

A.N.C.C.

Area Nine Cable Council

www.westportct.net/ancc

TO: ANCC MEMBERS

June 22, 2006

FROM: Carole Young-Kleinfeld

RE: MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING (June 21, 2006)

ATTENDANCE:

Darien:	Dave Dever
Easton:	
Greenwich:	Stu Reider
New Canaan:	Paul Sedlak,
Norwalk:	
Redding:	Bob Moran
Stamford:	Geza Ziegler
Weston:	Don Saltzman, Bob Atkinson
Westport:	Hal Levy, Judith Freedman
Wilton:	Carole Young-Kleinfeld

1. The meeting began at 5:30 pm at the Westport Town Hall, Room 309, with 8 towns represented.

2. ANCC Chair Hal Levy explained the purpose of the meeting—to discuss whether to retain the firm of Cohen & Wolf to represent the Area Nine Cable Council in the proceedings under DPUC Docket #05-04-10 (Cablevision of Connecticut Franchise Renewal) and whether to guarantee payment for such representation from operating funds (not access funds).

3. Discussion.

- The other two parties (Cablevision and Sound View) involved in the hearing on Docket #05-04-10 have been represented by legal counsel throughout the course of the franchise renewal process.
- In the past, Connecticut's Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) has represented the ANCC, pro bono, as part of their public service mission, but, due to staff cutbacks, will be unable to do so at this time.
- If Sound View is successful at persuading the DPUC that they are better able to operate PEG access channels than individual Area Nine towns can, our towns will lose control of their town-specific Educational and Governmental Access channels along with grants for improvements and equipment, which have totaled approximately \$12,500 per town per year.
- The ANCC explored the possibility of representation with Cohen & Wolf (who are the Town attorneys for a couple Area Nine towns and are currently representing two Area 2 towns on their renewal docket and specifically their Sound View problems), received a discounted quote of \$8500 for legal representation—preparation, participation at hearing (not to exceed three days), and travel expense. Work on any possible appeals would not be included.
- Members were encouraged to discuss sharing the costs of legal representation

equally among all Area Nine towns with the mayors and first selectmen. If each town contributed equally, the cost to each would be \$850. SR suggested a letter from the Cable Council to local officials, explaining the importance of all towns working together and contributing to support the cable council's efforts to protect our town-specific channels.

- Considering that timing is essential in securing legal representation for the June 27 hearing, members suggested guaranteeing the costs from our operating expenses, and moving ahead. HL and DS explained that these were not "access" funds, but funds mandated by state law for the operations of cable councils.

4. Motion. GZ moved to commit ANCC operating funds in an amount not to exceed \$8500, plus \$500 for incidental expenses if needed, to retain Cohen & Wolf to represent the ANCC in the Docket # 05-04-10 proceedings. JF seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 pm.

Next Meeting: 9/6, Westport Town Hall