



Agenda Date: 03/24/10

Agenda Item: IIIC

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Board of Public Utilities

Two Gateway Center

Newark, NJ 07102

[www.nj.gov/bpu/](http://www.nj.gov/bpu/)

### CABLE TELEVISION

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF COMCAST OF	)	<u>RENEWAL</u>
NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY, LLC FOR A	)	<u>CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL</u>
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL TO CONTINUE TO	)	
OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A CABLE TELEVISION	)	
SYSTEM IN AND FOR THE TOWN OF BELVIDERE,	)	
COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY	)	DOCKET NO. CE10010006

Dennis C. Linken, Esq., Stryker, Tams and Dill, Newark, New Jersey, for the Petitioner

Town Clerk, Town of Belvidere, by Teresa DeMont, for the Town

### BY THE BOARD:

On November 21, 1974, the Board of Public Utilities ("Board") granted CATV Service Company a Certificate of Approval in Docket No. 743C-6012 for the construction, operation and maintenance of a cable television system in the Town of Belvidere ("Town"). Through a series of transfers with required Board approvals, Storer Cable Communications of Northwest New Jersey, Inc. d/b/a Storer Cable Communications ("Storer") became the holder of the Certificate. On August 16, 1989, the Board granted Storer a Renewal Certificate of Approval for the Town in Docket No. CE89040362. Through a series of additional transfers, with required Board approvals, the holder of the Certificate became Comcast Cablevision of Northwest New Jersey, Inc. ("Comcast"). On September 15, 2000, the Board granted Comcast a Renewal Certificate of Approval for the Town in Docket No. CE00050313, which order was subsequently amended on May 9, 2001. Based on a name change, the current holder of the Certificate is Comcast of Northwest New Jersey, LLC ("Petitioner"). Although by its terms the Petitioner's above referenced Certificate expired on November 21, 2009, the Petitioner is authorized to continue to provide cable television service to the Town pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:5A-25, pending disposition of proceedings regarding the renewal of its Certificate of Approval.



The Petitioner filed an application for the renewal of its municipal consent with the Town on February 19, 2009, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:5A-23 and N.J.A.C. 14:18-13.1 et seq. The Town, after public hearing, adopted a municipal ordinance granting renewal consent to the Petitioner on August 3, 2009, which was rejected by the Petitioner on August 31, 2009. On November 16, 2009, the Town adopted a new municipal ordinance granting renewal consent to the Petitioner; the Petitioner formally accepted the terms and conditions of the November 16, 2009 ordinance on November 24, 2009. On January 6, 2010, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:5A-16, the Petitioner filed with the Board for a renewal of its Certificate of Approval for the Town.

The Board has reviewed the application for municipal consent, the petition for a Renewal Certificate of Approval, and the municipal consent ordinance. Based upon this review and the recommendation of the Office of Cable Television, the Board **HEREBY FINDS** the following:

1. The Petitioner possesses the requisite legal, character, financial and technical qualifications for the awarding of a Renewal Certificate of Approval. Further, the Town reviewed these qualifications in conjunction with the municipal consent process.
2. The design and technical specifications of the system will ensure that the Petitioner provides safe, adequate and proper service.
3. The Petitioner has represented that all previously required construction within the franchise territory is complete.
4. The franchise period as stated in the ordinance is 15 years. The Board finds this period to be of reasonable duration.
5. The Town may review the performance of the Petitioner with regard to the ordinance at its discretion. If the Town determines that the Petitioner has failed to substantially comply with the material terms and conditions of the ordinance, the Town shall provide written notice to the Petitioner of such alleged instances of non-compliance, and shall grant the Petitioner 90 days to cure such deficiency. The Town may petition the Board for appropriate administrative action, including revocation of the franchise or reduction of the franchise term, but only after the 90-day opportunity to cure has passed and the deficiency has not been cured.
6. The Petitioner's rates shall be regulated and tariffs shall be filed for all services, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, the Board and the Office of Cable Television. The Petitioner shall maintain and file with the Board an informational schedule of prices, terms and conditions for unregulated service and promptly file any revisions thereto.
7. Pursuant to statutory requirements, the ordinance specifies a complaint officer to receive and act upon complaints filed by subscribers in the Town. In this case, it is the Office of Cable Television. All complaints shall be received and processed in accordance with the applicable rules.



