiper</p>
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**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN**

**CABLE COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION**

**PROGRAMMING**



## Programming Schedule for Week of August 25 - 31, 2014

Time	Monday 8/25	Tuesday 8/26	Wednesday 8/27	Thursday 8/28	Friday 8/29	Saturday 8/30	Sunday 8/31											
12:00 AM	Meridian Live - Township Board REPLAY	Meridian Live - Planning Commission REPLAY	Meridian Live - Township Board REPLAY	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals REPLAY	Meridian Live - Park Commission REPLAY	Meridian Live - Township Board REPLAY	Meridian Live - Planning Commission REPLAY											
1:00 AM				Meridian Live - Environmental Commission REPLAY	Meridian Live - Environmental Commission REPLAY													
2:00 AM				Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge													
3:00 AM				Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge													
4:00 AM				Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge													
4:30 AM	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	Meridian Live - Environmental Commission REPLAY											
5:00 AM	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW												
5:30 AM	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW												
6:00 AM	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General											
6:30 AM	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General											
7:00 AM	Coffee Break: Wharton Center	Coffee Break: Wharton Center	Coffee Break: Wharton Center	Coffee Break: Wharton Center	Coffee Break: Wharton Center	Coffee Break: Wharton Center	Coffee Break: Wharton Center											
7:30 AM	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association											
8:00 AM	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association											
8:30 AM	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge											
9:00 AM	Senior Living	Senior Living	Senior Living	Senior Living	Senior Living	Senior Living	Senior Living											
9:30 AM	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General	Jewels 'N General											
10:00 AM	InnerView: Turtle Toast	InnerView: Turtle Toast	InnerView: Turtle Toast	InnerView: Turtle Toast	InnerView: Turtle Toast	InnerView: Turtle Toast	InnerView: Turtle Toast											
10:30 AM	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association											
11:00 AM	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW											
11:30 AM	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW											
12:00 PM	Meridian Live - Park Commission REPLAY	Meridian Live - Planning Commission REPLAY	Meridian Live - Township Board REPLAY	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals REPLAY	Meridian Live - Park Commission REPLAY	Meridian Live - Township Board REPLAY	Meridian Live - Planning Commission REPLAY											
1:00 PM	Meridian Live - Environmental Commission REPLAY				Meridian Live - Environmental Commission REPLAY													
2:00 PM	Coffee Break: Wharton Center				Coffee Break: Wharton Center													
2:30 PM	Coffee Break: Wharton Center				Coffee Break: Wharton Center													
3:00 PM	Coffee Break: Wharton Center				Coffee Break: Wharton Center													
3:30 PM	InnerView: Harris Nature Center Programs	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association											
4:00 PM	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge											
4:30 PM	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports											
5:00 PM	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian Magazine											
5:30 PM	Meridian News NOW	Meridian Live - Township Board REPLAY	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE											
6:00 PM	Sustaining the Future							Sustaining the Future	Sustaining the Future	Sustaining the Future	Sustaining the Future	Sustaining the Future						
6:30 PM	Meridian Live - Planning Commission LIVE							Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE	Meridian Live - Zoning Board of Appeals LIVE					
7:00 PM														All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports
7:30 PM														Open Line: Back to School REPLAY	Open Line: Back to School REPLAY	Open Line: Back to School REPLAY	Open Line: Back to School REPLAY	Open Line: Back to School REPLAY
8:00 PM														InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association	InnerView: American Heart Association
8:30 PM	Senior Living							Senior Living	Senior Living	Senior Living	Senior Living	Senior Living						
9:00 PM	Beyond The Badge							Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge	Beyond The Badge						
9:30 PM	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association							Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association	Coffee Break with the American Heart Association						
10:00 PM	Coffee Break: Wharton Center							Coffee Break: Wharton Center	Coffee Break: Wharton Center	Coffee Break: Wharton Center	Coffee Break: Wharton Center	Coffee Break: Wharton Center						
10:30 PM	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports	All Access Sports												
11:00 PM	Meridian Magazine	Meridian Magazine	Meridian Magazine	Meridian Magazine	Meridian Magazine	Meridian Magazine	Meridian Magazine											
11:30 PM	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW	Meridian News NOW											

Meetings	Programs/Specials	Talk Shows	News
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All programs subject to change. LIVE meeting coverage may pre-empt other programs.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

**VIEWERSHIP/  
PROMOTIONS**

# HOMTV'S

## Upcoming Schedule of Shows

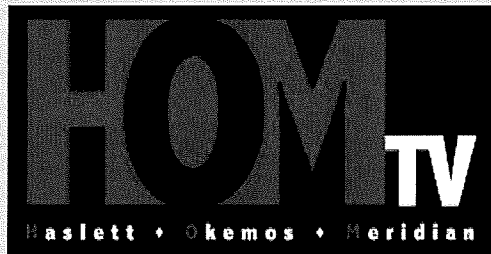


Week of August 25th - August 31th

### HOMTV Media Sponsorship

HOMTV is proud to sponsor multiple events this September including the Alzheimer's Association's 2014 "Walk to End Alzheimer's" on Sunday September 14th, the American Heart Association's 2014 "Lansing Heart Walk" on Saturday September 13th, and the Harris Nature Center Foundation's 2nd Annual "Turtle Toast Fundraiser" on Thursday September 11th. For more information watch InnerView: Turtle Toast online on-demand at homtv.net, and watch InnerView: American Heart Association, and Coffee Break: American Heart Association currently playing on Comcast channel 21 as well as on-demand.

More programming is soon to come regarding these upcoming events including Open Line: Alzheimer's Association, and Coffee Break: Alzheimer's Association.



