



Mt. Hood Cable Regulatory Commission

Serving Multnomah County and the Cities of Fairview, Gresham, Portland, Troutdale & Wood Village

MT. HOOD CABLE REGULATORY COMMISSION

Hybrid – Zoom and MetroEast, Gresham, Oregon

June 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes – **APPROVED**

SUMMARY MINUTES

Call to Order 6:30 PM

Roll Call:

Present: Chair DeGraw, Vice Chair Harden; Commissioner Goodlow; Commissioner Thomas; Commissioner Wagner

Absent: Commissioner Dennerline and Commissioner Moyer (excused)

Staff: Seema Kumar, BPS Chief of Community Technology; Rana DeBey, MHCRC Community Grants Manager; Laura Dyer, MHCRC Compliance Analyst; Douglas Imaralu, MHCRC Financial Analyst; Kevin Block, Policy Coordinator; Kathleen Lefebvre, MHCRC Administrative Specialist

Chair DeGraw welcomes Asad Butt and Soren Underdahl to the meeting. Asad Butt's MHCRC Portland Commissioner appointment was approved through Portland City Council and will be effective July 1, 2025. Soren Underdahl's MHCRC Multnomah County Representative appointment is on the Consent Agenda next week at the Multnomah County Board meeting and will also be effective July 1, 2025.

Chair DeGraw also welcomes Mark Wolf, MHCRC contracted legal counsel. Mark is with the firm Local Government Law Group, P.C. and is present and available during this meeting for any questions or concerns around Oregon Public Meeting laws or other aspects of the Commission's legal counsel.

- Agenda Review: Chair DeGraw adds agenda item *R3a which is a request to vote on a contingency budget request before the Commission votes on *R3 Community Technology Grant Agreements 2025 Cycle. The documents associated with this request are posted to www.mhcr.org/about-the-mhcr/meeting-agenda/
- Disclosures: Vice Chair Harden discloses that he has been working with Tim Goodman on obtaining a new account manager at Gresham Senior Center, his place of employment, and will have a meeting with Tim on 6/17/25 to discuss a new LiftZone location at the Gresham Senior Center.
- Public Comment (non-agenda items):
 - Cathy Keathley, Gresham City Councilor, and elected official liaison to MHCRC, shares the following public comment:
 - Gresham will be diving further into their role within the Commission over the next few of months and will be sharing updates as they go along. Chair strongly encourages and invites Gresham leadership and staff to reach out to her and/or MetroEast Community Media Center to discuss the future of the Commission, and with any questions or concerns.





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- Community Media Center Updates
 - MetroEast – John Lugton noted the following updates: MetroEast’s roofing project is in process and contractors will be finishing that work in the coming months and expressed appreciation for MHCRC’s support of this project. Wood Village City Hall install has been finalized and expressed appreciation for David Elkin-Bram for his work on this project. John shares that MetroEast just finished broadcasting programming for 18 budget work sessions and public hearings, resulting in a very busy past few months for MetroEast. John shares many exciting additional MetroEast updates and Vice Chair Harden highlights that MetroEast won a Telly Award for the video Food Foray.
 - Open Signal – Courtney Rae shares the following staffing updates: Katmeow Garcia, Open Signal’s Director of Community Media, will be returning to work next week after some time away on FMLA. Jim Bruce has transitioned out of his role as Director of Information Technology. Jim made significant contributions to our team, and we’re grateful for the many ways he supported Open Signal over the years. Courtney shares that Open Signal has been working with Laura Dyer, MHCRC Compliance Analyst, to draft an amendment to Open Signal’s general operating grant agreement with the City of Portland. Courtney highlights this amendment is important as it will formally acknowledge the expanded scope of work Open Signal provides to the City Council under the new form of government, with expanded council members and many new committees. Courtney shares exciting financial support for programming including a multi-year grant from the National Endowment for Arts, and a new grant award in the amount of \$10,000 from the Henry Lea Hillman Foundation. Courtney express appreciation to the MHCRC for their support and guidance.
 - Franchisee Activity Report
 - Ziplly – not in attendance.
 - Comcast – Tim Goodman shares Comcast is working to finalize the agreements with community partners using the I-Net end funds.

***CONSENT AGENDA – NO DISCUSSION**

All items listed below may be enacted by one motion and approved as consent agenda items. Any item may be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately if a member of the Commission so requests.

C1. May 19, 2025 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Vice Chair Harden moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Goodlow seconded.
VOTE: 5-0 passed

REGULAR AGENDA

***R1. Election of MHCRC Chair and Vice Chair**



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Laura Dyer provided an overview of the elections process and said nominations were made for Commissioner Julia DeGraw for Chair and Commissioner Scott Harden for Vice Chair via email.

