

Agenda

Iowa City Telecommunications Commission

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

Monday, February 24, 2020, 5:30PM

1. Call to order
2. Approval of minutes
3. Announcements of Commissioners
4. Short public announcements
5. Senate Study Bill 3009
6. Municipal broadband research
7. REPORTS
 - Consumer Issues
 - City Cable TV Office Report
8. Adjournment

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. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your access needs.

Minutes

Iowa City Telecommunications Commission

January 27, 2020 – 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 5:30 P.M.

Members Present: Matthew Brenton, Adam Stockman, Andrew Austin

Members Absent: Gina Reyes, Kyla Paterson

Staff Present: Ty Coleman

Others Present:

Recommendations to Council: None

Approval of Minutes:

Stockman moved and Austin seconded a motion to approve the December 16, 2019 minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Announcements of Commissioners:

None.

Short Public Announcements:

None.

Municipal Broadband Research:

Brenton said he had been reading more about the coming of 5G noting that it is forecasted to be a game-changer in broadband, but wants to find more concrete information. Stockman asked if Brenton knew of a rough timeline for when 5G would become more prominent. Brenton said it would be within the next ten years for sure.

Austin commented that U.S. Cellular has an option for in-home WiFi using mobile towers, though not using 5G technology at the moment. Austin said it didn't seem to be as good of an option price-wise and in terms of quality as other broadband services in the area. He said 5G is just starting to be rolled out in very large cities and that he has read of challenges some efforts have faced already with regard to 5G signal transmission.

Austin said he sent an email to the New York City mesh network group he had found but has not yet received a response. He said the group does have a book on how to create a mesh network.

Stockman said he received a response from Curtis Dean from the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities (IAMU) and was given the list of contacts for municipal broadband networks in Iowa. He said the next step is to send the survey to the contacts in order to learn more about their networks.

Stockman said Dean also sent him information about a bill that was introduced recently that could pose another challenge for existing municipal broadband networks as well as for communities looking into municipal broadband. Austin said the bill might demonstrate that municipal broadband is something current providers are concerned about. Brenton said the information, included in the meeting packet, indicated that the bill is attempting to divorce telecommunications utilities from other utilities. Brenton asked if Stockman had received any additional information about why the IAMU's interpretation is that the bill is anti-competitive. Stockman said he did not receive information about this.

One part of the bill that Stockman said caught his attention is that municipal broadband providers wouldn't be able to advertise their broadband service within customer bills for other utilities or services. Stockman said he could see how this would aid in creating a level playing field between municipalities and commercial providers.

Stockman said he did not see any information regarding a timeline for the bill. Brenton said perhaps there would be time to look further into it before the next Telecommunications Commission meeting, then decide if the Commission would want to recommend any action from the City Council. Brenton said the Commission had made a similar effort in the past for the net neutrality issue, for which they asked the Council to voice its support for opposing related legislation that had been proposed.

Brenton said that if the Commission was to decide that the bill was unfair or could restrict the creation of a municipal network, it could make the recommendation that the City Council voice its opposition.

Austin said the Commission may want to consider whether the bill has any effect on the access to those who don't currently have proper broadband access, noting the small pocket within Iowa City that did not appear to have access to broadband services. He asked if the bill could reduce the cost of internet access or improve access for students and other groups. He said that such factors could align more with the City's priorities.

Brenton said the issue could be put onto the next Telecommunications Commission meeting agenda for further discussion in order to decide whether or not taking action is needed. He said the group could hold a special meeting if the timeline seemed to indicate the bill was moving through the process quickly.

Austin asked if it was confirmed that there was an area of Iowa City where residents did not have access to broadband as defined by the FCC. He said that improving access to broadband is an important part of what the Commission is researching. Brenton said it was a mobile home park next to the area formerly known as Dolphin Cove. He said the group was unsure if this area was actually without access to service. Coleman said that Reyes indicated at the last Commission meeting she would look further into how the data was collected for the broadband coverage map she had found.

Austin asked for more information about the Iowa Communications Network (ICN). Brenton said from what he read, municipal broadband did not fall within the list of acceptable uses for the ICN system.

Austin asked if delivering information to the City Council sometime in March was a realistic goal. He also asked if the recommendation would include continuing to look into municipal broadband. Stockman said his impression was that after the Telecommunications Commission presents its findings to Council, the Council would decide whether or not it was worth further investigation. He said that if the Council decides to look further into the possibilities, it would most likely be a group or business outside of the Telecommunications Commission doing the work. Brenton said the Commission could recommend looking further into the issue, but that simply presenting information to the Council would be an option. He said the Council could decide to create an advisory board, as proposed by the Commission earlier last year, to seek a professional consultant, or to pass on further investigation.

