

Telecommunications Commission Meeting Minutes
Aug. 5, 2009 Meeting

Members Present

Cory Scott, chair
Julianne Nery
Timothy O'Brien

Others present

David Powers, Village staff liaison

Chairman Cory Scott called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 p.m.

Chairman Scott asked Commission members to review the minutes from the June 4, 2009 meeting. He then called for a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Julianne Nery so moved. Chairman Scott seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes was approved 3 – 0.

Chairman Scott noted that the meeting would be the last for Commissioner Timothy O'Brien, who was resigning because he was no longer a resident of the Village of Oak Park.

Commissioner O'Brien said he was resigning because he was no longer eligible to serve since he had moved from Oak Park into Chicago. He said he would miss working with the civic-minded individuals on the commission.

Chairman Scott expressed appreciation for Commissioner O'Brien's service, saying his involvement would be missed. He said he would contact the chair of the Citizen Involvement Commission to inform her of the need for additional commissioners. He also said he hoped Commissioner John Shuler who had been absent for some time due to a family issue would be returning soon.

Chairman Scott called the commission's attention to new business – a request from the Village Board for the Telecommunications Communications Commission to research and make recommendations on the feasibility of leasing public property to mobile telephone providers for cell antennae.

Chairman Scott said the record should reflect that the commission acknowledged the request from the Village board would work on the project. The first step, Chairman Scott said, would be to gather information on the how other communities had addressed the concept. Chairman Scott and Commissioner Nery said they would begin the research and reach out to Commissioner Downing to enlist his help.

Discussion moved to an e-mail included in the commission meeting agenda packet from Brian Grogan, the Village's cable television legal counsel. The e-mail referenced information Grogan had received about Comcast inquiring about Oak Park looking for assistance to resolve its franchise renewal.

A brief discussion ensued about why Comcast would be asking such a question and how they would know the Village is considering restarting franchise negotiations. Chairman Scott suggested that Comcast could be monitoring the minutes of the Telecommunications Commission that are posted on the Village web site.

A discussion of the status of the effort to begin franchise negotiations with Comcast followed. Chairman Scott said the commission had by resolution asked the Village Attorney to proceed and prepare a model agreement that could be used to formally bring Comcast back to the negotiating table.

The commission reviewed an invoice from Grogan, which referenced work on redrafting the model franchise agreement.

Discussion turned to the aboveground equipment ordinance recommended by the commission. The Village Board had agreed to the recommendation and directed the Village Attorney to prepare the ordinance. Chairman Scott noted that the Village Attorney had indicated that other priorities would have to be completed before he could work on the ordinance.

In a related matter, Chairman Scott said he had received an e-mail from the chair of the Transportation Commission indicating the body could do nothing about the possible sightline issues created by some AT&T video-ready access devices. The Telecommunications Commission had asked the Transportation Commission to review several specific installations to determine if they posed a danger by impeding visibility for vehicles and/or pedestrians. The Transportation Commission believed that since the boxes were installed with proper permits and staff oversight, it did not have the authority to take any action.

Chairman Scott said the Transportation Commission was thinking about a sightline ordinance, however, noting that once the Village Attorney begins working on the aboveground ordinance, a joint meeting of the two commissions should be considered.

The commission reviewed the citizen complaint report. Two complaints were received in July, one from Steven Endres, 1150 S. Elmwood Ave., who had addressed the commission in the past. Endres' issues with Comcast had been satisfactorily resolved, but he was having difficulty getting a refund from AT&T. After Endres' most recent complaint to the Village and prior to the Aug. 4 commission meeting, AT&T had agreed to the refund he requested.

Chairman Scott called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner O'Brien made the motion. Commissioner Nery seconded. The motion passed 3 - 0.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.

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