

Catskill Town Board Meeting
Catskill Town Hall
June 7, 2022 6:30 pm

Attendance:	Dale Finch,	Supervisor
	Jared Giordiano,	Councilman
	Patrick McCulloch,	Councilman
	Paul Vosburgh,	Councilman

Supervisor Finch opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed all in attendance.

He asked the clerk to read the notice of the public hearing:

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Please take notice the Catskill Town Board will hold a public hearing on June 7, 2022 at 6:30 pm at Catskill Town Hall, 439-441 Main St., Catskill, NY regarding renewal of the cable television franchise agreement by and between the Town of Catskill and MidHudson Cablevision Inc., Catskill, NY. A copy of the renewal agreement is available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Town Clerk's Office, 439 Main St., Catskill, NY, and the town's website www.townofcatskillny.gov

Supervisor Finch asked if anyone had any comment. The representatives of Mid-Hudson Cablevision are present tonight. The agreement is non-exclusive. The monthly franchise fee is 3% and applies to cost of cable only. Rachel Puckett of Mid-Hudson Cablevision stated the number of subscribers in the Town of Catskill for cable are 860 and for internet 2,237.

Mr. Izzo asked why the agreement is fifteen years. Ms. Puckett stated the language has never changed so this is what we legally need to go by. He asked if anyone ever asked the commission why it is fifteen years or if anyone brought a lawsuit challenging the number of years. Mr. Izzo asked what happens if the agreement is not approved. Councilman Giordiano stated we would still collect the 3% fee. Ms. Puckett stated she is not sure of the technicalities of a challenge for non-exclusive contracts. Mr. Izzo asked what would happen if the town did not approve the contract and renegotiate. Ms. Puckett stated the service with the town could cease but this is not something they wish to happen.

Discussion about the fee continued. Supervisor Finch stated the fee will not increase. Cable subscribers will decline. Elliott Matos inquired about the fifteen years for cable but the charge for internet is a lot. Supervisor Finch stated the agreement is non-exclusive so another company can come in if it chooses. Mr. Izzo stated that would cost millions of dollars to do. Ms. Puckett stated the company has invested millions of dollars in infrastructure.

Vince from Mid-Hudson stated this is the fourth time in 37 years the company is tearing down and rebuilding the system. They are investing a lot of capital into the plant. There will be a press release in late May as they are rolling out advanced fiber optic service. Councilman Vosburgh asked about investing in the final mile. Vince stated they will have to bid on things for areas lacking. The intention is to close the gap wherever they can.

Supervisor Finch asked for consideration of hot spots for the town and if Dutchman's Landing is a permanent hot spot, for which it is.

Mr. Izzo asked about satellite service for internet. The response was Hughes Net, and they own LTE service, but it is utilized in areas where there are no wire lines. They are aware individuals do not have service; they are reaching out for the potential of service.

The cost of cable was discussed as it is the number one concern. The cable cost increases each year as the cost is passed down to the consumers (franchise cost). Supervisor Finch asked if there is the possibility of a la carte. Vince stated no because then you would have the franchise cost doled out over only those who want that station, and it would then be cost prohibitive.

Further discussion about fees ensued with all fee costs being 100% passed down to the consumer. Mergers and streaming have turned ten networks into five making the industry less competitive. Networks are monopolies and have unregulated costs to cable providers. Supervisor Finch stated the large concern is for people on fixed incomes.

William Hawthorne asked if there was consideration asking the PSC for five-year agreements.

Supervisor Finch asked if there were any additional comments. Motion to end the public hearing was made by Councilman Giordiano second by Councilman McCulloch. Public hearing ended 7:22 pm.

Supervisor Finch stated we will consider everyone's comments and concerns and address the agreement at our next meeting or the first meeting in July.

The regular meeting convened 7:24 pm.

MINUTES:

May 2, 2022 Town Board Meeting

May 18, 2022 Town Board Committee Meeting

Motion: Councilman McCulloch Second: Councilman Giordiano, carried

CORRESPONDENCE:

NYSDOT speed limit reduction Woodstock Avenue between end of Route 23A and the Greene/Ulster County line (0.15 mile south of Malden Avenue) to be 30 mph from 35 mph.

IDA Route 23B land transfer/pump station. *Supervisor Finch stated the IDA would like to transfer the pump station the Town of Catskill and establish a right of way on 23B. This will be in front of the Planning Board. Councilman Vosburgh asked who owns the road. Councilman Giordiano stated if it is built to town specs, turn it over to the town. Councilman Vosburgh stated the county should own the road and maintain as they do with all other industrial parks.*

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

Central Hudson LCD – Ambulance Building. Central Hudson have accepted the project to retrofit the lighting. The total cost is \$8,932.80 which will be paid 100% by CH.

NEW BUSINESS:

Rev Turpin – use of Ricky Cramer Field. *Supervisor Finch stated they wish to use the field the last week in July for a 2-week bible study. He believes this is a good thing. Councilman Giordiano and McCulloch stated we will need insurance. Resolution # 58-2022 on motion of Councilman McCulloch second by Councilman Giordiano allowing Reverend Turpin use of the ballfield for a 2-week bible study. Adopted Vote: 4 Yes 1 Absent (Scannapieco)*

Delaware Engineering administering escrow accounts for planning/zoning projects. *Supervisor Finch stated this will streamline the process and avoid potential delays. Councilman Vosburgh asked if this would be at no extra charge. Supervisor Finch stated yes. Resolution # 59-2022 on motion of Councilman McCulloch second by Councilman Vosburgh authorizing Delaware Engineering administer the escrow accounts for projects before the Planning Board. Adopted Vote: 4 Yes 1 Absent (Scannapieco)*

NYSERDA grant application for Third Party Support Advancing Code Compliance Technology Pilot Program. *Councilman Giordiano stated this will help purchase the code software. The town qualifies for the grant. If we do not choose their software, we can have Delaware Engineering apply for a grant. The deadline is October 20th. Supervisor Finch stated he will investigate it further with DE.*

SUPERVISOR COMMENTS:

County Solar PILOTS – *Supervisor Finch stated the proposal is \$8,750/kw flat rate. He feels this is a good way to go and we can either adopt by local law or resolution. Councilman Giordiano asked what Audre thought. Supervisor Finch stated she believes it is a good thing. We will investigate it and if feels it would be advantageous, considered it.*

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

With no further business Councilman Vosburgh made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Councilman McCulloch. Meeting ended 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Izzo
Town Clerk