WATCH NOW ONLINE

### HOMTV Gearing up for General Elections

### Top Stories From the Week:

Drunk Driving & Seat belt Enforcement Crackdown in Full Force Through September 1st



HOMTV & Meridian Township Offices Closed Thursday, August 28th for Employee Appreciation Picnic





HOMTV is gearing up for November's General Election, bringing you statements from local candidates, as well as candidate debates, and LIVE election night results programming. Visit HOMTV's Election Central page to find out more about local candidates and their races at [bit.ly/BallotMeridian2014](http://bit.ly/BallotMeridian2014).



[WATCH NOW ONLINE](#)

### Meridian News Now

Live on Thursdays at 11:30 a.m., Meridian News Now brings you the latest on Board and Commission decisions, local happenings, and upcoming events in the Meridian Township area. This week on News Now, a Meridian Township resident has a centennial celebration, a recap on Monday's Planning Commission meeting, the scoop on what happened at Wednesday's Zoning Board of Appeals meeting and more. Replays are aired four times daily or available online anytime.

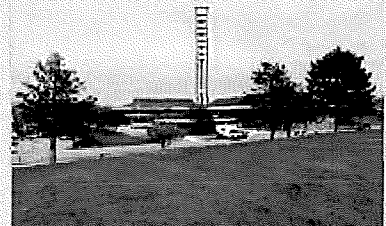


[WATCH NOW ONLINE](#)

### 2005 Master Plan Goals and Objectives Amendment Proposed



HOMTV & Meridian Township Offices Closed Monday, September 1st for Labor Day



### New Business Arriving in Meridian Township

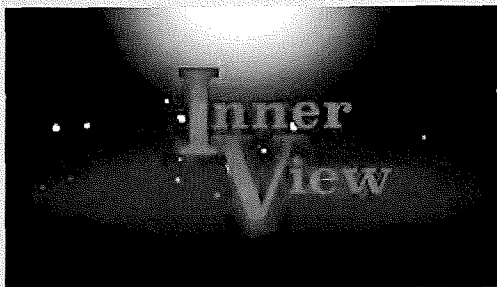


Ingham County Register of Deeds Releases Home Foreclosure Numbers, Meridian Township Improves

## InnerView

Coronary heart disease claims the lives of hundreds of thousands of people each year. In September, volunteers of Mid-Michigan will host and take part in the Lansing Heart Walk to raise awareness and prevention of heart disease. Joining HOMTV's Joe Gebhardt on InnerView this week are survivor and Heart Walk volunteer Judy Nash as well as American Heart Association Corporate Events Director and Lansing Heart Walk Staff Member Rodney Parkkonen. Catch the episode daily at 4:00 p.m., 8:00 p.m. Thursday - Sunday or online anytime.

This week on InnerView, HOMTV Whitney Burney welcomes Harris Nature Center Foundation Director and Turtle Toast Fundraiser Chairperson Roxanne Witcher along with Senior Park Naturalist Kit Rich to discuss the upcoming Turtle Toast fundraiser and how it will help benefit the future of the nature center. Catch the episode airing daily at 10:00 a.m. or online anytime.



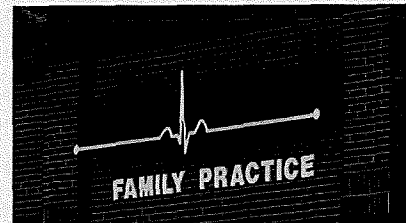
[WATCH NOW ONLINE](#)

## Meridian Live

Meridian Live brings you gavel-to-gavel coverage of Meridian Township government in action. The Planning Commission has a meeting Monday, August 24th at 7:00 p.m., and the Zoning Board of Appeals is scheduled for Wednesday, August 27th at 6:30 p.m.



Millions of Dollars Go into the Renovation and Building in Meridian Township So Far in 2014



### Contact Us

Deborah Guthrie  
Director of Communications  
[guthrie@meridian.mi.us](mailto:guthrie@meridian.mi.us)  
(517) 853-4380

Catch replays of all Meridian Live meetings online.



[WATCH NOW ONLINE](#)

### **Coming up the week of September 1st:**

Township Offices Closed on Labor Day (Monday 9/1)  
Meridian Live (Township Board Meeting 9/2)  
Coffee Break: Alzheimer's Association (Wednesday 9/3)  
Meridian News Now

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN**

**CABLE COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION**

**FINANCE**

with the reconstruction of Franklin Street in Haslett. There are a number of other streets that will be resurfaced this year beginning in September.

We will continue to seek creative funding patterns to help us repair our Township streets.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The most successful and thriving communities in Michigan and throughout the country do not settle for the status quo. *Communities of Choice* are those communities that seek new investments that go beyond simple brick and mortar. Creative Placemaking is just as important as the new MSU Federal Credit Union, Whole Foods, Hilton Hotel, Renaissance Inn by Marriott, Gordmans, H&M Clothing, Flagstar Bank, and Douglas J projects. Meridian Township continues to be a thriving *Community of Choice*. Residents in the Lansing Region, as well as homebuyers moving to the area, look at us for our lower taxes, environmental stewardship, outstanding parks, caring and attentive fire and police departments, exemplary schools, efficient public transportation, and a low crime rate. We need to maintain our focus on areas we can explore as a community that expands on our *Community of Choice* philosophy. We have a community band, farmers' market, and Lake Lansing. What other ways can we expose to draw more visitors and jobs to the area?

Our main focus must target Haslett, Downtown Okemos, and Carriage Hills. Grand River Avenue will thrive without much effort based on traffic counts and location.

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING**

Looking back on the ice storm response reminds all of us about the importance of community communication. Our dedicated Communications Department will continue their efforts in 2015.

