

TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2013

In Attendance: Tab Committee Chairman; Kurt Krause, Committee Members; Ed Ebenbach, Joe Salvati, and Assistant Township Manager: Staff Liaison; Sandra Zadell, Also in Attendance: Board of Supervisor Liaison; Tom Scarborough, Board of Supervisor Member; Rick Colello.

The board began by electing their 2013 Chairman. Kurt Krause made a motion to nominate Ed Ebenbach as the 2013 Chairman. The motion was seconded by Joe Salvati, motion passed. Ed Ebenbach will be the chairman for 2013.

The motion made by Joe Salvati seconded by Kurt Krause the December 5, 2012 amended meeting minutes were approved.

Sandra Zadell reported on three pieces of information that were sent to the committee from Verizon. The first was a notification regarding price increases that they will be having on many of their premium channels. The second was a sales pitch for faster internet connection and the third was the annual notification from Verizon.

Mr. Ebenbach reported on the 2012 TAB spending figures. At the end, the TAB budget had a remaining balance of \$113.88. Mr. Ebenbach expressed a concern about a \$2,400 encumbrance that is still showing on the account for 2012. Mrs. Zadell will check with Ken Wallace and report back to the committee.

Mr. Ebenbach indicated that he spent \$75.90 in 2013 on a battery replacement for the second Verizon interface unit. On a motion made by Kurt Krause seconded by Joe Salvati, the committee voted to approve that expenditure and move forward with reimbursing Mr. Ebenbach. The motion passed.

Mr. Ebenbach reported that he had no update on the lectern project. He also reported that equipment for the countdown timer and the broadcast monitor projects is here but not installed. Lastly, he also reported that going forward, Mike Sturgeon will only be available to help with TAB's installation projects on an overtime basis. The good news is that Richard E. John has agreed to pick up those charges.

The committee then discussed the Comcast franchise renewal agreement. Mr. Ebenbach reported that Jeff Garton has compiled comments on the agreement with Comcast. The sticking point really is that Comcast is not willing to grant the township a second, HD channel. Ed Ebenbach posed a question to the group asking them if they should suggest extending the current agreement for three more years so that the Verizon and Comcast renewals occur simultaneously. Such a tactic might give TAB time to negotiate with Verizon to see if they will provide a second, HD channel. If Verizon agreed to provide it, that would make it easier to induce Comcast to do the same, and by having both agreements negotiated at the same time, we might achieve more parity in the contracts.

Mr. Krause pointed out that if we delayed negotiating, we would get no additional grant funding and no free internet service. He also mentioned it may be between four and ten years before Doylestown Township could even afford to create an HD channel.

Mrs. Zadell pointed out that possibly the reason that Comcast doesn't want to give in to providing an HD channel is that other municipalities aren't even producing original programming for their channels, let alone an HD channel. So there may not be any great demand by the other municipalities for this to be included in their contracts.

Mr. Salvati suggested a provisional clause for the contract such as an if/then clause, like if HD becomes standard in a certain amount of years or certain percentage of the channel makeup on Comcast is HD, then they would be required to make an HD channel available to us. Or, even a provisional clause that says, if Comcast pushes every channel to HD then they would definitely be required to make one available to us.

Mr. Salvati and Mr. Krause both agreed that we should negotiate a new contract with the HD provisional clause condition.

Mrs. Zadell gave an update on programming. She stated that she has a meeting during the week of January 25th to speak with the students at MBIT and have them create the Moments in Time Piece. She needs to bring all the Moments in Time information to the students, so she may need a larger external hard drive. The TAB board okayed her purchasing such a drive up to \$70 in value.

Mrs. Zadell also brought several videos to the meeting from the EAC for their time-slot. She will upload them using Total Import and the committee will all look at them by the next meeting. The TAB board would also like the EAC to submit the appropriate form that goes with the videos.

Mr. Ebenbach brought up the email from Sinclair Salisbury regarding emergency communications. They talked about the Ready Notify program that was aired during Hurricane Sandy and discussed that they should probably wrap the program with some information that is specific to Doylestown Township. We should explore social media use by the Township and also come up with an upgraded internet connection that will not fail when we have an emergency.

Mrs. Zadell will check with Ron Rossi about the Verizon/Comcast internet connection issue. The potential suggestion by the TAB board is to have two internet options, but Kurt Krause said it needs to be tested aggressively.

Mr. Colello suggested that the TAB board look at the PSAT's magazine article regarding social media. Mrs. Zadell will check into that.

Mr. Salvati congratulated Mr. Ebenbach on his new position.

Mr. Krause made a motion to adjourn at 8:19 pm that was seconded by Mr. Salvati - motion passed.