

APPROVED

**Board of Selectmen
21 June 2011
Public Hearing – Renewal Franchise with MetroCast
Minutes**

Present were Acting Chair Rachel Hatch, Selectman Ralph Lavin, Town Administrator Tim Warren and Clerk Lois Dionne. Chairman Guarino was not in attendance due to getting caught in traffic caused by an accident.

6:00 pm – Acting Chair Hatch read “This opens the first hearing to ascertain the future cable related needs and interest of the community, as we begin the process of renewing the cable television franchise with MetroCast. This begins the public ascertainment process to gather information for the negotiations that we will soon engage in with MetroCast for a renewal of the cable franchise in our community. At this time, I would like to open the floor for initial comments from the public and any representative present from MetroCast.”

There were no members of the public present. Steve Mazzaschi was present to represent MetroCast.

Mr. Mazzaschi gave a brief overview of what they have done since they purchased the cable system in Gilmanton in 1999. This included rebuilding the system, adding digital and HSD service, Internet and telephone service, and video on demand.

At one of the Selectmen’s meetings, a resident asked why MetroCast charges its customers a franchise fee on their bill, and then gives the Town a check for the franchise fees. Mr. Mazzaschi said the Board of Selectmen determines the franchise fee; the franchise fee is only on the video portion of the cable bill. Tim said that initially, the franchise fees were an FCC regulation because the cable companies had to franchise with each town to enable them to run lines through the town.

There was also a brief discussion and a review of the map showing the areas where residents are currently not able to get cable.

6:29 pm - Acting Chair Hatch thanked Mr. Mazzaschi for attending tonight’s hearing. She read “We will be conducting at least one more hearing on the future cable-related needs and interests of the community, its administration, public libraries, public schools, PEG Access needs, and the police and fire departments as well as the future cable-related

needs and interests of the business community and residents. We expect to hold that second public ascertainment hearing later this year or early next year. In the meantime, we will be reviewing our records on the performance of MetroCast under the existing franchise agreement. We will hold the record for this hearing open until the next hearing, and welcome any written comments or input from the public on this topic. Thank you. This concludes the public hearing.

6:30 pm – MOTION – Selectman Lavin moved to adjourn the meeting. Acting Chair Hatch seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Lois Dionne
Recording Clerk