

**PUBLIC HEARING  
FRANCHISE – CABLE TELEVISION  
TOWN BOARD  
TOWN OF STEPHENTOWN  
MARCH 9, 2020**

The Regular meeting of the Town Board, Town of Stephentown was called to order by *Lawrence Eckhardt* at **7:02 PM** at the Town Hall.

***MEMBERS PRESENT:***

***( X ) Supervisor Lawrence Eckhardt***  
***( ) Councilman Philip Roder***  
***( X ) Councilman William Jennings***  
***( X ) Councilman Everett Madden***  
***( X ) Councilman Pam Kueppers***  
***( X ) Town Clerk Stephanie Wagar***

***( ) Highway Superintendent, Alden Goodermote***  
***( X ) Town Council, Christopher Langlois***  
***( X ) Assessor, Jennifer Van Deusen***  
***( X ) Town Justice, John Meekins***

A quorum ( X ) was ( ) wasn't established.

**11** from the Public were present

Also Present Members of the IT Infrastructure Committee:

Gerald Robinson  
Alexander Haley

***REPORT FROM THE TOWN BOARD & PUBLIC COMMENT:***

*L. Eckhardt:* introduces the board and committee members, gives the purpose of the meeting: To discuss the RFPs that were submitted to the Town for TV Franchises.

*G. Robinson:* Explains what he as council accomplished over his 4 year term on this project and why the Town Board has to go through the current process the Public Service Commission is requiring Stephentown to go through again after already going through this process once before.

*W. Jennings:* acknowledges the hard work G. Robinson put into this project, and introduces each company to provide their presentations. Consolidated Communications also known as Berkshire Cable and Charter also known as Spectrum.

A Motion to Open the meeting directed by Town Council Langlois: Motion Made By: L. Eckhardt Second by: W. Jennings. Votes: 4 Aye 0 Nye.

Charter Communications represented by Kevin Egen, Director of Government Affairs. Submitted an RFP with limited area to only serve the North end of Town off Route 22. Charter (Spectrum) is Financially Strong in 41 States, 1150-1160 relationships throughout New York State, we are one of the largest service providers. The RPF meets the specific SPECs of the Public Service Commission.

*Open for Public Comment on Charter:*

*L. Eckhardt:* Why just the Northern part of Town?

*K. Egan:* it's closet to the current infrastructure.

*L. Eckhardt:* How many will it serve?

*K. Egan:* 95 to 100 passings (addresses)

*W. Jennings:* It will cover Giles Road to the Town line, Whitman, Nora, CC Dam, North Moore Hill Roads. Have you built out entirely in Berlin?

*K. Egan:* not 100% sure on that.

*J. Meekins:* You're in New Lebanon too, right?

*K. Egan:* correct.

*J. Meekins:* well if you're north and south why not cover all of the Town?

*K. Egan:* As of right now we are not financially able.

*A. Haley:* copper or fiber optics?

*L. Eckhardt:* What would the rates be?

*K. Egan:* Rate list has been provided.

*L. Eckhardt:* any restrictions as far as infrastructure?

*K. Egan:* no, the infrastructure is capable of handling the services.

*L. Eckhardt:* are there bundles?

*K. Egan:* Yes, voice, internet and cable are available. Our RFP is specific to the requirements by the Public Service Commission.

*Discussion on live streaming – Charter could provide the public access channel not the infrastructure to live feed. Very costly, outside of their footprint. If this was something the Town would want, the Town would have to pay for the cabling from Giles road to the Town Hall.*

*Consolidated Communications Introduced*

*Bill Mulrein, Engineer with Consolidated for 46 years:* current service fiber optics to 2,500 people in the footprint. Cable will be offered to everyone in the Town.

*L. Eckhardt:* asks if there is additional wiring.

*B. Mulrein:* uses the same lines that are already in place.

*P. Mercer(Consolidated Rep.):* it's another box.

*L. Eckhardt:* using the existing system?

