TROY CAC ADVISORY COMMITTEE – DRAFT October 20, 2005

Call to Order

The regular meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. at Troy City Hall.

Roll Call

Present:	Penny Marinos	Bryan Wehrung
	Richard Hughes	Lisa Martinico
	Kent Voigt	Alan Manzon
	Robert Lin	Cindy Stewart

Absent: Jerry Bixby

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve minutes of August 18, 2005. Motion by Voigt, seconded by Manzon. Approved unanimously.

New Business

Oliver Visperas, Comcast – Has been the Governmental Affairs Rep for the past 5 years. Future projections: The Comcast CEO has pledged to roll out one new product each year. Digital cable products rolled out in recent years. Multiple increases in speed for the Internet, video on-demand movies like rental VCR are popular. Video On Demand has seen 560 million hits in 2004 and one billion hits to date 2005.

HDTV (High Definition TV) – high resolution picture image, CD-quality sound and wide screen display.

Digital Television – new type of broadcasting technology. Target date of 12/31/06 t rollout. DTV will offer TV with movie quality and sound. Clearer signal, more programming. Converting to DTV will also free up parts scarce and valuable broadcast spectrum. Those portions of the spectrum can then be used for other important services such as advanced wireless (cellular) and public safety services (police, fire, rescue).

Other new future products could be video conferencing, interactive TV/computer. Overtime will all analog TV will go away? Eventually those old models will become obsolete.

Cable is not a utility/lifeline service. People choose to have cable. Seniors who have been told they have to upgrade to digital can just upgrade to Enhanced Basic.

Troy Area – 10% off cable plus is offered to seniors 62 and older.

What Comcast would like the city to do?

Phone companies have expressed great interest into having their own video products. Asking support that like services treated alike. If SBC wants to come in with video they should enter into a franchise agreement with the City like Comcast and WOW.

Just ask support from a regulatory standpoint like cable companies do.

MI Telecommunication Act – issue in Lansing now hopefully franchising won't be gone. The Michigan Chamber took no position asking local chambers to do the same.

Is Comcast entering into phone area? Yes. Comcast digital voice rolled out in Flint, Macomb County. No date yet for Troy. They will most likely offer a bundled package.

Question – if we lose cable service, will phones go out? You will have backup battery power built in (minimum 8 hrs).

Backbone for WOW is fiber and copper into house. The backbone for Comcast is hybrid – still running copper in many areas.

What about when server goes down and lose signal, will phones go out? Yes if lose connection w/network will lose service. Valid concern for residents – losing phone service.

Does using phone over Internet set you up to be a common carrier? Probably not since it's our own managed network. Comcast digital voice would have caller ID go through TV.

Board members commend Comcast – few years ago when they talked about offering so many high quality services it seemed far-fetched but has come to fruition. Stewart reported that in the last few weeks both WOW and Comcast customers have been calling the City with complaints they can't get through. Increase of services – more calls, longer phone calls/customers.

Comcast's solutions: increased staffing 15%. Looking to expand Macomb Call Center, which handles Troy, calls – completion 2006. 18,000 square feet $4.5 mil expansion in Sterling Heights. Call Centers in Sterling Heights & Plymouth. Internet support center is in Ann Arbor.

Question: Internet Service - Customers having problem with virus. Any virus protection service? Yes, provide McAfee is free but you have to register for service information on Comcast.net.

Troy – Oakland County going wireless – any comments? Comcast met with IT staff from Oakland County but have decided not to participate in process as a provider.

Customers interested in new cable channels – that other providers have – how do they submit these ideas? Submit to marketing department at Comcast. It is difficult to determine demographics and factors in adding new channels. They consider negotiation factor and cost. Most expensive channel to offer is ESPN.

Commend Comcast for offering recent channels additions in other languages. First in nation to offer Call Center workers who speak Arabic and Spanish. JD Powers customer satisfaction showed Comcast on bottom third of list.

Comcast has launched local customer satisfaction program "Think Customer First" campaign. Just hired regional vice president for customer service Kate Nottman. Comcast records all calls coming in now with upgrade in technology, can assist when customers complain. Comcast has 3300 employees in Michigan.

Correspondence

1. Comcast - Cable Line Up Adjustments – August 10, 2005: Court TV will remain on channel 47/B4.
2. WOW - JD Powers Rankings – Sept. 2, 2005: #1 in overall customer satisfaction. WOW ranked highest in 3 of 6 factors – customer service performance, reliability and billing. Satellite TV service increasing 27%
3. Comcast - Cable Lineup Adjustments – Sept. 12, 2005: Adding Japanese, Latino, Black family channel, Arabic, Italian programming.

Articles

Comcast Expands, Will Add New Jobs – Detroit news – October 6, 2005

Old Business

Report on web publications - continue to search for anything new in the cable industry. Cindy has provided a large number of articles, but members should try and supplement for the group. Upcoming information on telecommunication franchising.

Staff Report

Email member listing and WTRY cable guide to members each meeting. Schedule a WOW representative at the January meeting.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Voigt, second by Manzon. Meeting adjourned 8:38 pm.

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Bryan Wehrung, CAC Chairman

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Cindy Stewart, Recording Secretary