Commissioner Thomas expresses his appreciation to Chair DeGraw and Vice Chair Harden for their effort and commitment to MHCRC, and shares they have both done outstanding jobs in their roles over this past year and looks forward to working with both in the coming year.

MOTION: Commissioner Wagner moved to appoint Commissioner DeGraw as the Chair for FY 2025-26 and Commissioner Harden as the Vice Chair for FY 2025-26. Commissioner Goodlow seconded.

VOTE: 5-0 passed

R2. NEX Strategies Strategic Plan Presentation (Information and Questions)

Chair DeGraw invites Autumn Carter and Reed Wagner from NEX Strategies to present. Autumn highlights NEX Strategies will present recommendations to the Commission and then invite Commissioner's comments, questions and discussion. Autumn emphasizes these recommendations come from NEX Strategies as MHCRC's contracted consultants on strategic planning for the future of the Commission. NEX Strategies was informed of these decisions by Commissioners, jurisdictions, media centers and well as analysis of documents and financial projects that were approved and provided by the Commission to NEX Strategies. NEX Strategies organized their presentation using the following outline: Key Dynamics, Strategy Overview, Core Recommendations and an Implementation Roadmap, details of each component were included in the packet of materials. Autumn pointed out that during the analysis process NEX Strategies took a third-party independent role to analyze the financials and finalize their recommendations. Autumn shares three scenarios, these concepts are included in the packet materials. Concluding, NEX Strategies notes that MHCRC has been a very successful joint effort to serve the community and moving forward NEX Strategies recommends that the Commission's funding source is aligned with their activities which means narrowing MHCRC's focus back to cable and facilitating a managed 2-year transition. This 2-year timeline would provide a level of stability while aligning today's fiscal and regulatory realities.

DISCUSSION: Vice Chair Harden notes that our community technology grants are multi-year and staffing needs to be maintained to ensure contract compliance, and requests City of Portland leadership assure that MHCRC staff would be retained. Chair DeGraw agrees in that those are exactly the kinds of decisions the Commission is facing as we move forward from planning into change management. Chair DeGraw requests that Commissioners get in touch with their respective jurisdiction because the authority for any change ultimately lies with the jurisdictions.

Vice Chair Harden highlights that our Community Technology Grants support small but burgeoning organizations, and our funding can have great impact on these smaller organizations and suggests a 4- to 6-year sunset as MHCRC is often a critical source of funding for smaller organizations. Vice Chair Harden also highlights that our Community Technology Grants program supports those in the community by educating and training community members, and especially in the East County jurisdictions, which also inter-connects with the Community Media Centers by providing content to broadcast.





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Reed Wagner, NEX Strategies, expects that these scenarios can and will be shaped and changed with input, as they are flexible options and not delineated options.

Chair DeGraw agrees that we need to work together get creative with our diminishing resources so we can have the greatest impact in our community. Chair DeGraw emphasizes that MHCRC's current positive impact across all jurisdictions lends to the importance of a new intergovernmental agreement to wholistically support our organizations and programs as multi-jurisdictional.

Commissioner Goodlow notes that she appreciates all the work that has gone into this strategic planning and the team that has worked on it, and she doesn't believe any of these scenarios outlined are the perfect answer but will support the majority on how to move forward. Commissioner Goodlow requests clear expectations on what jurisdictions expect for MHCRC.

Commissioner Wagner notes that she looks forward to a larger discussion soon and supports Commissioner Goodlow's comments on clear expectations and intentions.

Commissioner Thomas notes that NEX Strategies has given a great presentation and report and believes we need to highlight to the jurisdictions the value of what MHCRC provides, not so much the functions of the Commission, but rather the value to the communities that our services provide.

***R3a. Contingency Request: Community Technology Grants**

Rana DeBey, MHCRC Community Grants Manager, notes that Staff is recommending that the Commission allocate \$539,205 from the FY24-25 budgeted community grants contingency line item (\$800,000) so that the Commission can award grants to the remaining nine applicants who were invited to move forward this cycle. DeBey notes the MHCRC annually budgets \$800,000 in Community Grants Contingency in anticipation of this type of scenario that crosses fiscal years.

Douglas Imaralu, MHCRC Finance Manager, highlights that the concept of this discrepancy was brought to the Finance Committee in March 2025. This request from Staff is accounting for every outstanding advance in our budget, so that grants in a current year are not impacted by the recoveries. Ideally budgets from a previous year do not impact a current year budget, but this is why we have this contingency budget line item this year, because it is currently the case that the prior year advances are impacting this year's grant requests. Imaralu structured the FY26 MHCRC fund budget so Staff will not be requesting this contingency transfer in the coming years.

