

Agenda

**Iowa City Telecommunications Commission**

City Cable TV Office, 10 S. Linn St., Tower Place Parking Facility, Level 3A

Monday, August 26, 2019, 5:30PM

1. Call to order
2. Approval of minutes
3. Announcements of Commissioners
4. Short public announcements
5. Post-franchise role of the Telecommunications Commission
6. REPORTS
  - Consumer Issues
  - Mediacom Report
  - Local Access Reports
  - City Cable TV Office Report
7. Adjournment

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If you will need disability-related accommodations in order to participate in this program/event, please contact Ty Coleman at 319-356-5454 or [ty-coleman@iowa-city.org](mailto:ty-coleman@iowa-city.org). Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your access needs.

## **Minutes**

Iowa City Telecommunications Commission

July 22, 2019 – 5:30 P.M.

City of Iowa City Cable TV Office, 10 S. Linn St. - Tower Place, Level 3A

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 5:35 P.M.

Members Present: Matthew Brenton, Gina Reyes, Adam Stockman, Andrew Austin

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Ty Coleman

Others Present: Gerardo Sandoval

Recommendations to Council: None

### Approval of Minutes:

Stockman moved and Reyes seconded a motion to approve the June 24, 2019 minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

### Announcements of Commissioners:

Commissioners exchanged introductions with newly-appointed member Andrew Austin. Coleman announced that Commission member James Pierce had recently indicated he would need to step down from his responsibilities with the Commission due to conflicting commitments.

### Short Public Announcements:

None.

### Election of Officers:

Matt Brenton was elected as Chair and Adam Stockman was elected as Vice Chair by a unanimous vote.

### Post-franchise role of the Telecommunications Commission:

Brenton summarized that since the City's franchise agreement with Mediacom had expired, the Telecommunications Commission's authority had been reduced and the group had been asked to consider its role going forward. Brenton said that a proposal to Council had been drafted which recommends that the City should look into the feasibility of municipal broadband.

Coleman said that the proposal would be included within an upcoming Council information packet. Brenton said City Council members had expressed an interest in the topic in the past. He noted that one issue that had been brought up was that Iowa City does not own its own electric utility and that a lot of communities who had successfully built their own municipal broadband network had done so by "piggy-backing" off of their municipal electric utility's infrastructure.

Brenton referred to the lawsuit that had been filed by Mediacom a few years back in response to the City leasing fiber to ImOn for the provision of Internet and phone services. Coleman explained that companies offering cable television service are required to operate under a franchise agreement and pay franchise fees. He said that ImOn was only intending to provide Internet and phone services and was therefore not required to obtain a franchise and pay franchise fees. Brenton said the courts had sided with the City and ImOn. He said ImOn had recently stated it planned to build out its broadband network and begin offering residential broadband service over the next couple of years. Brenton said he wasn't sure if competitive service providers such as ImOn would affect the Council's interest in looking into municipal broadband.

Stockman said the group wants to first see if there is any interest by Council in municipal broadband. Brenton said that the proposal offers to set up an advisory board to look into the topic, but that if Council does not have an interest in it, then the Telecommunications Commission would plan to disband.

Andrews said the potential for working on a municipal broadband proposal and gathering data for it was one of the things that attracted him to the Commission. Brenton said the proposal does not include that existing Commission members would automatically become municipal broadband advisory board members, but said he'd expect anyone on the Commission interested in becoming a member of the advisory board to have an opportunity to do so.

Coleman said he said he would be including a couple of documents along with the proposal to provide information, including the excerpt from the Iowa Code dealing with municipal broadband and the City's Cable TV Franchise Enabling Ordinance. Coleman said a memo accompanying the proposal would suggest that the Council find a time to meet with the Telecommunications Commission to discuss and ask questions. Brenton noted that the proposal isn't to establish municipal broadband, but rather to make a recommendation. Brenton said it could be possible that the recommendation would be to not pursue it.

Consumer Issues:

Brenton referred to the issue described in the cable complaints report involving a customer who was not getting the speeds he felt he should have been getting. Brenton noted that the speeds are typically listed as being *up to* a certain speed. Coleman said some customers in the past have expressed that there was nothing they could do about receiving service that didn't meet their expectations and said that bringing in competition or discussing municipal broadband would help to address the concern of not having other options.

