

Mt. Hood Cable Regulatory Commission  
Location: Portland Public Schools Blanchard Center  
September 23, 2019, Meeting Minutes – **Draft**

Call to Order: 5:00 pm

- Roll Call  
Hansen noted that one or more members of the Commission may attend and participate by electronic means. The public will be afforded an opportunity to listen to the participation at the meeting site.

Hansen said he appointed Dennerline to the MetroEast Board of Directors and Studenmund to Open Signal Board of Directors.

Commissioners present: Leif Hansen (Chair), Carol Studenmund (by phone), Scott Harden, Norm Thomas (by phone), Jeff Dennerline.

Commissioners absent: Jacquenette McIntire

Staff Present: Julie Omelchuck, Program Manager; Rebecca Gibbons, Program Coordinator; Cinthia Diaz Calvo, Administrative Specialist

- Disclosures: None.
- Public Comment (non-agenda items): None.
- **\*CONSENT AGENDA – NO DISCUSSION**

\*C1. September 9, 2019 Meeting Minutes

**Motion:** Harden moved to approve the consent agenda. Dennerline seconded.

**Vote:** 5-0

- **REGULAR AGENDA**

R1. TechSmart Grant Amendment – Portland Public Schools

Omelchuck provided the overview of the Portland Public Schools TechSmart Grant Extension Amendment contained in the meeting packet. She said Portland Public Schools leadership will share more about the current grant and proposed grant amendment, which scales the current grant project to all Title I elementary schools in the District through school year 2021-2022.

Guadalupe Guerrero, Superintendent for Portland Public Schools (PPS), highlighted the impact that the grant would make in various aspects. He also said the extension grant is consistent with what the community has

expressed as a need, as presented in a handout from PPS. He provided an overview of the grant extension under the TechSmart Initiative factors for successful technology projects: teaching effectiveness, visible leadership, digital age learning culture, funding and budget, data-driven improvement, strategic planning, and engaged communities.

Kevin Crotchet, PPS Director of Learning Technology, explained the impact of professional development. He also dove deeper into the impact of the TechSmart Initiative and what it means for students and teachers to have access to technology and 358,680 digital books. He said the curriculum assets are accessed through chrome books. As an example, he said students have been able to make their own digital books through Book Creator and it's one way to for students to demonstrate their learning.

Jennifer Hopkins, TechSmart TOSA at Portland Public Schools, highlighted the importance of being innovators. The first grant helped start an innovation and growth mindset around technology. PPS is structuring its professional development to support teachers become more and more effective. TechSmart schools have used tools for students to share their work with peers, teachers and parents, bringing authentic audiences to students' work.

A three-minute video about the PPS current TechSmart grant was played.

Andy Wheeler, PPS Senior Project Manager, described how PPS has supported scaling and replacing equipment. He explained they've expanded to 4th-5th grades at many current TechSmart schools and developed resources that support instruction and delivery of a viable curriculum.

Crotchet recognized all of those involved with the TechSmart+ project development.

In response to a question from Studenmund, Wheeler said that the first grant included eight Title I schools and 12 others. They wanted to see the results of the adoption throughout all different schools, with and without TechSmart resources. Now they are scaling their learnings to all Title I schools. Omelchuck added that Pacific Research and Evaluation included more Title I schools in its evaluation pool because some of those schools were comparative schools that didn't have the TechSmart investment.

In response to a question from Studenmund, Wheeler said that a PPS goal is to assess students' access to adequate internet or Wi-Fi at home. Crotchet said they are identifying the costs and benefits of the District paying for students to have Wi-Fi at home. Omelchuck said that while it is a PPS goal, it is not part of the grant project budget.

In response to a question from Hansen, Wheeler said that PPS assesses teachers' learning and progress through teacher surveys. It's a combination between internal assessments and Pacific Resource and Evaluation TechSmart assessment work.

In response to a question from Hansen, Crotchet said they expect to see a gap when students move into 4th grade and don't have the technology. He said they are trying to expand the technology access in classrooms and using learnings from the first TechSmart grant to inform the expansion.

**Motion:** Harden moved to approve an amendment to the grant agreement with Portland Public Schools in order to expand the TechSmart grant project to additional elementary schools through school year 2021-22 and to provide grant funds for capital costs related to the expansion. Dennerline seconded.

**Vote:** 5-0

R2. TechSmart Grant – Gresham-Barlow School District

Omelchuck introduced the proposed grant agreement with Gresham-Barlow School District (GBSD) contained in the meeting packet. In accordance with the MHCR's grantmaking process for the TechSmart Initiative, the TechSmart Grant Committee and the full Commission conducted a work session on September 9, 2019, to vet the

GBSD draft project plan. MHCRC staff and GBSD staff revised the plan in consideration of the Committee and Commission input.

**Motion:** Thomas moved to approve the grant agreement with Gresham-Barlow School District in the amount of \$706,788. Harden seconded.

**Vote:** 5-0

R3. Community Technology Grant: Multnomah County Library Welcome to Computers

Gibbons said the Commission unanimously agreed to move this Pre-Application forward in the granting process and there are no significant changes to the grant request.

In response to a question from Studenmund, Gibbons said that originally participants received training on one computer operating system and then students had a different system on their take-home computers. Free Geek and the Library recognized this created a barrier, and the Library has received approval to change the computer operating system to be consistent with Free Geek computers.

**Motion:** Dennerline moved to approve the Community Technology Grant agreement with Multnomah County Library for \$19,196. Harden seconded.

**Vote:** 5-0

R4. Community Technology Grant: MetroEast Community Media

Gibbons said the Commission unanimously agreed to move this Pre-Application forward in the granting process and there are no significant changes to the grant request.