Vice Chair Harden requests more information on the Staff Cover sheet around the phrase "and award additional grants in the coming year". Staff clarify that this is an error, and not a necessary component of this request, as this request does not impact next fiscal year's grant awards.

Commissioner Thomas requests more communication to the Finance Committee on issues coming to the Commission. Imaralu confirms that MHCRC Staff will respond with better communication to the Finance Committee going forward.

MOTION: Vice Chair Harden moved to approve a one-time budgetary allocation from the Community Grants Contingency of \$539,205; Commissioner Thomas seconded.





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VOTE: 5-0 passed

***R3. 2025 Community Technology Grant**

Rana DeBey, MHCRC Community Grants Manager, notes there were two applicants who withdrew from the application process, those being Sabin CDC, and Southern Ocean Studios and therefore upon recommendation from the Equity Committee, has moved forward two other applicants: CETI and Peer Tribe Foundation. Staff is recommending that the Commission approve the Community Technology grant agreements included in the packet materials, with a total amount for all 9 applicants as \$539,205 and if the Commission approves all the grants this evening, then will have made investments totaling \$994,416 for the fiscal year. DeBey gave an overview of the following grant applicants up for approval:

African Youth and Community Organization	\$101,238.00
CETI	\$75,630.00
Friends of Saturday Academy	\$4,510.00
Peer Tribe Foundation	\$99,842.00
Portland Community College	\$81,252.00
Project Ledo	\$11,324.00
Roots & Beats Project (JUNTOSpdx)	\$56,100.00
Slavic Community Center of NW	\$47,800.00
Self Enhancement, Inc (SEI)	\$61,509.00
TOTAL	\$539,205.00

DISCUSSION: Vice Chair Harden notes that CETI’s newsletter is a valuable resource and suggests everyone subscribe to it via their website.

MOTION: Commissioner Thomas moved to approve the following 2025 Community Technology Grant Cycle agreements: African Youth and Community Organization for the total amount of \$101,238.00; CETI for the total amount of \$75,630.00; Friends of Saturday Academy for the total amount of \$4,510.00; Peer Tribe Foundation for the total of amount of \$99,842.00; Portland Community College for the total amount of \$81,252.00; Project Ledo for the total amount of \$11,324.00; Roots & Beats Project (JUNTOSpdx) for the total amount of \$56,100.00; Slavic Community Center of NW for the total amount of \$47,800.00; Self Enhancement, Inc (SEI) for the total amount of \$61,509.00 for a total amount of \$539,205.00. Vice Chair Harden seconded.

VOTE: 5-0 passed

R4. Proposed Meeting Dates and Retreat Options

Kathleen Lefebvre presents proposed meeting and retreat dates for the upcoming year, to be finalized and appointments sent on or around July 1, 2025.

Staff Activity





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- Legislative Activity Report – Kevin Block gives an updated legislative activity report, included in the packet materials. He shares that Olivia Trustee is a current FCC nominee and will send a bio to Commissioners.
- Consumer Protection Report – Laura Dyer gives an updated consumer protection report, included in the packet materials.
- **Committee Reports**
 - Finance Committee – none
 - Equity Committee – none
 - Policy Committee - none
 - City of Portland Charter Liaison - none
 - Open Signal Board Appointee – none
 - MetroEast Board Appointee – none
- **New Business; Commissioner Open Comment** – Chair DeGraw requests that Commissioners need to reach out to their respective jurisdictions as we move forward in the strategic planning process and highlighted that particularly with the public comment from Gresham City Councilor, Cathy Keathley, Chair DeGraw wants to make sure the Commissioner Wagner feels supported to set up a meeting with Gresham sooner than later, and she is available to assist in any way necessary to open up those communication channels for all Commissioners.
- **Public Comment (non-agenda items)-** none

Next MHCRC Meetings:

- MHCRC FY26 Budget Presentation – ongoing throughout June
- Portland City Council MHCRC Appointments for Commissioners Goodlow and Butt - **approved**
- Multnomah County Board MHCRC Appointment for Commissioner Underdahl – on consent agenda
- MHCRC Regular Meeting – Calendar appointments will be sent on July 1 for the coming year.
- MHCRC Retreat – Staff are currently working on calendaring with the aim of 100% participation.

***Denotes a voting item**

Adjourned: 9:02 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Lefebvre

