

**Town of Concord, MA
PEG Access Advisory Committee
Committee Charge**

A. Background

The Select Board has issued a License Agreement to Comcast of Massachusetts III, Inc. for the period from April 22, 2014 through April 21, 2024, which authorizes the company to provide non-exclusive cable television and other telecommunication services to homes and businesses in the Town of Concord. The agreement provides for the delivery of PEG Access (Public, Educational, and Governmental) Television services, defined in the agreement as “non-commercial programming developed by any Concord residents or organizations, schools, government entities and the use of facilities, equipment and/or channels of the Cable System in accordance with 47 U.S.C. 531 and this Renewal License”. Pursuant to section 6 of the agreement, Comcast makes three channels available to the Town for PEG access programming and allocates 4.8% of the company’s gross annual revenue in Concord to support PEG access programming.

In 2015, Town Meeting voted to accept MGL Chapter 44, Section 53F-3/4 authorizing the creation of the PEG Access & Cable Related Fund. Revenue from Comcast is deposited into this fund and may be expended by the Town Manager only to support PEG access programming. The Concord-Carlisle Regional High School has set aside space in the school for a cable studio to operate the community television service.

B. Purpose

The purpose of the PEG Access Advisory Committee is to monitor the effectiveness of Concord’s PEG Access services, and to help the Select Board ensure that the those services conform to the requirements of the Comcast franchise agreement while safeguarding the public’s interest in community television through policies promoting fairness, equal access, and non-discrimination. The committee is also intended to promote quality telecommunication services that reflect the interests and concerns of Concord residents. The committee will also assist the Select Board in adapting to new technologies as society moves from the traditional local cable television to more current telecommunication services.

C. Membership

The PEG Access Advisory Committee shall be comprised of five voting members appointed by the Select Board, and one ex officio, non-voting member designated by the Carlisle Select Board. The term of office shall be three years, and the initial appointments shall be of one, two and three years, so that terms of members shall be staggered. The committee shall be comprised of members representing a diversity of residents interested in communications and community television. The membership shall be as follows:

One citizen with experience in communication media, particularly with experience in television or community television;

One representative designated by the School Committee;

Three citizens at-large with diverse backgrounds that have an interest in, or experience with, communications, media and information services;

One ex officio, non-voting member designated by the Carlisle Select Board.

D. Duties and Responsibilities

- 1) To advise the Select Board and Town Manager on matters concerning PEG access television services, including comparing Concord’s services to those of other communities and to the state of the industry in general.

- 2) To recommend broad policies on matters concerning PEG access television, including matters involving use of studio equipment, training of volunteers, access to studio space by citizens including students, and similar matters.
- 3) To ensure that Concord's PEGs services conform to all requirements of the Comcast franchise agreement, as well as all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations concerning PEG access services.
- 4) To solicit public feedback regarding the performance of PEG access operations including the ability to deliver a variety of quality PEG access programming offerings.
- 5) To investigate and make recommendations where appropriate in response to public feedback received regarding PEG access programs and offerings.
- 6) To make recommendations to the Select Board and Town Manager on media and communication initiatives that do not involve Comcast, including social media outlets and other methods of communicating with Concord residents.
- 7) Conduct occasional surveys of users of PEG access services to discern whether current programs meet the needs of residents and how those services might be augmented or improved.
- 8) To support the PEG service staff in creating, developing and promoting various and specialized courses which are necessary to enhance citizen and volunteer use and involvement in public access programming.
- 9) To assist the Town Manager and PEG access staff in creating a voluntary dispute resolution service regarding PEG access or other cable TV services for the citizens of Concord.
- 10) To assist the Select Board at the time of renegotiation of the cable television franchise agreement, to maximize the benefits to the community of cable television and other services during the term of the Comcast agreement, to hear citizen complaints concerning Comcast's compliance with the requirements of the franchise agreement as well as such Comcast services that are subject to local review under the law, and to make recommendations concerning service complaints to the Select Board.
- 11) The PEG Access Advisory Committee may be requested to provide advice or guidance with respect to PEG Access operations and technological advancement initiatives, including expanded audio-visual communications and web-based programming.
- 12) To submit a comprehensive annual report regarding committee activities and efforts for inclusion in the Town's "Annual Town Report." Such submission should include an overview of the Committee's work during the prior year as well as an assessment of the community's access to PEG-related services and offerings.
- 13) To meet regularly, and annually, to elect a Chairperson and Committee Clerk.

E. Other Considerations

The PEG Access Advisory Committee is responsible for conducting its activities in a manner which is in compliance with all relevant State and local laws and regulations, including but not limited to: Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law and Conflict of Interest Law.

Attachments:

- a. *Copy of Cable Television Renewal License Issued by Select Board to Comcast of Massachusetts III, Inc. 2014 to 2024.*