Stockman said it would be good to include information found that deals with access to broadband. Austin said this aligned with the City's plans to increase accessibility, noting that access to reliable internet can help in a lot of ways. Brenton said he would reach out again to the members of the Community Internet Project who had come to a Commission meeting in the past. He said the group had been focused on accessibility at that time and was working to improve access for students by partnering with the schools. Austin asked if a question about accessibility could be included in the survey to be sent to Iowa communities who have municipal broadband. Austin said the contacts could

be asked whether the municipalities considered accessibility when deciding to build their own networks and whether they had any related data to share.

Consumer Issues:

Brenton noted that the two issues found in the Cable Complaints Report in the meeting packet had been resolved.

City Cable TV Office Report:

Coleman referred to the report the Cable TV Office had submitted in the meeting packet. He noted that Cable TV Office staff would be covering a number of annual programs in the coming weeks, including the Johnson County Local Food Policy Council forum, the Compeer Program's Sound of Friendship Concert, the Prairie Preview event keynote, and the Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce's Annual Banquet.

Adjournment:

Stockman moved and Austin seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Adjournment was at 6:10 p.m.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION 12-MONTH ATTENDANCE RECORD

	Gowder	Paterson	Brenton		Pierce
		resignation		Stockman	
02/25/2019	x	vacant	x	x	o/c
		Reyes			
03/25/2019	resignation	o/c	x	x	x
04/22/2019	vacant	x	x	x	o/c
06/03/2019 Meeting not held due to lack of quorum.	vacant	-	-	-	-
06/24/2019	vacant	x	x	x	o
	Austin				
07/22/2019	x	x	x	x	resignation
08/26/2019	o/c	x	x	x	vacant
					Paterson
09/23/2019	x	x	x	x	o
10/28/2019	x	x	o/c	x	o
11/25/2019	o/c	x	x	x	o
12/16/2019	o/c	x	x	x	o
01/27/2020	x	o/c	x	x	o

(x) = Present

(o) = Absent

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

February 18, 2020

To: Iowa City Telecommunications Commission
From: Ty Coleman, Media Production Services Coordinator (MPSC)
Re: Cable Complaints January 2020

1.)

Date: 01/05/20

Method of contact:

Email to City Council

Complaint/Comment Summary:

Resident complained about recent increases in cable TV service charges, most notably the local broadcast station surcharge, and expressed concern for those on fixed incomes.

Resolution Summary:

The City Manager's Office forwarded the comments to the MPSC. MPSC responded to the resident to provide information regarding the City's limitations on rate regulation as well as offered a document from the Federal Communications Commission that explains cable TV rate regulation. MPSC also provided information regarding the increasing local broadcast station surcharges being charged to Mediacom.

MPSC looked into the history of basic tier rates in Iowa City and reported to the resident that the service rate has stayed fairly consistent for the past several years and that Iowa City's rates, in comparison to other large cities in Iowa, were considerably lower than most. MPSC explained that the City does not have regulatory authority over the extra rates and fees charged along with cable TV service rates.

MPSC noted that the State of Iowa now issues cable TV franchises and provided contact information for the Iowa Utilities Board in case the resident wished to contact them.

MPSC also checked with Mediacom's Stephanie Poole from the Iowa City customer service office to see if Mediacom offered any kind of program for lower-cost cable TV service, similar to its Connect-2-Compete program for lower-cost internet service for families with students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. Poole said there was not a program like this for cable TV service but noted that the resident may be eligible for a retention offer that could lower her bill.

No further communication was received from the resident.

Date of Resolution: 01/06/20

2.)

Date: 01/06/20

Method of contact:

Email to MPSC

Issue/Comment Summary:

Resident noted that his internet service rates would increase significantly over the next two years, following a promotional period. He noted that he has needed his internet service more over time as he streams more video content. He asked if Iowa City would ever build a TV tower in order to allow for better TV reception without the

use of an outdoor antenna. The resident also said he was waiting for 5G services to become available and wondered if Iowa City had seen any 5G activity.

Resolution Summary:

MPSC connected with Iowa City's Engineering Division and was told that the City had been receiving small cell applications, but wasn't certain if any of those projects completed so far had yet become operational. MPSC reported the information to the resident. MPSC was later told by Engineering staff that the applications had been for 4G installations rather than 5G. MPSC noted that with increasing demand for online video content, over-the-air broadcast technology, including towers, was likely a low priority for TV stations.

The resident responded and said he was most interested in whole-home 5G service, which he said Verizon was developing, as well as 5G used for self-driving vehicles.

