



Agenda Date: 6/17/15
Agenda Item: III E

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Avenue, 9th Floor
Post Office Box 350
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350
www.nj.gov/bpu/

CABLE TELEVISION

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF)
COMCAST OF NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY, LLC)
FOR A RENEWAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL)
TO CONTINUE TO CONSTRUCT, OPERATE AND)
MAINTAIN A CABLE TELEVISION SYSTEM IN)
AND FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON,)
COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY)
AUTOMATIC RENEWAL)
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL)
DOCKET NO. CE15040451)

Parties of Record:

Dennis C. Linken, Esq., Scarinci Hollenbeck, LLC, for the Petitioner
Anna Godfrey, Clerk, Township of Washington, New Jersey

BY THE BOARD:¹

On April 18, 1980, the Board of Public Utilities ("Board") granted Washington Cable Company, Inc. ("Washington") a Certificate of Approval in Docket No. 803C-6651 for the construction, operation and maintenance of a cable television system in the Township of Washington ("Township"). In that Order, the Board noted that prior to the Certificate of Approval's issuance, Washington had been transferred, with Board approval, to Futurevision Cable Enterprises, Inc. ("Futurevision") and Futurevision was required to meet all obligations agreed to by Washington under the Certificate of Approval. Through a series of subsequent Board-approved transfers, the holder of the Certificate became Storer Cable Communications of Northwest New Jersey, Inc. ("Storer"). On June 6, 1991, the Board granted Storer a Renewal Certificate of Approval for the Township in Docket No. CE90020070. Through an additional series of Board-approved transfers, the current holder of the Certificate became Comcast of Northwest New Jersey, LLC ("Petitioner"). On October 22, 2004, the Board granted the Petitioner a Renewal Certificate of Approval for the Township in Docket No. CE04070711. Although the Certificate expired on April 18, 2015, the Petitioner was authorized to continue to provide cable television service to the Township pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:5A-25, pending disposition of proceedings regarding the renewal of its Certificate of Approval.

¹ Commissioner Upendra J. Chivukula recused himself due to a potential conflict of interest and as such took no part in the discussion or deliberation of this matter.

On February 6, 2015, the Petitioner notified the Township of its intention to exercise its right under the automatic renewal provision of the Township's municipal consent and the Renewal Certificate of Approval. On April 10, 2015, the Petitioner filed with the Board for Automatic Renewal of its Certificate of Approval for the Township, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:5A-16, -19 and -25 and N.J.A.C. 14:17-6.9 and 14:18-13.6. The filing indicates that on May 18, 2004, the Township adopted an ordinance granting municipal consent. On May 21, 2004, the Petitioner accepted the ordinance which provided for a term of 15 years with an automatic renewal for a term of an additional five years.

The Board reviewed the petition for Automatic Renewal Certificate of Approval and the Application for Renewal Cable Television Franchise filed by the Petitioner. Based upon this review and the recommendation of the Office of Cable Television, the Board **HEREBY FINDS** the following:

1. The Petitioner possesses the requisite legal, character, financial and technical qualifications for the awarding of a Certificate of Approval.
2. The design and technical specifications of the system will ensure that the Petitioner provides safe, adequate and proper service.
3. The Petitioner represented that all previously required construction within the franchise territory is complete.
4. The franchise period, as provided in the ordinance, is five years. The Board finds this duration to be reasonable.
5. The Township may review the performance of the Petitioner with regard to the ordinance at its discretion. If the Township determines that the Petitioner failed to substantially comply with the material terms and conditions of the ordinance, the Township shall provide written notice to the Petitioner of such alleged instances of non-compliance, and shall grant the Petitioner 90 days to cure such deficiency. The Township may petition the Board for appropriate administrative action, including revocation of the franchise or reduction of the franchise term, but only after the 90-day opportunity to cure has passed and the deficiency has not been cured.
6. The Petitioner's rates shall be regulated and tariffs shall be filed for all services, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, the Board, and the Office of Cable Television. The Petitioner shall maintain and file with the Board an informational schedule of prices, terms and conditions for unregulated service and promptly file any revisions thereto.
7. Pursuant to statutory requirements, the ordinance specifies a complaint officer to receive and act upon complaints filed by subscribers in the Township. In this case, it is the Office of Cable Television. All complaints shall be received and processed in accordance with the applicable rules.

