



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 Open Signal, Portland, Oregon

May 19, 2025 Meeting Minutes --**APPROVED**

SUMMARY MINUTES

Call to Order 6:30 PM

Roll Call:

Present: Vice Chair Harden – Chair; Commissioner Dennerline; Commissioner Goodlow; Commissioner Moyer; Commissioner Thomas; Commissioner Wagner

Absent: Chair DeGraw (excused)

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

- **Agenda Review:** Vice Chair Harden reviews the agenda and notes the timeline for the MHCRC Annual Report production, Staff anticipate final product will be ready by the end of May and will distribute to Commissioners and jurisdictions upon receipt and bring the final product to the June meeting.
- **Disclosures:** Vice Chair Harden notes that in his new role as the Program Director for the Gresham Senior Center he reached out to Tim Goodman to obtain a new direct customer service contact to renew the Senior Center's Comcast broadband agreement for an improved 3-year term. Vice Chair Harden also noted that it was discussed with Tim Goodman the possibility of creating a LiftZone at the Gresham Senior Center.
- **Public Comment (non-agenda items):** none.
- **Community Media Center Updates**
 - **MetroEast** – John Lugton noted the following updates: the municipal install at city of Wood Village is underway; MetroEast is continuing to make major upgrades to Studio A and Studio B; MetroEast staff have developed a balanced FY 2025-26 Budget; MetroEast is embarking on creating and selling gear. Additionally, completion of the staff handbook has wrapped up; MetroEast just finished a podcast, working with Underscore News, an organization that is a MHCRC Community Technology Grant recipient. John shares additional MetroEast updates.
 - **Open Signal** – Daniela Serna shares the following updates: Open Signal recently completed the FY 2025-26 budgeting process; their Board approved operating and capital budgets which were submitted to the MHCRC staff; Open Signal welcomed two new Board members, Karma Rivera and Deniz Taşdemiroğlu Conger; Open Signal





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was awarded \$10k in general operating funds from the Oregon Community Foundation; Daniela shares other updates and expresses gratitude to the Commission and staff, for support, guidance, and allyship.

- Franchisee Activity Report
 - Ziplly – not in attendance.
 - Comcast – Tim Goodman shares the following Community Investment updates: recently sponsored a successful Portland Community College Foundation’s annual gala and fundraiser; partnered with Dress for Success, and looking at this organization for a possible Lift Zone; partnered with Free Greek for a tech e-cycling event, during which 4000 lbs. of e-waste was collected and avoided going to landfills; and Comcast is working on multiple LiftZone partnerships in the community.

***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. March 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes
- C2. FY 25/26 MHCRC Goals and Objectives
- C3. Equity Committee Statement to Grantees and Grant Applicants

MOTION: Commissioner Goodlow moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Dennerline seconded.

VOTE: 6-0 passed

REGULAR AGENDA

***R1. FY 2025-26 MHCRC Fund Budget Proposal**

Commissioner Thomas, Chair of the Finance Committee, requests a re-order of presentations, specifically that MetroEast and Open Signal present first, and then Douglas present the MHCRC FY 2025-26 Fund Budget subsequently. Laura Dyer, MHCRC Staff, clarifies that we received updated budget materials from the Community Media Centers and published those materials on our website after the Wednesday packet publishing deadline. Tonight’s presentations will be reviewing the most up-to-date materials that are available on our website.

Daniel Serna from Open Signal gives a high-level overview of their FY 2025-26 budget, a prior version was presented at the May 1 2025 Finance Committee and has since been updated and balanced. Jim clarifies the new building fund line item. Details are included in the packet materials.

Seth Ring from MetroEast gives a top-level overview of their FY 2025-26 budget, including staffing remains around 10.5 FTE and there will be a 3% COLA for staff. Seth highlights that this is a balanced budget by pursuing diversified revenue, with a small surplus. Details are included in the packet materials.





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Douglas Imaralu, MHCRC Finance Manager, presents the MHCRC FY 2025-26 proposed fund budget to the Commission. Imaralu shares that we recently changed how we are calculating the beginning fund balance, reverting to how we had made those calculations in 2019 and prior. Imaralu shares this is important as we are calling out our liabilities and advances. This will result in a significant change in the Net Change in Fund Balance going forward. Imaralu highlights that we recently incorporated the Zippy subscriber numbers. Imaralu reviews the proposed FY 2025-26 fund budget as presented in the packet materials.

DISCUSSION: During MetroEast's budget presentation Commissioner Thomas seeks clarification on the MetroEast non-personnel expenses changes and Seth notes a change in chart of accounts and therefore there are some significant line-item changes in non-personnel expenses from last FY, these changes include shifting depreciation and amortization. During Douglas Imaralu's presentation Commissioner Thomas requests further information on the breakdown of the \$200,000 increase in FTE and BPS overhead. Seema Kumar conveys the increase in Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) from 3.85 to 4.35 is a strategic and necessary adjustment to support the MHCRC's Phase 2 of the strategic planning process and ensure continuity and effectiveness during a period of organizational transition. Going forward Commissioner Thomas requests a more advance notice of the budget documents before the May Finance Committee. Imaralu confirms that next year Staff will meet the Finance Committee engagement timeline request. Imaralu reviews the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability's overhead costs. Commissioner Dennerline shares concerns on the increase in FTE. Imaralu highlights the FY 2025-26 proposed Operations budget and that carryover funds may not be a source of revenue in the coming fiscal years. There is a discussion on the jurisdictional approval schedule, it was noted that Staff need to amend the budget document to capture the following: further narrative of the overhead breakdown; details on .5 FTE personnel increase; acknowledge that there may be amendments to the carryover amounts for the advance encumbrances; and all * are met with a footnote explanation.