Mediacom Report:

Coleman reported that he had not received any information from Mediacom other than a notice that a few upper tier channels were being moved.

Local Access Reports:

Sandoval reported that PATV would be changing its hours based on current usage of the facilities. He said the PATV board has been aggressively looking at how PATV can continue its mission and said they had some promising leads. Sandoval said that activity at PATV increases when the school year begins. He said independent filmmakers had been using the facility and the podcast room had seen increased use. Sandoval said an upcoming project would be to provide a way to include video for podcast recordings.

Sandoval said that PATV has been around for 40 years, starting at the City, and operating for 30 years as an independent non-profit organization. He said PATV's building is owned by Public Access, making it community-owned. Sandoval said PATV's funding has always been pass-through money from the cable company, passed through the City. Despite the current lack of a funding stream, he said that the City still contracts with PATV to provide the service so that community members can have a channel on which to put their content.

City Cable TV Office Report:

Coleman referred to the report the Cable TV Office had submitted in the meeting packet. He mentioned that the City's Rummage in the Ramp event would be starting soon and that Cable TV Office staff would be doing a Facebook Live event to highlight the event and to show people what's there as well as to inform the public of the impact the event has, including diverting items from the landfill and distributing the profits to participating non-profit organizations.

Coleman said he had been working with the Johnson County Mobility Coordinator, as well as transit systems from Iowa City, Coralville, the University of Iowa, and Johnson County, to produce a series of

short videos to highlight the public transportation offerings in our area as well as to provide some how-tos on things like planning your route and transferring between buses. Andrews commented that the video series is a good idea for new students coming to town.

Adjournment:

Stockman moved and Reyes seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Adjournment was at 6:05 p.m.

	<b>Gowder</b>	<b>Bergus</b>	<b>Brenton</b>	<b>Johnk</b>	<b>Pierce</b>
<b>08/27/2018</b> Meeting not held due to lack of quorum.		vacant		vacant	
<b>9/24/2018</b>	x	vacant	x	vacant	x
		<b>Paterson</b>			
<b>10/22/2018</b>	x	o	x	vacant	x
<b>11/26/2018</b> Meeting not held due to lack of quorum.				vacant	
<b>12/17/2018</b>	x	o	x	vacant	x
<b>01/22/2019</b> Meeting not held due to inclement weather and lack of quorum.				vacant	
		resignation		<b>Stockman</b>	
<b>02/25/2019</b>	x	vacant	x	x	o/c
		<b>Reyes</b>			
<b>03/25/2019</b>	resignation	o/c	x	x	x
<b>04/22/2019</b>	vacant	x	x	x	o/c
<b>06/03/2019</b> Meeting not held due to lack of quorum.	vacant				
<b>06/24/2019</b>	vacant	x	x	x	o
	<b>Andrews</b>				
<b>07/22/2019</b>	x	x	x	x	resignation

(x) = Present    (o) = Absent    (o/c) = Absent/Called (Excused)



# CITY OF IOWA CITY MEMORANDUM

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Date: July 22, 2019

To: Ashley Monroe, Assistant City Manager

From: Ty Coleman, Media Production Services Coordinator

Re: Future of the Telecommunications Commission

**Introduction:**

The Iowa City Telecommunications Commission has been asked to consider its role as a commission, given that the local cable TV franchise agreement with Mediacom has expired.

**History/Background:**

The City Council formed the Iowa City Broadband Telecommunications Commission at the time of Iowa City's first cable TV franchise agreement with its first cable TV service provider. The Council enacted the Broadband Telecommunications Franchise Enabling Ordinance (later to be known as the Cable Television Franchise Enabling Ordinance), which established standards, regulations, and procedures for the granting of a cable television franchise, as well as defined the Telecommunications Commission and its role (attached).

