

Connecticut State-wide Video Advisory Council

August 27th, 2025

Café Fiore Cromwell- In Person Only

In Attendance: Alan Budkofsky, Gregory Davis, Merja Lehtinen, Stephen Fuest, Elaine Buchardt

Members Absent: Peaches Quinn, Stuart Strelzer, Marco Iacoviello, Steven Simonin, Temosticles Valdes

Providers: None

Alternate: Johnes Ruta (New Haven)

- 1) Meeting was called to order at 7 pm by Merja Lehtinen, Chairman. Roll-Call was held
- 2) Merja read the minutes from the Feb 26th, 2025 Meeting. Greg Moved to Accept, Steve Seconded- minutes accepted unanimously.
- 3) Alan gave Treasurers Report- Feb 27th- \$357 expense for Website, Received \$6,000 from Frontier for 3 years. Total is 54,477.69 plus 10,000.00 CD
- 4) Chairmen Report- Merja reported she has been receiving many calls about fees that consumers are getting charged for services they did not pay for. Complaints sent on to providers and PURA. Complaints can also be filed with FTC as providers can not charge you for something you do not receive. Merja reported her franchise had not lost any income like many PEG studios but they don't have many people putting on shows. Discussion ensued about Company Vs Privately run PEG facilities.
- 5) Old Business- Discussion of Election Slate- October there will discussion of the slate and in December we will have an election of the new Board which will take over Feb 2026
- 6) New Business- Johnes asked emails he was receiving from Comcast about email being obsolete. Merja mentioned it was a phishing and to update email goto the comcast website. Discussion ensued.

The December meeting will be December 10th. It will be in Person unless we cannot get a quorum then we will do zoom or hybrid.

- 7) Committee Reports: Legislative- Greg reported that nothing was done for Community access this past session. No money from Appropriations committee was received. Discussion ensued about cable advisory councils and community access in the state of CT and how long it will exist and discussion of legislative activity and the longevity of cables advisory councils and the SVAC. Steve mentioned that advisory boards are self-dissolving as no one want to get involved and some have not had meetings in a few years. You cannot force someone to be on an advisory council.

Greg reported that PURA was not paying attention to Public Access or Cable Advisory issues. Discussion ensued about shortage of community access fees and only charging subscriber fees on customers who only received cable tv services. Legislation was not passed about trying to get advisory fees to where they should be – on any service on the wire.

Greg reported he was at a meeting of the evaluation of the merger of Charter Spectrum and Cox Cable. Three Franchises- Charter taking over Cox- studios may close. Sale was stopped do to some issues. Discussion ensued about this issue. Greg drafted a letter of some requirements that should be met for this merger to occur- including upgrading quality of public access signals in the state (HD), dissolving company run community access channels (making them independently owned) and to provide community access programming to the lowest tyre of wired services (internet) and to require compliant with CT statues involving community access television. Greg can provide a copy of the letter. Discussion ensued.

8) Adjournment at 8:15 pm