

IN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 1983

Present: Chairman William J. Cossart, John E. Murray and Anne W. Donald.

The statutory requirements as to notice have been fulfilled, the meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Hearing: Cable Television License

Present: Representatives of Adams-Russell and Community Cablevision; and interested residents.

Chairman Cossart convened a special meeting for the purpose of making a decision on the granting of a cable television license. Having reached a consensus on the sufficiency of information relative to the ability to come to a decision, it was on motion by Chairman Cossart unanimously

VOTED: That the Board limit the meeting to discussion among the Board of Selectmen only, with no further input from the audience.

Chairman Cossart stated that the granting of a cable license is one of the most important decisions the Board has had to make from the standpoint of its value to the Town and the direction of the Town, and in terms of the total cost involved and the long-term involvement of the Town, and because it affects almost everybody in Town.

Chairman Cossart stated he had considered the possibility that neither company would prove to be adequate from the standpoint of their initial proposals and that perhaps the Board should consider dismissal of both; however, he dismissed that as a solution based both on the material received and the presentations at Monday (March 21, 1983) night's public hearing.

Recognizing the fact that the Town has two viable applicants, Chairman Cossart stated his reasoning went further. The proposals are substantially different and varied in their approach. Keeping in mind that some information is not as relevant as other material, it is important to decide what the most important factors are, both as an individual and as a Selectman, and, as a Selectman, what is the most appropriate decision for the Town. As an individual, Chairman Cossart stated he would not be worried about a \$20 or \$30 monthly charge - a relatively low risk with a high payoff, but from the standpoint of a Selectman the considerations are quite different. He expressed his opinion that the determining factors should be based on fiscal strength of the applicant, the established record of performance, and a very close involvement with the technology of the industry. Considering these factors, he stated his opinion that Adams-Russell was substantially ahead of Community Cablevision.

Selectman Murray complimented both applicants on their proposals and stated he was particularly intrigued by the Community Cablevision marketing approach. He commented that the Board had contacted several towns which had gone through the process, stated he had discussed the possibility of a regional system, and agreed that financial stability for the long-term is the most important factor in choosing a cable company.

Selectman Donald commented on regionalization, i.e., less town control, problems inherent in scheduling use of studio and stated her preference that the whole Town have access to cable, but questioned the financial feasibility of that.

On question from the Board, it was confirmed by Mr. William Henchy of Adams-Russell that cable television would be available to more remote homes at an additional charge as stipulated in their proposal of March 14, 1983.

After some discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to offer a 15-year license, although Selectman Murray stated he would also be satisfied with a 10-year license.


Selectman Murray questioned how the award would be addressed - by means of approval of the amended application or otherwise. Town Counsel confirmed that a provisional and a final license will be drafted upon the Board's direction on content. Mr. Thompson added that the provisional license would have to be acceptable to the company.

It was on motion by Selectman Cossart unanimously

VOTED: To grant a provisional cable television license to Adams-Russell Telecommunications Group, 280 Bear Hill Road, Waltham, Massachusetts.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Attest:



Richard E. Thompson
Executive Secretary-Clerk

NOTE: The above minutes are a summary of this meeting, not intended to be a verbatim transcript. The complete text of this meeting is available on tape for public review in the office of the Board of Selectmen. (Said tape is no longer available, since it was inadvertently reused. However, it was reviewed in detail and compared with transcription by Elaine Jones of the Selectmen's Office prior to final approval of minutes by Board of Selectmen; the review revealed that the minutes are all inclusive. 5/12/83)