Meridian Township received a cable franchising renewal letter from Comcast in 2012 which discussed the federal formal process. Federal law gives communities 6 months to start a proceeding to identify future cable related needs and interests. Meridian responded to the renewal and began the formal process which includes a financial audit, tech audit, and communications needs assessment. Prior to the end of 2014, the technical audit and franchise fee audit should be complete. The communications needs assessment is budgeted for 2015. The purpose of the financial audit is to determine whether or not the calculation of franchise and PEG fees are conducted properly by the cable companies. The purpose of the tech audit is to review the technical compliance of the cable systems including areas of code noncompliance.

Meridian received an application from Comcast to transfer control of the current franchise to a new entity, Midwest Cable LLC, who will be buying a variety of services from Charter Communications. This deal could pose serious risks for the Township beyond customer service standards and pricing. The Cable Communications Commission responded to the request in regards to the incompleteness and inaccuracies as it pertains to the franchise and Meridian Code of Ordinances. The Commission will continue evaluating the legal, financial, and technical qualifications of Midwest Cable providing services to the residents of Meridian Township.

As such, a large portion of the Communications budget has been dedicated to refranchising and the transfer of control. This process has significantly had an impact on the ability for equipment replacement and upgrades. As a result, staff will work with the Commission on reconfiguring the 5 year equipment replacement and purchasing plan.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

The Public Works and Engineering Department is split, for accounting purposes, into a Water Fund and a Sewer Fund in order to differentiate expenses as recommended by the utility rate study completed in 2001. The rate model developed for the study was used to determine recommended utility rates for 2015. The water charge is recommended to increase from \$3.65 to \$3.70 per 1,000 gallons and the sewer charge from \$3.70 to \$3.85 per 1,000 gallons. The billing charge is recommended to remain at \$4.00 per bill. The average homeowner will see an increase of \$.90 per month for water and sewer service.

The increase in the water rate is necessary to cover the increased cost of water purchased from the Lansing Board of Water & Light and the East Lansing Meridian Water & Sewer Authority. It will also allow us to continue to replace older water mains that have a history of frequent breaks. Even with the increase in the rate, the water fund balance is estimated to remain unchanged.

The increase in the sewer rate is necessary for several reasons. First, there is an increased cost of sewage treatment at the East Lansing treatment plant. Second, it will allow continued upgrades to our 28 sewage lift stations. Last, the increase will provide funds to replace the Towar Lift Station identified as necessary by the recently completed sewer study.

## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS – ALL FUNDS**

The projects budgeted in 2014 that will be completed before the end of the year:

- Installation of streetlights along Okemos Road is complete; however, some lights are still not operating correctly. This project is partially funded by a Transportation Enhancement Grant.
- Begin construction of the foundations for the pedestrian bridge crossing the Red Cedar River on the west side of Okemos Road. Installation of the bridge structure will occur in early spring of 2015. Estimated cost is \$500,000.

Projects scheduled for 2015 include the following:

- Construct a new fire station on Okemos Road at Central Park Drive. Scheduled completion is December 2015. Total project cost, including engineering, is \$3,500,000.
- Reroof the Service Center Building – Estimated cost is \$195,000.
- The only pathway project scheduled for 2015 is construction of a pathway along the south side of Mt. Hope Road from Okemos Road to Maumee. Construction is contingent on the acquisition of easements along Mt. Hope. Condemnation will be necessary to acquire some of the easements. Estimated cost is \$300,000.
- Sewer projects recommended for 2015: Replacement of pumps at the Shoals Lift Station and at the Sundance Lift Station (\$34,000); replacement of controls at the

## SUMMARY OF SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS

REVENUE SUMMARY				
FUND	2013 Actual	2014 Original Budget	2014 Projected Total	2015 Budget
Local Roads	\$507,625	\$509,700	\$825,733	\$510,300
CATA Redi-Ride Millage	306,100	305,300	300,300	308,300
Senior Center Millage	128,488	129,100	126,603	129,100
Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathways	433,720	425,500	429,289	427,300
Land Preservation Millage	494,277	513,000	507,458	515,500
Land Preservation Reserve	-54,977	15,000	26,315	25,000
Park Millage	563,176	525,500	527,440	1,745,500
Park Restricted/Designated	52,627	50,200	56,000	56,000
Nancy Moore Park Beautification	0	3,000	3,000	3,000
Fire Restricted/Designated	0	0	417	0
Library Restricted	5,000	0	0	0
Police Restricted/Designated	15,899	14,000	24,420	26,000
Police Grant Funds	30,261	11,000	30,910	15,000
Energy Grant Fund	21,761	23,844	38,007	16,040
Cable Television	741,663	664,200	679,126	690,100
Community Needs	10,054	11,000	9,600	9,500
<b>TOTAL ADOPTED REVENUES</b>	<b><u>\$3,255,674</u></b>	<b><u>\$3,200,344</u></b>	<b><u>\$3,584,618</u></b>	<b><u>\$4,476,640</u></b>

### FUND BALANCE USAGE:

Local Roads Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
CATA Redi-Ride Millage	0	0	0	0
Senior Center Millage	0	0	0	0
Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathways	0	70,861	335,856	17,750
Land Preservation Millage	0	0	0	0
Land Preservation Reserve	113,386	65,061	64,516	0
Park Millage	0	2,742	97,380	0
Park Restricted/Designated	0	10,800	21,531	20,000
Nancy Moore Park Beautification	688	6,000	6,000	2,000
Fire Restricted/Designated	1,944	20,000	18,083	0
Library Restricted	0	0	0	0
Police Restricted/Designated	0	8,466	0	5,000
Police Grant Funds	0	0	0	0
Energy Grant Fund	0	0	0	0
Cable Television	0	0	0	0
Community Needs Fund	802	0	0	0
	116,820	183,930	543,366	44,750