8. The Petitioner shall maintain a local business office for the purpose of receiving, investigating and resolving complaints. Currently, the primary local business office serving this provision is located at: 155 Port Murray Road, Port Murray (Mansfield Township), New Jersey.
9. The franchise fee to be paid to the Borough is specified to be 2% of the Petitioner's gross revenues from all recurring charges in the nature of subscription fees paid by subscribers for its cable television reception service in the Borough, and shall be increased as required by N.J.S.A. 48:5A-30. Additional regulatory fees shall be paid to the State in an amount not to exceed 2% of Petitioner's gross operating revenues derived from intrastate operations. The Board finds these fees to be reasonable.
10. The Petitioner shall provide service to any residence or business along any public right-of-way in the Primary Service Area at no cost beyond standard and non-standard installation charges as set forth in the Petitioner's application. For any extension outside of the Primary Service Area, the Petitioner shall utilize the line extension policy ("LEP") attached to the Certificate. The minimum homes per mile figure is 35.
11. The Petitioner shall provide public, educational and governmental ("PEG") access channels and facilities in accordance with its renewal application and the ordinance. Specifically, the Petitioner shall continue to provide a system-wide community access channel for use by customers, organizations and entities served by the Petitioner's system. The Petitioner maintains a fully equipped local production studio for local origination production and shall permit the Township to use the studio if requested.
12. The Petitioner shall continue to allocate a weekly four hour block of time to the Township and its designees on the system-wide public access channel for the taped cablecasting of non-commercial programming. Additional time shall be provided, as needed, in the event the Warren Hills Regional High School sports teams are playing Division of State playoff games.
13. The Petitioner shall continue to provide standard installation and basic cable television service, free of charge, on one outlet to the following: Administration Building; Police Department building; Department of Public Works; the fire department buildings located at 196 Washburn Avenue and 16 Pleasant Valley Road; Brass Castle Elementary School; Port Colden Elementary School; Warren Hills Regional High School; and any municipal building, library or first aid squad that may be constructed in the Township. To qualify for free installation, the facility must be within 200 feet of the Petitioner's active cable television plant.
14. The Petitioner shall also continue to provide a video outlet in each classroom or instructional space in any new public school or addition to a public school and ensure that there is a signal of sufficient strength to feed those outlets.

15. Upon reasonable written request of the Township, the Petitioner shall appear at least once annually, at a public meeting of the governing body, or before the Township's Cable Television Advisory Committee, to discuss matters pertaining to the provision of cable television service to residents of the Township and other related issues as the Township and the Petitioner may see fit.

Based upon these findings, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:5A-17(a) and 28(c), the Board **HEREBY CONCLUDES**, as follows: the Petitioner has the municipal consent necessary to support the petition, such consent and issuance thereof are in conformity with the requirements of N.J.S.A. 48:5A-1 et seq.; the Petitioner complied, or is ready, willing and able to comply, with all applicable rules and regulations imposed by or pursuant to State or federal law as preconditions for engaging in the proposed cable television operations; the Petitioner has sufficient financial and technical capacity, meets the legal, character and other qualifications necessary to construct, maintain and operate the necessary installations, lines and equipment; and that the Petitioner is capable of providing the proposed service in a safe, adequate and proper manner.

Therefore, the Petitioner is **HEREBY ISSUED** this Automatic Renewal Certificate of Approval as evidence of Petitioner's authority to construct, own, operate, and maintain a cable television system within the entirety of the Township.

This Renewal Certificate is subject to all applicable State and federal laws, the rules and regulations of the Office of Cable Television, and any such lawful terms, conditions and limitations as currently exist or may hereafter be attached to the exercise of the privileges granted herein. The Petitioner shall adhere to the standards set forth by the Federal Communications Commission's rules and regulations, 47 C.F.R. § 76.1 et seq., including but not limited to, the technical standards 47 C.F.R. § 76.601 through § 76.630. Any modifications to the provisions thereof shall be incorporated into this Certificate.

Failure to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations and orders of the Board or Office of Cable Television, and/or the terms, conditions and limitations set forth herein, may constitute sufficient grounds for the suspension or revocation of this Certificate.

This Renewal Certificate is issued on the representation that the statements contained in the Petitioner's applications are true, and the undertakings therein shall be adhered to and enforceable unless a specific waiver is granted by the Office of Cable Television pursuant to the authority contained in N.J.S.A. 48:5A-1 et seq.