Date of Resolution: 01/08/20

Date: February 18, 2020

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 February 2020 meeting

Media Production Services

Submitted by Jack Brooks, Special Projects Assistant, and Lillie Ostwinkle, Media Production Assistant

Recent production activities:

- Produced episodes of *Iowa City Update* with topics that included caucus information, Maker Space, free snacks at the ICPL, and updates to the Deer Management Plan.
- Released a new series that introduces the individuals who plow our streets.
- PSA video topics included safety tips for biking in the winter, seasonal job opportunities at City pools, and the role of the Community Outreach Assistant for the Police Department.
- Released a new *Iowa City Matters* podcast episode on winter-related issues in Iowa City.
- Livestreamed the Preucil School of Music's Annual String Concert at Hancher Auditorium.
- Produced a video of the Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet program.
- Live coverage of a City Council joint session with the Iowa City Community School District.

Upcoming productions:

- Continue producing *Iowa City Update* episodes with topics including the search for a new police chief, new Parks and Rec programming, and more.
- Recording a new *Iowa City Matters* podcast episode on resource management in Iowa City.
- Live streaming the Preucil Orchestra Festival.
- Recording the Sound of Friendship benefit concert held by the Johnson County Compeer Program.
- Covering the United Nations Association's Night of 1000 Dinners, honoring organizations advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals in Iowa City

Programming and Interactive Services

Submitted by Kevin Crawley, Communications Technician

Recent and Upcoming Projects

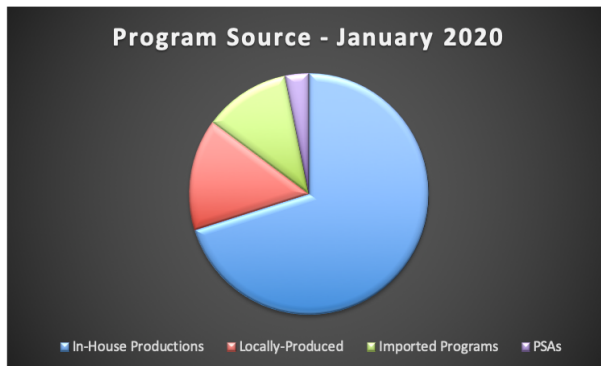
I have developed my first web animation template for InfoCast, and the University ITS people were kind enough to work with us to use a variation of my InfoCast slideshow inside of their digital signs. This means that I can now teach the digital sign in the Lobby all kinds of new tricks by showing web pages as well as graphic images. In programming, we have said goodbye to Education Exchange because it has ceased production. In its place, I've found a senior-oriented home safety series produced by the Fire Department of New Brunswick, Maine.

Website

In January, there were 3,618 users accessing 6,403 pages in 4,837 sessions. Our most popular pages were Mediacom's channel lineup page, our home page, our live video page, Mediacom's rates page, our program schedule, and our watch online page.

On YouTube, we had 6,745 video views account for 359 hours of watch time. We added 20 more subscribers, and our current total is 784. Our most-watched videos by views were all four of the Iowa City Update episodes from January, and the most-watched by total viewing time included a discussion from last year on Schools, Racial Segregation and Social Injustice, both of the

January City Council meetings, and the Deer Population Management forum.



Programming:

In January, we cablecast 154 programs produced in-house 773 times for 519 hours of programming, 33 locally-produced (DITV, Senior Center, Hoover Library, Task Force on Aging, and meetings of the JC Board of Supervisors, Coralville, North Liberty, University Heights, and ICCSD School Board) programs 124 times for 110 hours of programming, and 46 imported programs 150 times for 86 hours of programming. We also showed 102 PSAs 1107 times for 24 hours of programming.

Programs Completed by the Cable TV Office in January 2020

- 2020 Presidential Candidate Forum: The U.S. Role in an Interdependent World
- Bike Shorts: Biking During Winter
- Economic Development Committee Meeting of 01/27/20
- Iowa City Area Transit Study Open House Presentation - January 26, 2020
- Iowa City City Council
 - FY2021 City of Iowa City Budget Overview and Highlights
 - Capital Improvement Projects Presentation of January 7, 2020
 - Council Meeting of January 7, 2020
 - Council Meeting of January 21, 2020
 - Special Formal Meeting of January 2, 2020
 - Work Session of January 7, 2020
 - Work Session of January 21, 2020
- Iowa City Foreign Relations Council Presents
 - Europe's Radical Right
 - The New Nuclear Landscape: What You Need to Know
- Iowa City Update
 - Community Relations Officer
 - Household Hazardous Materials
 - Iowa Caucuses
 - Transit Study Open Houses
- PSA - Join Our Aquatics Team
- Keeping our streets safe (featuring Iowa City snow plow drivers)
 - Bob Wood
 - Ethan Krob
 - Josh Stratton
 - Kyle Madden
 - Troy Palmer
- LWV Legislative Forum of January 25, 2020
- MPOJC Urbanized Area Policy Board Meeting of 1/29/20