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY				
FUND	2013 Actual	2014 Original Budget	2014 Projected Total	2015 Budget
Local Roads	\$423,361	\$509,087	\$505,000	\$510,000
CATA Redi-Ride Millage	300,470	303,600	300,000	308,000
Senior Center Millage	108,277	120,000	104,825	107,000
Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathways	354,933	496,361	765,145	445,050
Land Preservation Millage	35,834	500,000	500,000	333,978
Land Preservation Reserve	58,409	80,061	90,831	0
Park Millage:				
Parks & Recreation Administration	125,589	142,853	142,164	154,714
Harris Nature Center	183,306	191,419	194,088	188,661
Parks Maintenance	128,472	147,970	149,568	234,024
Park Development	17,866	46,000	139,000	899,000
Total Park Millage	455,233	528,242	624,820	1,476,399
Park Restricted/Designated	48,808	61,000	77,531	76,000
Nancy Moore Park Beautification	688	9,000	9,000	5,000
Fire Restricted/Designated	1,944	20,000	18,500	0
Library Restricted	0	0	0	0
Police Restricted/Designated	12,868	22,466	23,116	31,000
Police Grant Funds	30,261	11,000	30,910	15,000
Energy Grant Fund	17,509	3,650	20,984	5,000
Cable Television	646,761	659,479	679,126	690,100
Community Needs	10,856	11,000	9,600	9,500
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b><u>\$2,506,212</u></b>	<b><u>\$3,334,946</u></b>	<b><u>\$3,759,388</u></b>	<b><u>\$4,012,027</u></b>

## CABLE TV FUNDS

**Narrative:** The highest priority of the Communications Department is to provide residents with an increased access to transparency in governance with relevant information and in a timely fashion. A diverse means of methods through the utilization of current and best communication practices is used to provide information to residents and neighboring municipalities. An advisory board, the Cable Communications Commission, approves operating policies and makes recommendations concerning fiscal matters to the Township Board. Operating funds are primarily generated from franchise fees and peg fees derived from cable service providers according to Public Act 480.

<b>REVENUE SUMMARY</b>				
Account Classification	2013 Actual	2014 Original Budget	2014 Projected Total	2015 Budget
Franchise Fees-Cable TV	\$624,058	\$610,000	\$620,000	\$630,000
PEG Fees	56,489	54,000	56,000	60,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	60,916	200	3,000	100
Donations/Agency Fees	200	0	126	0
Interest	0	0	0	0
	<u>\$741,663</u>	<u>\$664,200</u>	<u>\$679,126</u>	<u>\$690,100</u>

**Franchise Fees - Cable TV:** The revenues from Cable Franchise Fees are received from the 5% Franchise Fee that is charged on the annual gross revenues of Comcast Cable Services and AT&T Uverse Services for use of the public rights of way.

**PEG Fees:** Cable PEG Fee revenues are received from the 3.36% that AT&T Uverse is charged on their gross revenues as support for the cost of public, education, and government access facilities and services.

**Donations/Agency Fees:** Includes the programming application fees, municipal shared services fees, and sponsor revenues for CAMTV.

<b>STATEMENT OF FUND BALANCE</b>		
	<u>Nonspendable</u>	<u>Restricted</u>
Fund Balance as of December 31, 2013 (per audit)	\$5,286	\$266,876
Anticipated Operating Surplus (Deficit) for 2014	<u>(5,286)</u>	<u>5,286</u>
Estimated Available Fund Balance as of December 31, 2014	0	272,162
Anticipated Operating Surplus for 2015	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Estimated Available Fund Balance as of December 31, 2015	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$272,162</u>



**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN**

**CABLE COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION**

**FYI**

The following materials are "for your information"  
and do not necessarily relate to an agenda item

# Chicago City Council to Comcast: End the Delays and Support CAN TV

Posted: 06/13/2014 12:41 pm EDT | Updated: 08/12/2014 5:59 am EDT

103

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Chicago's City Council, in a recent letter to Comcast, is seeking a 10-year renewal of its cable franchise in Chicago. Nationally, Comcast wants to take over Time Warner, combining the nation's two largest cable companies. The merger is attracting attention from the justice department, public officials, and a wide range of public interest groups. When advocating for approval of the merger, Comcast executive, David Cohen, stated that Comcast has consistently "over-delivered" on its public interest commitments.

It is precisely those public interest commitments that have caught the attention of Chicago Aldermen as negotiations go into overtime. The main issue is Comcast's reluctance to meet a standard of support for public access television channels operated by CAN TV that RCN, a much smaller company, already meets as part of its 2012 franchise renewal.

Over 40 members of the City Council made it clear in a recent letter to Comcast that they will oppose Comcast's franchise renewal if it doesn't include an acceptable deal for CAN TV. 10th Ward Alderman, John Pope said, "My colleagues and I want no further delays in Comcast meeting its public obligations in Chicago."

Comcast's renewal comes at a time when public protections in the cable and video market have been weakened by major corporations lobbying for regulatory "relief" while claiming increased competition for customers. At the same time, cable revenues in Chicago are robust, with Comcast enjoying an 80 percent increase in revenues from 2002-2012. By 2013, Comcast controlled two-thirds of the Chicago cable market, and had annual cable revenues of over \$384 million within the City.

Jordan Quinn of Kartemquin Films and Committee for Media Access was recently on WBEZ recalling the cable industry's start in Chicago, when a wide diversity of groups came together to advocate for CAN TV's creation, advocacy work that continues to this day. Says Quinn, "It's amazing to me to watch over the years the way the CAN TV has evolved into this multiplatform entity that helps all different kinds of people get their word out, tell their stories, and talk to their constituencies."