The purpose of the Commission was to recommend policies to the City Council on the regulation, development, and operation of cable television, telecommunications, and communications systems in Iowa City. Many of the Commission's established duties included actions related to the powers of the City as allowed by the local franchise agreement, such as resolving disputes between subscribers and the cable provider, providing recommendations related to basic tier rate regulation, conducting a triennial review of the cable TV system and recommending improvements to the system and amendments to the franchise agreement, establishing and administering sanctions to ensure compliance with the franchise enabling ordinance, and soliciting, reviewing, and providing recommendations to Council for selection of applicants for franchise. Other duties included promoting awareness of the local access channels, educating the public on telecommunications matters affecting consumers, identifying public rights-of-way issues and concerns, and making recommendations regarding development of the local communications infrastructure.

In 2007, Iowa adopted a law that created a state franchise process for cable providers. Our local franchise agreement with Mediacom was able to remain in effect until its natural expiration, which took place on August 1, 2018. Mediacom has been operating under a state-issued

franchise since this date and it is highly unlikely that a cable TV provider would ever seek a local franchise agreement in the future, though permissible by state law.

**Discussion of Solutions:**

Given the lack of a local cable TV franchise, the Telecommunications Commission has been considering its role going forward and how it might envision its potential for providing a valuable service to our community. While members of the Commission have agreed that the group does not have as great a purpose as it once did due to the end of the local franchise and a reduced number of access channels (UI, ICCSD, and ICPL channels have ceased use of their channels), the group has discussed its interest in the development of a municipal broadband advisory board. The Commission's proposal is attached for City Council's review and consideration.

The Telecommunications Commission has stated that it will continue to operate as a Commission until it is decided by Council that it should either disband or that a municipal broadband advisory board be formed to explore the potential for creating a municipal broadband system in Iowa City.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the Commission's proposal be reviewed and that the City Council determine whether the Commission should be disbanded, whether to proceed with an advisory board, or whether it is necessary to meet with the Telecommunications Commission to discuss the proposal.

August 20, 2019

To: Iowa City Telecommunications Commission  
From: Ty Coleman, Media Production Services Coordinator (MPSC)  
Re: Cable Complaints July 2019

1.)

**Date:** 07/19/2019

**Method of contact:** phone call to MPSC

**Complaint/Comment Summary:**

Resident complained that he has had continued problems with his cable TV service, including intermittent dropouts and pixelating. Resident said that technicians have come out multiple times to investigate and have replaced the fittings on his cables with no improvements. Resident said one technician had noted that the infrastructure in his neighborhood was old.

**Resolution Summary:**

Coleman presented the issue to Mediacom's Rick Karnes. Karnes said that infrastructure in Iowa City has been upgraded and was not likely the issue. Karnes passed the issue to Mediacom's Heath Piercy, who left the customer a message to offer assistance. As of August 22, Piercy reported that the customer had not responded.

**Date of Resolution:** 08/22/2019

2.)

**Date:** 07/22/2019

**Method of contact:** phone call to MPSC

**Issue/Comment Summary:**

The resident of a newly-completed townhouse learned that Mediacom service was not yet available for his unit or others in a series of seven townhouses. Resident said the builder had been trying to get service extended to the buildings but was having a difficult time getting a response from Mediacom.

**Resolution Summary:**

MPSC asked Mediacom about the status of this project. Mediacom's Darwin Driscoll said that it was a new-build construction that needed a project submitted and approved. MPSC asked Driscoll for an estimate on how long it could be before the project was submitted, approved, and completed. Driscoll said it could be four to six weeks before the project would be complete.

**Date of Resolution:** Not yet resolved



***PATV Report to Iowa City Telecommunications Commission August 2019***

August has been a month of the return of some of our regulars like The Lyle Style Show, Hello It's Us and Rev Ray's Right on Time Gospel and the continuation of Latino Hour and Joey's Game Shack. PATV supports the Iowa City Latino Film Festival.

**PATV Board Meetings**

PATV Board of Directors next meeting September 17th., at 7pm.

**Intro Workshop**

Guidelines orientation is the 2nd Sat. of every month, 10AM at PATV or online @ [www.patv.tv](http://www.patv.tv)  
Next Guidelines is Saturday September 14th. at 10AM.

