

**STAFFORD COUNTY**  
**TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

**May 27, 2010**

**I. Call to Order.**

The meeting was called to order by the chair, Danielle Davis, at 7:10 p.m. in the County Administrator's Conference Room, Administration Center, 1300 Courthouse Road.

**II. Roll Call.**

The following members were present: Danielle Davis, John Johnson, Robert Thomas, and Russ Moulton. Also present were Cathy Riddle and Jason Hill representing the County, Kathryn Falk representing Cox and Marie Schuler representing Comcast.

**III. Presentations by the Public.**

Ms. Diana Groton, HOA President for Lakeland Forest subdivision, presented maps and information regarding her neighborhood and inquired why Comcast was not available to the residents of her neighborhood. She said that with 32 homes, Lakeland Forest meets the density requirements outlined in the County's franchise agreement with Comcast. She stated that all residents in her neighborhood would like to have Comcast service. She stated that there are many families with children who are students, and who need Internet access. She said that she has talked to Ms. Marie Schuler about this issue.

Ms. Schuler stated that Lakeland Forest is located 2.2 miles from its facility from which the company connects to its plant. She requested that Ms. Groton provide her with her map so she could have her construction staff review the neighborhood again.

Mr. Moulton asked how Comcast determines a starting point from which it can connect a neighborhood to its facilities to provide service. He also inquired how the average citizen would know where to start on his/her property to measure to determine how far the property is from the cable provider's facility.

Ms. Schuler stated that Comcast reps tell customers where the facility is located.

Ms. Davis requested that Ms. Schuler and Ms. Groton exchange information and that Ms. Schuler obtain specific information on where construction began near Lakeland Forest that allowed Comcast to provide service to nearby subdivisions but not to Lakeland Forest.

Mr. Moulton inquired about the service points from which Comcast can provide service to neighborhoods.

Ms. Schuler stated that the service points are based on where Comcast can provide the capacity to the house. She stated that if Comcast has a node near the property and can extend their infrastructure, then they could provide service. She stated that customers do not take service off other residents, they take the service off an existing line.

#### IV. Approval of Minutes.

The minutes of the February 2010 minutes were approved unanimously with changes.

#### V. Members' concerns

Mr. Moulton asked Ms. Schuler for an update on Mr. Stribling's situation, which he had e-mailed her about earlier.

Ms. Schuler replied that she did not have an update regarding Mr. Stribling.

Mr. Johnson asked Ms. Schuler if a cable provider cuts a cable, and the company sends someone to fix it, if there was a reimbursement or some type or reciprocal agreement.

Ms. Schuler said that there was no reimbursement or reciprocal agreement.

Mr. Johnson stated that he had a cable on his property cut, but that Comcast restored service with an above ground cable.

Ms. Schuler stated that she would check on it

Ms. Davis inquired about providing broadband service to 2077 Courthouse Road. She also asked whether Verizon would provide cable or high-speed Internet to Peter's Run subdivision. She stated that Mr. Paul Milde was supposed to forward information to her about this subdivision.

#### **VI. Agenda Additions.**

There were no agenda additions.

#### **VII. New Business.**

##### **- Public Access Station**

Ms. Davis stated that there is no money for a public access station. She said that Ms. Pamela Haines was encouraged to bring a business plan for a public access station to the Commission and as a 501c3 on her own. She stated that once Ms. Haines does this, the public access station would be placed back on the agenda.

Mr. Johnson asked if PEG fees were enough to pay for the channel.

Ms. Davis said that there was not enough PEG fees to fund a public access channel.

Ms. Riddle stated that she had sent information the Commission regarding PEG fees. Ms. Davis asked that Ms. Riddle re-send this information to the members.

#### **- 4G**

Ms. Davis stated that 4G technology was very promising, and would help service remote areas that need high speed service but can't get it. She said that she needed someone on the Commission to work with her on a plan that would address the possibilities of the 4G network and its impact on Stafford County.

Mr. Moulton asked if the Federal Stimulus Bill would net more money and allow government and private companies to apply for that money with a grant proposal. He asked if Stafford County had applied for any Stimulus funds.

Mr. Jason Hill stated that yes, the county had already applied for stimulus funds.

Ms. Davis stated that issue in Stafford has been getting broadband to rural areas.

Mr. Moulton asked if new towers would be constructed for 4G technology. He stated that residents throughout Stafford can't get Internet, cable or cell phone service. He agreed to partner with Ms. Davis on the 4G study.

Ms. Davis stated that AT&T has a software upgrade on their towers.

Mr. Thomas stated that he would contact Sprint for additional information.

Ms. Davis and Mr. Moulton stated that they would explore the 4G technology.

Mr. Moulton asked what the County could do as a local government to take away the barriers to make it easy for entrepreneurs. He asked how difficult it would be to put up a cell tower in Stafford County.

Ms. Riddle stated that the provider would have to apply for a permit, then go to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors for approval.

Ms. Davis said the Commission could work with the Planning Commission if there was a desire. She stated that the Commission could only explore, and that it was restricted by state law.

Mr. Moulton inquired about the ordinances an applicant would have to follow to build a cell phone tower. He also inquired about the fees they would have to pay.

#### **- Presentation to the Board of Supervisors**

Ms. Davis stated that the Board of Supervisors does not want the Commission's charter amended. She stated that in an effort to cut costs, staff was asked by the Board to come up with a list of committees and commissions that could possibly be disbanded. She said that the

Telecommunications Commission was one of them. She stated that the Board supported the Commission. She said that the Board requested a presentation from the Commission on its vision, what they plan to do and how Commission members would help the Board. For example, with Ms. Haines, she stated that the Commission would help her explore grants.

Mr. Moulton asked who was requesting the presentation.

Ms. Davis replied that the Board was requesting the presentation. She stated that the Commission needed to let the Board know what work members were doing now and what work they planned to do in the future.

Mr. Moulton requested that his inquiries to Comcast regarding Mr. Stribling of 117 Marsh Road be entered into the minutes. He also requested that his inquiry regarding 25 homeowners in the River Gates subdivision and why they can't get Comcast also be listed in the minutes. He has provided information to Ms. Schuler on both of these inquiries.

### **VIII. Adjournment.**

At 8:00 p.m., Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Moulton seconded; the motion passed unanimously.