For 30 years, CAN TV has worked to protect and extend the public's most fundamental right - the right to speak and be heard. As a result, Chicago residents and groups now create more local programming than can be found in any other station in Chicago. CAN TV's training program helps people adapt to a changing multimedia environment, teaching skills toward independent use of media and building technological literacy in the community.

Chicago's cable ordinance created CAN TV 30 years ago with a requirement that cable companies operating in the City allocate channels and funding to support CAN TV's public mission. "This is something that they owe the community," says Quinn.

## Charter Slams PEG Channels and Gouges Municipalities

By AMERICAN COMMUNITY TELEVISION | JULY 18TH, 2014

July 18, 2014

### Charter Slams PEG Channels and Gouges Municipalities

American Community Television (ACT) and the Southeast Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (SEATOA) were notified this week that Charter Communications has slammed Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access channels to the 180's and 190's in three more states. PEG managers in Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina report their PEG channels have been slammed and the channel placement requires subscribers to rent an additional box in order to receive their local community channels.

In addition, Charter has eliminated Basic Tier service to municipal buildings claiming the municipal building is a commercial service, requiring local governments and schools pay twice the monthly fee (from \$30 to \$70), in order to be able to receive their own PEG channels.

"This is a direct result of statewide franchising laws that passed in these states," said Bunnie Riedel, Executive Director of ACT. "Even so, Charter is the only cable company that is doing this so far."

Three years ago ACT complained when Charter slammed PEG channels in Missouri and Wisconsin into the 900's, including cutting off free cable service to first responders in some communities.

"Among the cable operators, Charter has the worst track record when it comes to the public interest," said Riedel. "They are openly hostile to PEG access television and municipalities."

ACT has been speaking with Congressional offices regarding their concern over Charter acquiring Comcast cable systems and the formation of a new Midwest Cable, in partnership with Comcast's shareholders, in the Midwest.

Historically, local governments would negotiate with the cable operator for free service to municipal buildings, schools, libraries, police and fire department buildings. The service was considered part of the obligation of cable operators as they built their plant in, and used, the public rights of way. However, since twenty-two states adopted a statewide franchising regime local governments have lost the power to franchise cable providers.

"At this time, when municipalities are barely making payroll, Charter has decided that it can make a profit on the backs of the taxpayers," said Doris Boris, Executive Director of SEATOA.

American Community Television educates and advocates on behalf of Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access television. To contact Ms. Riedel, call 410-992-4976 or email [riedel@acommunitytv.org](mailto:riedel@acommunitytv.org), to contact Ms. Boris, call 704-541-5787 or email [seatoa@carolina.rr.com](mailto:seatoa@carolina.rr.com).



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This entry was posted in *News* and tagged *basic tier, channel slamming, Charter, municipalities, PEG*. Bookmark the *permalink*. Comments are closed, but you can leave a

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### ALEC Backs Dangerous Comcast -- Time Warner Cable Merger Plan, Opposes Open Internet

Posted by Jay Riestenberg (<http://www.commoncause.org/about/staff-directory/jay-riestenberg.html>) and Todd O'Boyle (<http://www.commoncause.org/about/staff-directory/todd-oboye.html>) on August 26, 2014

A powerful corporate lobby that has quietly engineered the passage of hundreds of pro-business state laws is setting its sights on securing federal approval of the controversial proposed merger of Comcast and Time Warner Cable.

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) also is pushing the Federal Communications Commission to relax Open Internet regulations so that internet service providers (ISPs) can slow down some websites and online applications while speeding up others.

ALEC called on the FCC last week to fast track approval of the Comcast -- Time Warner Cable deal "with little to no regulatory conditions." The merger would create a de-facto national cable monopoly, with unprecedented control over what you can see and say online and on the cable dial.

In a letter to the FCC, ALEC also declares its opposition to net neutrality and the Open Internet, calling net neutrality rules an "inflated regulatory burden." That's nonsense. Open Internet guarantees protect consumers from ISP gatekeeping. Without those rules, ISPs can effectively block your access to the websites and services you rely on every day. And because voters study the issues online, maintaining the Open Internet is critical to maintaining and strengthening democracy.

ALEC's moves are anything but surprising, as both Comcast and TWC are ALEC members. Comcast has served as ALEC's state corporate co-chair in Georgia, Minnesota, Missouri, and Utah, while Time Warner Cable serves as Ohio's ALEC corporate chair. Both Comcast and Time Warner Cable are members of ALEC's Communications and Technology Task Force and Tax and Fiscal Policy Task Force. In these task forces, Comcast and TWC lobbyists vote as equals with elected officials behind closed doors to endorse bills that cut corporate taxes, restrict municipal broadband systems, and eliminate hard won consumer protections on telecoms.

You still have time to tell the FCC what you think about the future of the Internet. Click here to take action (<https://secure.convio.net/comcau/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=242>)

# Comcast is expanding its \$10-a-month Internet program for the poor

35

By Brian Fung August 4

(Mr. T in DC)

Comcast is relaxing one of the eligibility requirements for its low-cost Internet access program, Internet Essentials. With the change, more Americans who are in poverty will be able to sign up for the company's \$10-a-month broadband program.

Under a back-to-school promotion running from now until Sept. 20, new Internet Essentials subscribers will get six months of free Internet access. In addition, those who were previously Comcast customers but were barred from signing up for Internet Essentials because they owed the company money for other services will now be able to subscribe to Internet Essentials — provided that their outstanding bill is more than a year old.