*P. Mercer:* separate router. There is a separate switch.

*L. Eckhardt:* is there a separate charge for each TV?

*B. Jennings:* there are separate charges for TV, Phone and internet.

*S. Wagar:* is each TV a different cost or one fee for 3 TVs in the home?

*D. Dalaudiere (Consolidated Customer Service Rep.):* there is a top box for each TV which is \$7.99/month.

*P. Mercer:* 400 – 500 people have already signed up with fiber optics.

*B. Jennings:* Consolidated is not going to come knocking on your door, you must contact them to hook up fiber optic services.

*D. Flint:* how does it compare to satellite or Dish?

*B. Mulrein:* no weather problems.

*P. Flint:* how big is the set up box?

*P. Mercer:* relatively small.

*S. Wagar:* I have residents that have come in my office telling me their contracts have ended and the prices have more than doubled. Is this going to be the case with the Cable?

*D. Dalaudiere:* send them to me. We can try and work with them to see if what they currently have is really what they need or if it can be lowered to a less costly plan.

*B. Jennings:* a lot of people are still not hooked up, that's Consolidated's fault. Customer Service is not the best. Good news is that they will get it to you no matter the conditions.

*G. Robinson:* I live on a rocky hill area and they installed it in the ground at my house. They needed machines to get it done but they did it and it worked.

*B. Jennings:* this will give the people the opportunity to choose for themselves. Is there any more questions?

*J. Meekins:* are you going to wrap the TV, Phone and internet together?

*B. Mulrein:* absolutely, we will be offering bundle packages.

*B. Jennings:* Consolidated needs to explain the process and what is offered to the people.

*P. Flint:* what about those who have a land line?

*B. Jennings:* that's fine it will still work.

*P. Flint:* I haven't been getting voicemails for 3 days out. When someone calls and leaves a voicemail I get it 3 days later.

*D. Dalaudiere:* call me.

*J. Meekins:* question for Charter, why won't they cover the Town?

*K. Egan:* not able to.

*J. Meekins:* what the hell's the problem? If you are South and North of us why wouldn't you cover the whole Town?

*K. Egan:* the Government has not provided us the finances to do so.

*L. Eckhardt:* year ago they asked the Town Board and they said no because if it wasn't going to be offered to everyone in Town then it wasn't coming through the Town. They currently have customers at the Northern end of Town. There was a 8.5 million dollar grant that the government awarded to communities like ours. Gerry was on them and we received the most funding. Personally the internet is much faster.

*B. Jennings:* there is no place in Stephentown where there is 30 homes within a mile. This would have never happened if Consolidated didn't receive this grant and Gerry Robinson is how they got it. If we did not have him we would not have gotten it.

*S. Wagar:* would we have to go through this entire process again if Charter is able to cover the Town in the future?

*K. Egan:* No, well it is limited so it depends on how the paperwork reads.

*P. Flint:* so it's \$7.99 to rent?

*D. Dalaudiere:* that charge is for the support.

*D. Flint:* when can we get this?

*B. Mulrein:* once we get word from the board we can go to work.

*B. Jennings:* 60 days to submit to the Public Service Commission, then they make their decisions. Could be 60 days before these guys submit their paperwork.

*P. Kueppers:* when do we make the decision?

*L. Eckhardt:* after the resolutions are drafted by the lawyer and hopefully next week's meeting we can vote.

**No more comments – Supervisor requests motion to close.**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 8:08PM**

**MOTION BY: JENNINGS**

**SECONDED BY: KUEPPERS**

**VOTES OF: 4 AYE**

**0 NAY**

**\*\*A Workshop Meeting** is held every second Monday of every month at **7:00PM** at the Town Hall.

**\*\*The next Regular Meeting** of the Town Board, Town of Stephentown will be held on **Monday, March 16, 2020** at **7:00 PM** at the Town Hall.

*Stephanie M. Wagar*

**Town Clerk**