This Certificate shall expire on April 18, 2020.

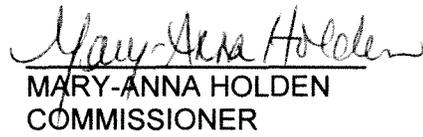
This Order shall be effective on June 26, 2015.

DATED: June 18, 2015

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
BY:


RICHARD S. MROZ
PRESIDENT

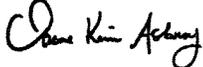

JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO
COMMISSIONER


MARY-ANNA HOLDEN
COMMISSIONER


DIANNE SOLOMON
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST: 
IRENE KIM ASBURY
SECRETARY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the within
document is a true copy of the original
in the files of the Board of Public Utilities



APPENDIX "I"
OFFICE OF CABLE TELEVISION
LINE EXTENSION POLICY

COMCAST OF NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY, LLC
TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON

A cable operator is required to absorb the cost of extensions to the system in the same proportion that the extension is to the remainder of the system.

Actual subscribers served by the extension are required to absorb the remainder of the cost.

If new subscribers are added to the extension the cost is adjusted and those who previously paid receive an appropriate rebate.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. <u># of homes in extension</u>
mileage of extension | = | homes per mile (HPM) of
extension |
| 2. <u>HPM of extension</u>
Minimum HPM that
company actually
constructs in the
system * | = | ratio of the density of
the extension to the
minimum density which the
company constructs in the
system ("A") |
| 3. Total cost of building
the extension times "A" | = | company's share of
extension cost |
| 4. Total cost of building
extension less company's
share of extension cost | = | total amount to be
recovered from
subscribers |
| 5. Total amount to be
<u>recovered from subs</u>
Total subscribers in extension | = | each subscriber's share |

In any case, the company shall extend its plant along public rights of way to:

1. All residences and businesses within 150 aerial feet of the operator's existing plant at no cost beyond the normal installation rate.
2. All residences and businesses within 100 underground feet of the operator's plant at no cost beyond the normal installation rate.

 * The minimum HPM that the company actually constructs in the system or municipality is the minimum number of homes that the company has historically constructed at its own cost. This is a function of the operator's break-even point and its rate of return. Unbuilt systems will use the primary service area rather than construction.

The operator's installation policies shall apply to construction beyond the public right of way.

Detailed accounting and/or financial information to support the minimum HPM shall be supplied to the Office for its approval in such form as required. The minimum HPM shall be updated as appropriate.

When a request for service is received, and unless good cause is shown, cable companies shall:

1. Provide a written estimate within 30 days of such a request.
2. Begin construction within 60 days of receipt of any deposit monies from potential subscribers.
3. Complete construction within six months of receipt of any deposit monies from potential subscribers.
4. Inform each home passed along the extension of the potential costs for subscribers.

Subscribers who pay for an extension shall be entitled to rebates in the following manner:

1. If the company acquires new subscribers subsequent to the initial calculation of step 5 above, the formula will be adjusted and those who have previously paid for the extension will be entitled to an appropriate rebate. In no event shall the amount of the rebate exceed the subscriber's contribution.
2. The company shall keep accurate records of the cost of the extension, the amounts paid by subscribers and any appropriate adjustments.
3. The company shall notify subscribers in the extension of their rights and responsibilities concerning the extension.
4. Once an individual dwelling has paid its share of the extension cost future reconnections or installations shall be made at the company's standard rates.
5. After a period of five years from the installation of the first dwelling unit in the extension no further adjustments shall be made. Installations after five years shall be at the company's standard rate.
6. Once a subscriber is installed, that person shall not normally be entitled to a refund of any monies paid for the installations, except in accordance with the rebate procedure outlined in this policy.

Definitions

Primary Service Area

The Primary Service Area (PSA) can be an entire municipality, but in many instances the PSA is a limited area within a community outside of which a line extension policy may apply. The PSA is depicted by a franchise map and narrative, presented and recorded during the franchise proceedings. It normally remains a fixed geographic area throughout the life of the franchise.

Line Extension Survey

Potential subscribers residing outside the PSA who request service are entitled to an estimate of their share of the cost to secure service. When conducting a survey and estimating costs, a cable company should factor in all potential subscribers who could practicably be included in the extension and give consideration to apparent residential construction in areas contiguous to the proposed extension.

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OF WASHINGTON, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DOCKET NO. CE15040451

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