Low-income customers who have an outstanding balance less than a year old will still be able to apply for the program, which offers speeds of 5 Mbps, if they meet the other eligibility requirements, but they'll have to pay off their balance first. The company said Monday that

paying in installments would be an option.

"There is more work to be done to bridge the digital divide in America, but we are proud of what we have accomplished so far," wrote Comcast executive vice president David Cohen in a blog post Monday.

Americans can generally sign up for Internet Essentials if they have a child who is eligible for free or reduced-cost school lunches. Other requirements, such as not owing Comcast money for equipment or services and not having subscribed to Comcast for the last 90 days, have earned the company some criticism because the restrictions effectively limited the number of eligible participants in the program.

The company has gradually expanded eligibility requirements over time; when it began in August 2011, Internet Essentials was only available to families of students on free school lunches. That was later broadened to include students on reduced-cost lunches, and then later to private schools, parochial schools and homeschooled students.

A company spokesman acknowledged that some families have raised sign-up complaints through Comcast's nonprofit partners, but said that over the course of Internet Essentials' three-year existence, the program has registered 350,000 families for an estimated total of 1.4 million Americans served.

Comcast's subscription-based approach to low-cost Internet is available nationwide. Meanwhile, other companies have begun their

own low-cost programs, too. Google Fiber, which is still only available in a handful of cities, provides free 5 Mbps Internet with no eligibility requirements other than an upfront \$300 installation fee.

Comcast has been promoting Internet Essentials as part of its campaign to convince regulators to approve a \$45 billion merger with Time Warner Cable. Cohen's blog post added that the merger would extend Internet Essential to "millions of additional families."

Although the company told the Washington Post it was unclear how many Americans will be newly eligible to apply for Internet Essentials as a result of the more relaxed requirements, the changes promise to make the Internet more affordable for America's least well-off.

## Public access television: It could thrive if Congress lifted restriction

By Emmett D. Carson, Doug Stanley and Susan W. Hayes | *Special to the Mercury News*

POSTED: 08/28/2014 10:00:00 AM PDT | UPDATED: ABOUT 21 HOURS AGO 0 COMMENTS

Picture a hospital with no doctors or nurses but state of the art equipment; or a school with high-tech computers and smart boards but no teachers or support staff. Is this what the cable act intended when it restricted how Public Education and Government fees could be spent by community media centers like CreaTV San Jose? All cameras, no staff? That's the way it is now, but it doesn't make sense.

Fortunately, there's a simple fix.

Earlier this year, California Assemblymember Roger Hernandez authored AJR 39, a joint resolution that encourages Congress to lift the restriction on how municipalities can spend the PEG fees, rent paid by cable systems for using the public rights of way. Federal law restricts the use of these funds to capital expenditures. As a result, hundreds of media centers across the country like our own CreaTV San Jose are seriously hobbled. The resolution passed overwhelmingly out of the Assembly and State Senate and has been sent to our congressional delegation.

What would this mean for media centers in California serving our schools, nonprofits and media-making community? More jobs, more digital resources for schools and community groups, more local media content and a richer community conversation.

Community media centers, sometimes known as public access TV stations, act as information hubs. The intent of these centers is to provide equipment, training and cable channels purely for public and noncommercial use, enabling anyone in a city, including San Jose, to provide local perspectives on mainstream media.

For example, CreaTV airs programs in 10 different languages produced by San Jose residents. Media centers also offer job training to youth, the unemployed, senior citizens, professionals and video enthusiasts in how to produce, direct, edit, use cameras and produce live multicamera television shows. Media centers offer access to equipment and production services at low to no cost so that everyone can have a voice online and on cable television.

Since California enacted a cable franchise law in 2006, more than 250 communities have been handcuffed by this federal capital restriction. As a result, 20 percent of community media centers in California have closed, unable to survive on equipment funds alone. Dozens of California communities have been stripped of public cable channels, training and production resources, and a local voice.

In the interim since enacting its law, CreaTV San Jose has wanted



have enabled over 20,000 locally produced videos in 10 different languages to air on their four Comcast cable channels. They have distributed equipment resources to nine community centers in cooperation with SV Creates and the Adobe Foundation, and 14 San Jose schools through their own Media Access Program grant. Thousands of San Jose students have been trained in 21st century digital media skills.

CreaTV has issued 4,000 class certifications in various digital media workshops and offered participants low to no cost access to media making tools. Media centers enable our community to use video production tools to engage civically.

Imagine if these federal restrictions were lifted and CreaTV could hire the staff needed to support their programs. It would be a game changer for local communications and civic engagement in San Jose.

As members of CreaTV San Jose's Advisory Council and supporters of its community work, we urge Congress to lift the unnecessary restriction on this funding and allow California media centers to fully be a resource to our schools, nonprofits and underrepresented communities.

Emmett D. Carson, Ph.D., is CEO of the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. Doug Stanley is CEO and executive producer of Ridgeline Entertainment and Susan W. Hayes is president and CEO of ReSurge International. They wrote this for this newspaper.

