

Commissioners

For the record ... my name is George Geyer, I work in the Information Services Department in the Computer and network services division. One of my additional duties is representing Kitsap County in the Cable Franchise arena. I work closely with both Comcast and Wave Broadband addressing issues for the county and resolving concerns with and for our county residents.

Today I come before the Board to present the current status of our Cable Franchise agreements with Wave Broadband and Comcast.

**Existing Cable Franchise Status:**

- Our current Comcast Cable Franchise agreement expires May 2021
- Franchise dates: 15 January 2011 thru 14 April 2016 w/ Comcast and Kitsap agreeing to enable the 5 year auto-extension clause to May 2021
- Their renewal letter was received 15 June 2018 (3-Year renewal window: June 2018 thru May 2021)
- Our Prosecutor's office is optimistic in providing Comcast with a draft renewal proposal before the expiration yet is aware that an extension may need to be requested.
- Working with Kasi Walker from our Prosecutor's office, the possible proposed one-year additional extension for Comcast would carry the current franchise to May 2022 due to existing COVID issues and workloads.
- The current Wave Broadband agreement was extended thru - January 2022
- Kitsap County Received Wave's Request for Renewal letter 27 March 2017 (This request initiated the 3-Year renewal window: March 2017 thru February 2020)
- Franchise dates: 11 January 2010 thru 10 January 2020
- Last year the BOCC extend the agreement for one year to January 2021

The prosecutor's office is currently working with our consultant, The Buske Group on initial franchise agreement drafts and are working to have those completed within the first quarter of this year.

I have also briefed the BKAT Committee regarding progress and how they might be able to get involved in expanding BKAT's public outreach.

Over the course of the past three years, I've reviewed cable franchise agreements of similar sized municipalities to see where ours were 'outdated' or could be improved. I created a roster of 30 items from that review as well as input from the commissioners and provided these to our consultant. The Buske Group will take those items and shore them up with the needs assessment results to complete the initial proposed updated franchise agreement renewal.

In the past, we've renewed the existing agreement but not involved the public. This time we have so the process is taking longer than anticipated.

# 1. GOALS

Goals for this project have been identified as:

**Goal 1:** County obtains a quality franchise agreement with Wave Broadband

**Goal 2:** County obtains a quality franchise agreement with Comcast

**Goal 3:** Maintain or improve franchise agreement, with specific objectives as follows:

- Ensure service provided to citizens is not only maintained but is updated to current technology standards over the duration of the agreement
- Provide cost-effective access for targeted populations
- Ensure cable TV service access is provided to all citizens in the County
- Provide for oversight of rates and revenue
- Ensure quality customer service
- Provide options for provisioning of PEG channels over the life of the franchise
- Provide options for potential utilization of PEG fees over the life of the franchise
- Provide robust programming
- Enhance services based on community interests
- Protect public right of way and facilities consistent with County and community best interests
- Require dual connectivity to the BKAT Headend by both cable providers
- Review “issues to be addressed” file for initial agreement renewal upgrades and updates

**Goal 4:** Provide technical expertise to ensure a quality result that is legally sound and consistent with national laws and trends

**Goal 5:** Obtain and incorporate input from the public

## **2. Needs Assessment was completed in 2018 by the Buske Group**

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| 2017 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter | Fiscal Audits of Comcast & Wave payments initiate by Cohen Law Group – May  |
| 2018 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter | Develop & finalize Needs Assessment Workplan<br>Review current franchise documents, reports and contracts<br>KC Senior Staff and Elected Officials briefed on renewal – 3 May 2018  |
| 2018 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter | Implement Outreach Plan<br>Preparations and Planning Focus Groups<br>Invite to Community & Stake Holder Meeting emailed 24 July 2018<br>Format online Survey<br>Evaluation of PEG access resources and services   |
| 2018 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter | Hold Public Hearing / Focus Groups – Buske<br>Government, Business, Technology & Citizens Group Meeting – 24 October 2018<br>Education and General Public – 24 October 2018<br>Non-profits, Faith-based, and Citizens – 25 October 2018<br>Art, Culture, Heritage, and Citizens – 25 October 2018<br>1,587 On-line surveys completed<br>Fiscal Audit Report received – 18 December 2018 |
| 2019 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter | Information analysis and report to Kitsap County<br>Community Needs Assessment Report received - 27 March 2019  |