8. The Petitioner shall maintain a local business office for the purpose of receiving, investigating and resolving complaints. Currently, the local business office serving this provision is located at 155 Port Murray Road in Port Murray (Mansfield Township), New Jersey.
9. The franchise fee to be paid to the Town is specified to be 2% of the Petitioner's gross revenues from all recurring charges in the nature of subscription fees paid by subscribers for its cable television reception service in the Town, and shall be increased as required by N.J.S.A. 48:5A-30. Additional regulatory fees shall be paid to the State in an amount not to exceed 2% of Petitioner's gross operating revenues derived from intrastate operations. The Board finds these fees to be reasonable.
10. The Petitioner shall provide service to any residence or business along any public right-of-way in the Primary Service Area at no cost beyond standard and non-standard installation charges as set forth in the Petitioner's application. For any extension outside of the Primary Service Area, the Petitioner shall utilize the line extension policy ("LEP") attached to the Certificate. The minimum homes per mile figure is 35.
11. The Petitioner shall provide public, educational and governmental ("PEG") access channels and facilities in accordance with its renewal application and the ordinance. Specifically, the Petitioner shall continue to provide a system-wide public access channel for use by the Town and other municipalities in the Petitioner's system. Qualified individuals and organizations may utilize the public access channel for the purpose of cablecasting non-commercial access programming in accordance with the Petitioner's published public access rules.
12. Within 180 days of the date of issuance of this Certificate, the Petitioner shall provide to the Town a one-time grant in the amount of \$10,000.00 for access-related needs. Upon payment, the Petitioner shall provide the Office of Cable Television with proof of satisfaction of this obligation.
13. The Petitioner shall provide standard installation and basic cable television service on one outlet, free of charge, in each school in the Town, public and private, elementary, intermediate and secondary, including the following locations: Board of Education at 537 Oxford Street and the schools at 302 Third Street, 791 Oxford Street and 795 Oxford Street. To qualify for free installation, the facility must be within 200 feet of the Petitioner's active cable television plant. Each additional outlet installed, if any, shall be paid for on a materials, equipment plus labor basis by the school requesting such additional outlet(s). The school(s) may self-install additional outlets but the Petitioner is not obligated to service or assure that any self-installed outlets work. Monthly service charges shall be waived on all additional outlets.
14. The Petitioner shall provide standard installation and basic cable television service, free of charge, to one outlet to the following locations in the Town: each police and fire facility, public library, DPW facility (230 Paul Street), first aid squad (233 Paul Street), municipal building (691 Walter Street), municipal recreation building (207 Race Street) and municipal pool building. To qualify for



free installation, the facility must be within 200 feet of the Petitioner's active cable television plant. Each additional outlet installed, if any, shall be paid for on a materials, equipment plus labor basis by the Town. The Town may self-install additional outlets but the Petitioner is not obligated to service or assure that any self-installed outlets work. Monthly service charges shall be waived on all additional outlets. All costs for conversion of non-Petitioner authorized outlets to Petitioner's standards shall be paid by the Town.

15. The Petitioner shall provide or continue to provide standard installation of one non-networked outlet of Internet service via high speed cable modem, free of charge, to each public library building and all public and private schools listed in Condition No. 13 above. To qualify for free installation, the facility must be within 200 feet of the Petitioner's active cable television plant. The connection shall be installed in a location accessible for community and student use, and shall not be restricted to administrative use.

Based upon these findings, the Board **HEREBY CONCLUDES**, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:5A-17(a) and 28(c), the Petitioner has the municipal consent necessary to support the petition, that such consent and issuance thereof are in conformity with the requirements of N.J.S.A. 48:5A-1 et seq., that the Petitioner has complied or is ready, willing and able to comply with all applicable rules and regulations imposed by or pursuant to State or federal law as preconditions for engaging in the proposed cable television operations, that the Petitioner has sufficient financial and technical capacity, meets the legal, character and other qualifications necessary to construct, maintain and operate the necessary installations, lines and equipment, and is capable of providing the proposed service in a safe, adequate and proper manner.

Therefore, the Petitioner is **HEREBY ISSUED** this Renewal Certificate of Approval as evidence of Petitioner's continued authority to construct and operate a cable television system within the entirety of the Town.

This Renewal Certificate is subject to all applicable State and federal laws, the rules and regulations of the Office of Cable Television, and any such lawful terms, conditions and limitations as currently exist or may hereafter be attached to the exercise of the privileges granted herein.

The Petitioner shall adhere to the standards set forth by the Federal Communications Commission's rules and regulations, 47 C.F.R. §76.1 et seq., including but not limited to, the technical standards 47 C.F.R. §76.601 through §76.630. Any modifications to the provisions thereof shall be incorporated into this Certificate.

Failure to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations and orders of the Board or Office of Cable Television and/or the terms, conditions and limitations set forth herein may constitute sufficient grounds for the suspension or revocation of this Certificate.

This Renewal Certificate is issued on the representation that the statements contained in the Petitioner's applications are true, and the undertakings therein contained shall be adhered to and enforceable unless specific waiver is granted by the Office of Cable Television pursuant to the authority contained in N.J.S.A. 48:5A-1 et seq.