**Video Workshops Schedule**

Studio Training – The second Mondays of the month from 5 – 7pm.  
HD Camera – The third Mondays of the month from 5 – 7pm.  
Digital Editing – The third Thursday of the month from 12 - 2pm.

**Current and upcoming staff supported productions**

Joe's Gaming Shack  
Latino Hour  
GreenFire  
The Lyle Harris Show  
Hello It's Us

Submitted by Gerardo Sandoval 8/22/19

**Date:** August 20, 2019

**To:** The Iowa City Telecommunications Commission

**From:** Ty Coleman, Media Production Services Coordinator, City of Iowa City Cable TV Office

**Re:** City of Iowa City Cable TV Office report for the August 2019 meeting

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### **Media Production Services**

Submitted by Jack Brooks, Media Production Specialist, and Ty Coleman, Media Production Services Coord.

#### Recent production activities:

- Topics covered for episodes of our weekly [Iowa City Update](#) program included Rummage in the Ramp, Soul and Blues Fest, National Night Out, Emergency Training Exercise, and Climate Crisis Declaration.
- Released a new *Iowa City In Focus* program with topics including Emerald Ash Borer Treatment, ICPD Traffic Stop Study, and the Monarch Festival.
- Produced *Community Highlight* videos from the Thornberry Park Party in the Park, Riverfront Crossings Park Grand Opening, and the Soul and Blues Festival.
- Created PSA videos for the EMS Kids Day, Leaf Vacuum Program, and Kids Day at the Farmers Market.
- Released *Iowa City Matters* podcast on inclusivity and accessibility.
- Streamed Facebook Live events at Rummage in the Ramp.
- Recorded the Black Authors Panel program at Prairie Lights as part of the Summer of the Arts' Soul & Blues Festival.
- Recorded a program on making house modifications to allow you to age in your own home, sponsored by Johnson County Livable Community.

#### Upcoming productions:

- Continue producing Iowa City Update programs with topics including back to school safety tips, Taste of the Market, and the annual Dog Paddle.
- Recording the first Iowa City Foreign Relations Council lecture of the fall 2019 semester.
- Coverage of the upcoming meeting of the City Council's Economic Development Committee.
- Recording the Urbanized Area Policy Board Meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County (MPOJC).

### **Programming and Interactive Services**

Submitted by Kevin Crawley, Communications Technician

#### Recent and Upcoming Projects:

I've picked up another locally produced program from PATV. "Hello! It's Us" is a show devoted to disability issues. It does not have a specific slot, but the 25-40 minute episodes help to fill out our community programming slots. I have also replaced our long-time series on Family Caregivers (which has been out of production for several years now) with a new imported program called "Conversations with Dr. Don" -- a one-hour program produced in Portland with a wide range of guests and topics. On the tech support side, we've been moving all of our media files to a new server, and I've implemented a new file organization framework to simplify our backup strategy.

#### Website:

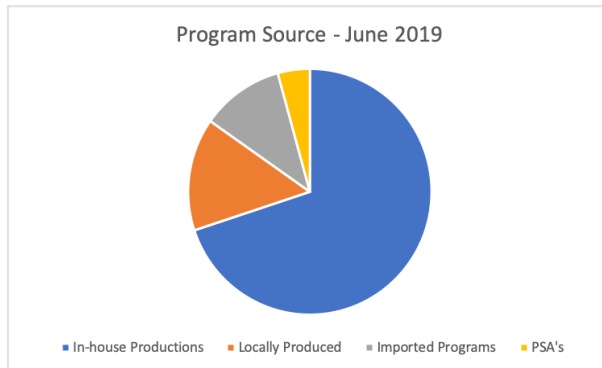
In June, there were 3,571 users accessing 6,016 pages in 4,742 sessions. Our most popular pages were Mediacom's channel lineup page, our live-video page, our home page, Mediacom's channel rates, our program schedule and our watch-online page.