**Motion:** Harden moved to approve the Community Technology Grant agreement with MetroEast Community Media for \$114,830. Dennerline seconded.

**Vote:** 5-0

R5. Community Technology Grant: Outside the Frame

Dennerline supported the project but he suggested they consider revising some of the video production equipment to more student-friendly equipment instead of professional grade equipment.

**Motion:** Dennerline moved to approve the Community Technology Grant agreement with Outside the Frame for \$35,000. Harden seconded.

**Vote:** 5-0

Elisabeth Perez, Interim MHCRC Staff Director and Bea Coulter, MHCRC Program Coordinator, joined the meeting by phone.

\*R6. Frontier Franchise Transfer of Ownership

Omelchuck said that Gail Karish, BBK and the Commission's legal counsel on this matter, and MHCRC staff Perez and Coulter are on the phone for this agenda item. Omelchuck is assisting them in providing an overview of the process. Northwest Fiber has provided all required information for the transfer request and staff recommends that the MHCRC adopt Resolution 2019-02 contained in the meeting packet. The Resolution recommends that the MHCRC Jurisdictions, which have Frontier franchises, consent to the franchise transfer of control from Frontier Communications Northwest, Inc. to Northwest Fiber. If the Resolution is approved, staff will forward the MHCRC recommendation to the Jurisdictions.

Byron Springer, General Counsel at Northwest Fiber, provided an overview of Northwest Fiber and the nature of the transaction. He said they plan to improve the network, give customers choice and control, and provide good customer service through a local call center.

Jessica Epley, Government & External Affairs Manager at Frontier Communications, said Frontier staff will continue to operate the new company so as to have a seamless process and the MHCRC should not be receiving any complaints by customers.

Dennerline said he agreed with the transfer recommendation. In response to a question from Harden, Coulter said staff reviewed Frontier's current franchise compliance and didn't identify any issues.

In response to a question from Harden, Omelchuck said that the MHCRC may seek payment for consultant costs from Northwest Fiber but there are options. The MHCRC approved \$20,000 from FY19-20 contingency to support legal and other costs related to the transfer process. Coulter added that staff partnered with two other local governments in the region, through BBK, to share consultant costs. The amount will be lower than what was budgeted for this project.

In response to a question from Hansen, Springer said that Northwest Fiber's video strategy is to provide customers what they are most interested in.

Harden raised an issue about Frontier not building its system in certain parts of Gresham. Epley said the issue had to do with rights of developers and State PUC rules. Omelchuck said, several years back, staff had found Frontier was not building in certain new developments in Gresham because Comcast was building in the areas. As houses were built, there were complaints about people not being able to get Frontier service. Springer noted that Northwest Fiber wants to work with the jurisdictions regarding new home developments to provide new customers with Northwest Fiber services. Omelchuck said she looked forward to working with the new company to build in areas currently without competition for cable and broadband services.

**Motion:** Thomas moved to approve Resolution 2019-02, recommend MHCRC Frontier Jurisdictions consent to transfer of control of Frontier Communications Northwest, Inc. from Frontier Communications Corporation to Northwest Fiber, LLC, with all Exhibits and specific conditions. Dennerline seconded.

**Vote:** 5-0

- Staff Activity Reports and Updates
  - FY18-19 MHCRC Fund Audit Schedule – OCT staff met with Auditor Moss Adams and anticipates the Finance Committee will meet the week of December 2<sup>nd</sup> to approve the MHCRC Financial Statements. The Full Commission will review the audit at its December meeting.
  - FY19-20 Budget Process – OCT staff will provide an update at the December Finance Committee meeting and the December MHCRC meeting.
  - MetroEast CEO Hiring – Omelchuck introduced the new CEO from MetroEast, Tomi Douglas.
  - Staff NATOA Conference Attendance – Perez and Coulter are attending.
- Committee Reports
  - Finance Committee – None.
  - TechSmart Grant Committee – None.
  - Community Ascertainment Committee – Hansen said he is discontinuing this committee as it's no longer needed.
  - Open Signal Board Appointee – None.
  - MetroEast Board Appointee – Dennerline said he attended his first board meeting and noted MetroEast's new CEO.
- New Business; Commissioner Open Comment – None.  
Meeting Schedule:
  - October 21 – MetroEast
  - November – recess
  - December 16 – Open Signal

January 27 – MetroEast  
*February – Annual Planning Retreat (TBD)*  
March 16 – Open Signal  
*April – recess*  
May 18 – MetroEast  
June 15 – Open Signal

- Franchisee Activity Report
  - Frontier – None.
  - Comcast – Sheri Acker, Senior Specialist, Government Affairs, said Tim Goodman was at the NATOA conference. Comcast has expanded the Internet Essentials program to include veterans and expanded eligibility requirements for low-income people. She highlighted Comcast’s Tools for Schools program and partnership with the Boys’ and Girls’ Club for participation in the Portland Film Festival. Comcast is also creating short films with veterans and she would check if these could be cablecast through community media channels.
  - CenturyLink – None.
- PEG Provider Activity Report
  - Open Signal – None.
  - MetroEast Community Media – Tomi Douglas, MetroEast CEO, shared her excitement to join MetroEast and her background working in non-profits and government.  
John Lugton, MetroEast, provided updates from the Alliance for Community Media conference: Several staff presented at workshops; volunteers and staff won Hometown awards; and staff member Seth Ring received the Emerging Leader award. Lugton said the studio upgrade was completed on time and within budget. He said MetroEast’s Summer Camp was successful in that 70% of the students were from historically underrepresented communities. He said staff is using more usage stats and data analytics to better tailor services. MetroEast also received the Partner of the Month award for work with Reynolds schools.
- Public Comment: None.
- Adjourned 7:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Cinthia Diaz Calvo, Administrative Specialist II