## Proposed Comcast-Time Warner Cable-Charter Merger/Swaps/Sales Spark Thousands of Filings at the FCC; Responses Due Sept. 23

Date: August 27, 2014

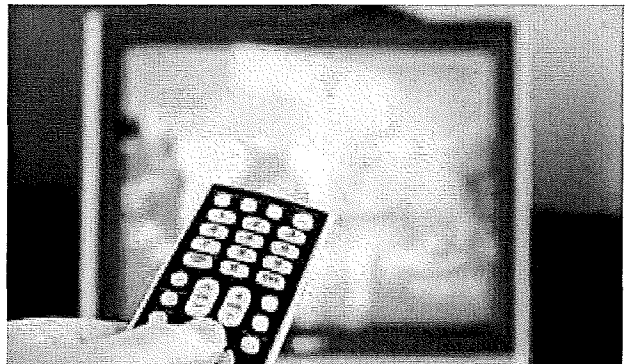
Author(s): Joe Van Eaton (<http://www.bbknowledge.com/author/joseph-van-eaton/>), Gail A. Karish (<http://www.bbknowledge.com/author/gail-karish/>) and Jordan Ferguson (<http://www.bbknowledge.com/author/jordan-ferguson/>)

([http://www.bbknowledge.com/wp-](http://www.bbknowledge.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/cabletv.jpg)

[content/uploads/2014/08/cabletv.jpg](http://www.bbknowledge.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/cabletv.jpg)) The proposed merger of the two largest cable operators in the country, Comcast and Time Warner Cable, and the related system swaps and sales involving Charter Communications, have generated an enormous amount of press coverage (see the *Washington Post* ([http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-switch/wp/2014/08/26/what-new-york-mayor-bill-de-blasio-and-others-want-from-the-comcast-time-warner-cable-merger/)

[switch/wp/2014/08/26/what-new-york-mayor-bill-de-blasio-and-others-want-from-the-comcast-time-warner-cable-merger/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-switch/wp/2014/08/26/what-new-york-mayor-bill-de-blasio-and-others-want-from-the-comcast-time-warner-cable-merger/)) and the *Los Angeles Times* (<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/envelope/cotown/la-et-ct-time-warner-cable-internet-outage-merger-complaints-20140827-story.html>)) and paper this last week. The deadline for the initial round of comments on the merger was Aug. 25, and more than 65,000 filings were listed in the FCC docket as of Aug. 27.

The FCC can approve the merger without conditions, deny the merger, or approve it with conditions to ensure it serves the public interest. This means the outcome of the proceeding could impact local programming and budgets, consumer protection, preservation of the open Internet, and access to regional sports programming, among other things. This [filing deadline](http://www.bbklaw.com/?t=40&an=31444&format=xml) (<http://www.bbklaw.com/?t=40&an=31444&format=xml>) was intended to allow communities and the general public to weigh-in on the merger.



Among the filers were the mayors of [Boston \(http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7521820075\)](http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7521820075), [Los Angeles \(http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7521820004\)](http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7521820004) and New York City, as well as the [counties of Los Angeles \(http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7521820475\)](http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7521820475) and Montgomery, Md., together with Portland, Or. and the Ramsey-Washington Suburban Cable Commission. Their filings, and others like them, argued that if the merger is approved, it should be approved subject to enforceable conditions. The conditions proposed include:

- requiring the companies involved in the merger to support local public, educational and government channels by allowing localities to use PEG funding for operating and capital purposes and requiring the companies to provide high-quality channels at no charge to local governments;
- expansion and improvement of the Internet Essentials program, which offers low-cost Internet connections to school-age children;
- conditions to speed broadband deployment and adoption to unserved and underserved areas;
- requirements for customer service improvements; and
- conditions to prevent operators from engaging in practices that limit competition or access to programming.

The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors and the Alliance for Community Media were also critical of the merger, as were some cable and media industry representatives, including Netflix, Roku, Starz, ReelzChannel, the Sinclair Broadcast Group, Centurylink, RCN, DISH Network Corporation and the American Cable Association. Among those who urged approval of the merger was a group of 50 cities, led by Philadelphia (although it is not clear whether those cities would oppose the conditions proposed in the filings). All the filings can be found [here \(http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/proceeding/view?z=oai2n&name=14-57\)](http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/proceeding/view?z=oai2n&name=14-57).

Communities that wish to weigh-in on the debate will have an opportunity to file responses supporting, opposing or supplementing the initial comments on Sept. 23, and can also file replies to the Sept. 23 responses on Oct. 8. There are also opportunities to meet with FCC staff to discuss the merger. More information about the merger can be found [here \(http://www.fcc.gov/transaction/comcast-twc\)](http://www.fcc.gov/transaction/comcast-twc).

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# MINISTRY OF INNOVATION / BUSINESS OF TECHNOLOGY

## Comcast conveniently forgets “no fees” promise until confronted by recording [Updated]

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Not everyone likes their friendly neighborhood cable behemoth.

Two weeks ago, in the wake of Ryan Block's nightmare of a cancellation call, Comcast Chief Operating Officer Dave Watson issued an internal memo saying that the recording was "painful to listen to." He exhorted his employees to "do better." Unfortunately for Watson, another call surfaced on Sunday that will likely be just as painful: a fellow named Tim Davis called Comcast to contest some bogus charges on his bill and only managed to get them refunded *because he had recordings of previous Comcast calls*.

According to the write-up by *The Consumerist*, Davis had moved to a new apartment and transferred his Comcast service to his new residence, opting to perform a self-install rather than have Comcast send out a technician. After a few weeks without problems, his Internet connection started dropping out, and a technician was dispatched. Comcast determined that the problems had to do with outside wiring rather than anything under Davis' control, and thus the company told him that the truck roll and service were *gratis*.