On YouTube, we had 7,546 video views account for 24,916 minutes (415 hours and 6 minutes) of watch time. We added 12 more subscribers, and our current total is 608. Our most watched

videos by views were the Welcome to Iowa City! video, the Hindustani Vocal Concert, our College Green Park drone video, Iowa City Update episodes on Recycling Reminders, Phase 2 of the Ped Mall Project, and the Iowa Arts Festival. The most watched videos by time were the Hindustani Vocal Concert, the Council live stream of May 7, the ICPD Narcan Training, the Welcome to Iowa City! video, and the latest episode of Iowa City in Focus.

In July, there were 3,759 users accessing 6,096 pages in 4,791 sessions. Our most popular pages were Mediacom's channel lineup page, Mediacom's channel rates, our home page, our live-video page, hour watch-online page, and our program schedule.

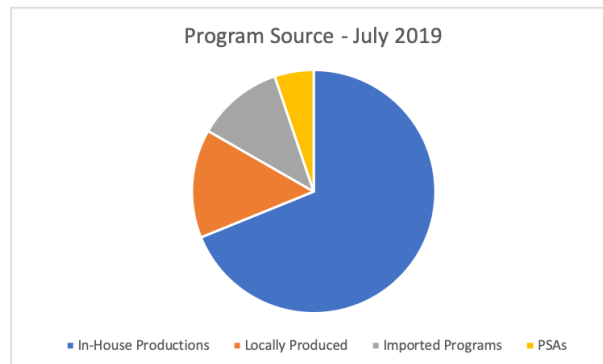
On YouTube, we had 7,429 video views account for 18,305 minutes (305 hours and 5 minutes) of watch time. We added 24 more subscribers, and our current total is 657. Our most watched videos by views were the Welcome to Iowa City! video, Iowa City Update episodes on Riverfront Crossings Grand Opening, Rummage in the Ramp (two videos), and the Hate Crime Ordinance, the Hindustani Vocal Concert, the short video on the Riverfront Crossings Park Grand Opening, and the IC Update episode on the Soul & Blues Festival.



#### Programming:

In June, we cablecast 117 programs produced in-house 601 times for 502 hours of programming, 29 locally-produced (DITV, Senior Center, Hoover Library, Task Force on Aging, Education Exchange and meetings of the JC Board of Supervisors, Coralville, North Liberty, University Heights, and ICCSD School Board) programs 102 times for 106 hours of programming, and 41 imported programs 132 times for 79 hours of programming. We also showed 113 PSAs 1118 times for 31 hours of programming.

In July, we cablecast 109 programs produced in-house 730 times for 522 hours of programming, 32 locally-produced (DITV, Senior Center, Hoover Library, Task Force on Aging, Education Exchange and meetings of the JC Board of Supervisors, Coralville, North Liberty, University Heights, and ICCSD School Board) programs 112 times for 109 hours of programming, and 47 imported programs 153 times for 87 hours of programming. We also showed 114 PSAs 1383 times for 39 hours of programming.



### **Programs Completed by the Cable TV Office in July 2019**

- 2019 Friday Night Concert Series
  - Kevin BF Burt & Big Medicine
  - Pigs in Clover
  - Soul Sherpa
- 2019 Iowa City Jazz Festival
- 2019 Juneteenth Commemoration
- Emerald Ash Borer Treatment Process
- Inclusive Teaching Awards
- Iowa City City Council Meetings
  - July 2, 2019
  - July 16, 2019
- Iowa City City Council Work Sessions
  - July 2, 2019
  - July 16, 2019
  - July 24, 2019 (Special Meeting)
- Iowa City Foreign Relations Council Presents
  - Africa's Future Opportunities
  - Disinformation in Social Media
- Iowa City Police Traffic Stop Study
- Iowa City Update episodes
  - 2019 Rummage in the Ramp
  - Hate Crime Ordinance
  - Riverfront Crossings Park Grand Opening
  - Rummage in the Ramp
  - Soul and Blues Festival
- Market Music 2019
  - David Zollo
  - Ingrid Streitz & Seven House Radius
  - New Dawn
- MPOJC Urbanized Area Policy Board of 07/10/19
- MusicIC 2019
  - A La Russe
  - Every Moment Present
  - With Our Compliments
- Party in the Park - Mercer Park
- Riverfront Crossings Park - Grand Opening
- Slam O Vision Poetry Slam