This Certificate shall expire on November 21, 2024.

DATED: 3/24/10

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES  
BY:

  
LEE A. SOLOMON  
PRESIDENT

  
JEANNE M. FOX  
COMMISSIONER

  
JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO  
COMMISSIONER

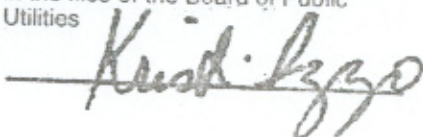
  
NICHOLAS ASSELTA  
COMMISSIONER

  
ELIZABETH RANDALL  
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

  
KRISTI IZZO  
SECRETARY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the within  
document is a true copy of the original  
in the files of the Board of Public  
Utilities





**APPENDIX "I"**  
**OFFICE OF CABLE TELEVISION**  
**LINE EXTENSION POLICY**

**COMCAST OF NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY, LLC**  
**TOWN OF BELVIDERE**

A cable operator is required to absorb the cost of extensions to the system in the same proportion that the extension is to the remainder of the system.

Actual subscribers served by the extension are required to absorb the remainder of the cost.

If new subscribers are added to the extension the cost is adjusted and those who previously paid receive an appropriate rebate.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. $\frac{\text{\# of homes in extension}}{\text{mileage of extension}}$                                 | = | homes per mile (HPM) of extension   |
| 2. $\frac{\text{HPM of extension}}{\text{Minimum HPM that company actually constructs in the system *}}$ | = | ratio of the density of the extension to the minimum density which the company constructs in the system ("A") |
| 3. Total cost of building the extension times "A"  | = | company's share of extension cost   |
| 4. Total cost of building extension less company's share of extension cost                               | = | total amount to be recovered from subscribers   |
| 5. $\frac{\text{Total amount to be recovered from subs}}{\text{Total subscribers in extension}}$         | = | each subscriber's share   |

In any case, the company shall extend its plant along public rights of way to:

1. All residences and businesses within 150 aerial feet of the operator's existing plant at no cost beyond the normal installation rate.
2. All residences and businesses within 100 underground feet of the operator's plant at no cost beyond the normal installation rate.

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\* The minimum HPM that the company actually constructs in the system or municipality is the minimum number of homes that the company has historically constructed at its own cost. This is a function of the operator's break-even point and its rate of return. Unbuilt systems will use the primary service area rather than construction.

The operator's installation policies shall apply to construction beyond the public right of way.

Detailed accounting and/or financial information to support the minimum HPM shall be supplied to the Office for its approval in such form as required. The minimum HPM shall be updated as appropriate.

When a request for service is received, and unless good cause is shown, cable companies shall:

1. Provide a written estimate within 30 days of such a request.
2. Begin construction within 60 days of receipt of any deposit monies from potential subscribers.
3. Complete construction within six months of receipt of any deposit monies from potential subscribers.
4. Inform each home passed along the extension of the potential costs for subscribers.

Subscribers who pay for an extension shall be entitled to rebates in the following manner:

1. If the company acquires new subscribers subsequent to the initial calculation of step 5 above, the formula will be adjusted and those who have previously paid for the extension will be entitled to an appropriate rebate. In no event shall the amount of the rebate exceed the subscriber's contribution.
2. The company shall keep accurate records of the cost of the extension, the amounts paid by subscribers and any appropriate adjustments.
3. The company shall notify subscribers in the extension of their rights and responsibilities concerning the extension.
4. Once an individual dwelling has paid its share of the extension cost future reconnections or installations shall be made at the company's standard rates.
5. After a period of five years from the installation of the first dwelling unit in the extension no further adjustments shall be made. Installations after five years shall be at the company's standard rate.
6. Once a subscriber is installed, that person shall not normally be entitled to a refund of any monies paid for the installations, except in accordance with the rebate procedure outlined in this policy.

## **Definitions**

### Primary Service Area

The Primary Service Area (PSA) can be an entire municipality, but in many instances the PSA is a limited area within a community outside of which a line extension policy may apply. The PSA is depicted by a franchise map and narrative, presented and recorded during the franchise proceedings. It normally remains a fixed geographic area throughout the life of the franchise.

### Line Extension Survey

Potential subscribers residing outside the PSA who request service are entitled to an estimate of their share of the cost to secure service. When conducting a survey and estimating costs, a cable company should factor in all potential subscribers who could practicably be included in the extension and give consideration to apparent residential construction in areas contiguous to the proposed extension.



COMCAST OF NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY, LLC  
RENEWAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL  
TOWN OF BELVIDERE  
DOCKET NO. CE10010006

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