Commissioners noted there are no dollar amount amendments requested, only further narrative on the document.

MOTION: Commissioner Thomas moved to approve the FY 2025-26 MHCRC Fund Budget Proposal as amended and recommend the FY 2025-26 MHCRC Fund budget as amended to the jurisdictions. Commissioner Moyer seconded.

VOTE: 6-0 passed

R2. NEX Strategies Strategic Planning Updates and Next Steps (Information and Questions)

Vice Chair Harden invites Reed Wagner, Partner NEX Strategies, to present. Reed hands it over to Nick Popenuk, from Tiberius Solutions, who gives a financial analysis of three scenarios over a 10-year time-period for the Commission. Presentation materials are in the packet for further details. NEX Strategies is currently refining recommendations through stakeholder feedback and will present recommendations in the coming months.

DISCUSSION: none.





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***R3. 2025 Community Technology Grant**

Rana DeBey, MHCRC Grants Manager, notes that Staff is recommending that the Commission approve the Community Technology grant agreements included in the packet materials, with a total amount for all 6 applicants as \$364,211.00. DeBey gave an overview of the following grant applicants:

Ethos Music Center for	\$57,600.00
Gresham Barlow School District	\$118,762.00
North Star Collaborative Foundation dba North Star Civic Foundation	\$32,093.00
Portland Art Museum	\$80,100.00
Portland State University: Sub-Basement Studios	\$63,730.00
Stomping Grounds Arthouse	\$11,926.00

DISCUSSION: None

MOTION: Commissioner Thomas moved to approve the following 2025 Community Technology Grant Cycle agreements: Ethos Music Center for the total amount of \$57,600.00; Gresham Barlow School District for the total amount of \$118,762.00; North Star Collaborative Foundation dba North Star Civic Foundation for the total amount of \$32,093.00; Portland Art Museum for the total amount of \$80,100.00; Portland State University: Sub-Basement Studios for the total amount of \$63,730.00; and Stomping Grounds Arthouse for the total amount of \$11,926.00 for a total amount of \$364,211.00. Commissioner Goodlow seconded.

VOTE: 6-0 passed

Commissioner Moyer excused herself from the meeting.

R4. Peak Grant Conference

Rana DeBey, MHCRC Grants Manager, shares an information-only presentation on the Peak Grantmaking conference titled "Onward Leading with Courage" that she attended in March. This engaging presentation highlighted transforming philanthropy by elevating the field of grant making for public and private sector grant professionals.

***R5. Comcast Signal Degradation**

Kevin Block, MHCRC Policy Analyst, gives a technical overview of the potential Comcast signal degradation issue. Laura Dyer, MHCRC Compliance Analyst, summarizes MHCRC Staff's correspondence with Comcast, which notes the interpretation applied by the CMCs is inconsistent with their understanding of what that contract language was designed to accomplish. Dyer notes that Staff confirmed that all channels are broadcast today in 720p, doing so because there is a provision in the agreement that prohibits discrimination. Dyer noted Staff reached out to BBK, Commission's legal advisors, for a price estimate for analyzing the signal degradation facts is approximately \$2,500. Commissioner Dennerline notes he spent 25 years as a professional broadcast engineer and gives a summary of the issue based on that background. He shares that ultimately this is not degradation and recommends the Commission not spend resources pursuing this issue. There is no motion.





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Staff Activity

- FY2025-26 Budget Process and Timeline Update – Douglas Imaralu gave an overview of the FY 2025-26 timeline and the jurisdictional budget presentations.
- Legislative Activity Report – Kevin Block gives an updated legislative activity report, included in the packet materials.
- Consumer Protection Report – Laura Dyer gives an updated consumer protection report, included in the packet materials.

- **Committee Reports**
 - Finance Committee –none
 - Equity Committee – Commissioner Goodlow notes an equity statement will be distributed to all grantee and grant applicants, included in the packet materials. The Equity Committee will be reviewing applications for awards as funds become available.
 - Policy Committee - none
 - Open Signal Board Appointee – none
 - MetroEast Board Appointee – none

- **New Business; Commissioner Open Comment** - none

- **Public Comment (non-agenda items)**- David Elkin Bram gave public testimony on R5. Comcast Signal Degradation. David shares he agrees in part with Commissioner Dennerline that video production requires many times more bandwidth than video distribution over cable and modern televisions convert signals but adds in support of the CMCs' argument is that the 2 million pixels in the original frame is no longer available once the frame is reduced to less than 1 million pixels, regardless of upscaling. David emphasized there was no notification provided to the CMCs, or to MHCRC. Please see additional written testimony included in June packet materials, attached to these minutes.

Next MHCRC Meetings:

- MHCRC Regular Meeting – Monday, June 16, 6:30pm, MetroEast/Hybrid
- MHCRC Appointments
 - Commissioner Leslie Goodlow – City of Portland T&I Committee May 19th
 - Vice Chair Scott Harden – City of Wood Village May 13th
 - Asad Butt – City of Portland T&I Committee May 19th
- FY 25/26 Jurisdictional Budget Presentations:
 - City of Fairview Council Wednesday, June 4th at 7:00 pm
 - City of Gresham Council Consent Agenda June 17th 6:00 pm
 - City of Troutdale Council Tuesday, June 10th at 7:00 pm
 - City of Wood Village Council Tuesday, June 10th 6:00 pm
 - City of Portland Finance Committee Monday June 9th 12:00 pm
 - City of Portland Council TBD
 - Multnomah County Board Meeting Thursday June 26th 9:30 am

Adjourned: 9:02 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Lefebvre