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### LATEST FEATURE STORY

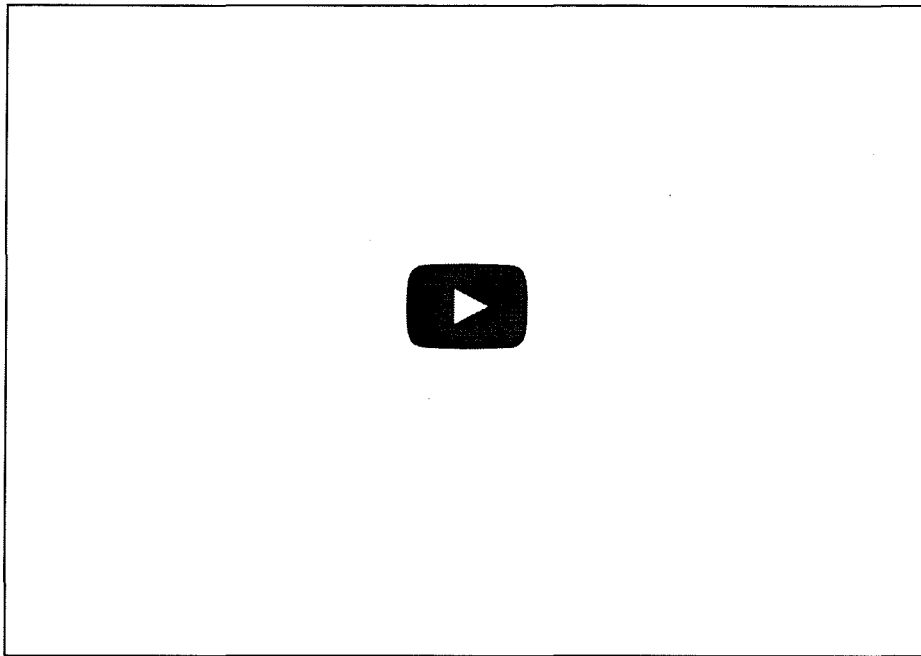


FEATURE STORY (2 PAGES)

## The executive order that led to mass spying, as told by NSA alumni

Feds call it "twelve triple three"; whistleblower says it's the heart of the problem.

WATCH ABS VIDEO



Tim Davis and the Comcastic Customer Service Call.

(Warning: the above video has some strong language, and you should probably put on headphones if you're going to listen to it at work.)

Davis, demonstrating excellent foresight, recorded the customer service phone call where this was discussed. This proved fortunate when the month's bill arrived, padded out with \$181.94 of extra charges.

Comcast charged Davis for a "failed self install," as well as a "failed video SIK" (that's "self-install kit") and a wireless network setup. The company was gracious enough to apply a service discount for the wireless setup—which was fortunate, because the technician who visited Davis had performed no such activity.

Other Charges & Credits		
Deposit Transfer	07/30	\$100.00
Deposit Received -- Thank You	07/30	(\$100.00)
Balance Transferred From [REDACTED]	07/30	(\$17.95)
Failed Video SIK	07/30	\$32.00
HSD Failed Self Install	07/30	\$99.99
Service Discount	07/30	(\$49.99)
Wireless Network SET Up	07/30	\$49.95
Service Discount	07/30	(\$48.95)
<b>Total Other Charges &amp; Credits</b>		<b>\$64.05</b>

Enlarge / Davis' bill showing the disputed charges.

Tim Davis, YouTube

Davis did what any angry customer would do: he called Comcast to hash things out. The resulting set of calls is a comedy of terrible customer service. The first representative argued with Davis, then put him on hold for an hour. Davis ended that call and started a new one, this time escalating to a "supervisor" (which, as we've discussed, is usually just another regular customer service rep with no additional power or authority).

The supervisor continued the argument, insisting that Comcast had already given Davis more than enough discounts (the other \$49.99 "service discount" underneath the failed install lines on the bill) and saying that the remaining \$82 of extra charges were Davis' responsibility. The rep then tried to upsell Davis to discounted "BLAST+" Internet service as a sop. The actual charges, said the rep, were valid and thus impossible to remove.

Davis then dropped his bomb: he forced the rep to listen to

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The same One M8 that ran Android now runs Windows Phone, exclusively on Verizon.

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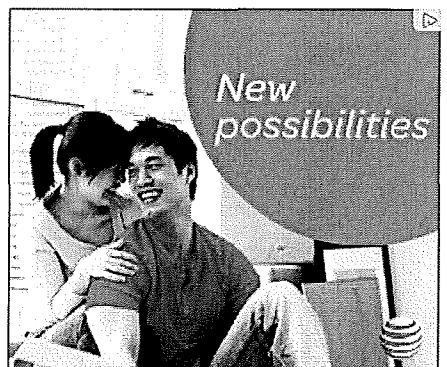
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the call he had previously recorded, in which the Comcast rep told Davis the service visit would be free.

Like a kid caught with a hand in the cookie jar, the Comcast rep tells Davis that she'll have to "investigate" and call Davis back. Miraculously, the callback actually *does* occur—in it, the rep tells Davis that Comcast has agreed to refund the charges, but only because Davis had the recording.

"We try to negotiate," explains the rep, "and again, that is a valid charge."

The rep closes with a flat-out admission that the only reason Davis got his money back was because he had that recording.

In spite of assurances from top Comcast executives like Dave Watson, Comcast is proving too large a ship to steer effectively—empty pronouncements for more attentive customer service can echo down from leadership all day long, but there are just too many moving parts in the Comcast machine for it to *matter*. Dozens of layers of management and the entrenched system of sales metrics-based compensation leveled on customer-facing employees ensures that, without more drastic action, any call to action from the top will be grossly mutated by the time it reaches the folks on the phones. Calls like this will continue to be the result.

**Update:** Comcast has contacted Ars with the following statement on Davis' customer service adventure:

This is not the type of experience we want our customers to have, and we will reach out to Mr. Davis to apologize to him. Our policy is not to charge for service visits that are related to problems with our equipment or network. We are looking into this to understand what happened and why it happened.

READER COMMENTS 284



Lee Hutchinson / Lee is the Senior Reviews Editor at Ars and is responsible for the product news and reviews section. He also knows stuff about enterprise storage, security, and manned space flight. Lee is based in Houston, TX. @Lee\_Ars on Twitter

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