



Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission  
[www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission)

## Regular Meeting

### Minutes

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

The Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, May 13, 2009, 301 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Austin, TX, City Hall, Room 1101.

Please go to [www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission/schedule.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission/schedule.htm) for backup material associated with this agenda.

*This is a summary of the activities at this meeting. To view the full meeting on DVD please visit the Austin History Center, 810 Guadalupe Street, Austin, Texas, Phone (512) 974-7480.*

#### 1. Call to order – May 13, 2009 – 6:39 p.m.

Commission members in attendance:

Chip Rosenthal  
Jim Howerton  
Wendell Ramsey  
Arthur Sampson  
Kedron Touvell  
Lemuel Williams Jr.  
Randall Kolb

City staff in attendance:

Rondella Hawkins

#### 2. Adoption of agenda.

The agenda was adopted on a 7-0-0 vote of the Commission.

#### 3. Citizen Communication: General

The first 10 speakers signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will each be allowed a three-minute allotment to address their concerns regarding items not posted on the agenda.

Douglas Martin stated public access is a great resource for the community.

Nick Papatonis stated his unhappiness with the management of public access.

Ruth Epstein stated that channelAustin is a private corporation therefore not subject to the same rules of transparency and the bill of rights that a city contractor is subject to. Her video of Nick Papatonis has been forbidden to enter the public access studios.

SueAnn Campbell feels the City is not monitoring the public access management contract.

#### 4. Approval of minutes – April 8, 2009 Commission regular meeting.

**The minutes from the regular meeting of April 8, 2009 were approved on Commissioner Kolb's motion; Commissioner Ramsey's second on a 5-0-2 vote. (Commissioners Howerton, Sampson, Kolb, Ramsey and Williams voted aye. Commissioners Rosenthal and Touvell abstained.)**

#### 5. Invited Presentations

- a. Presentation from African American Resource Commission. (Dr. Chiquita Eugene) (wp9)

This item was postponed

- b. channelAustin quarterly update on public access television. (Linda Litowsky) (wp1)

Linda Litowsky, Executive Director of channelAustin (aka Public Access Community Television (PACT)) gave a brief overview of channelAustin's quarterly report which included a briefing on current grievances and facility upgrades.

Citizen Communications:

Nick Papatonis asked how are the Commission and the City tracking grievances filled against channelAustin. The public access management contract is not being managed.

SueAnn Campbell wants to know how channelAustin is reporting the resolutions to their grievances.

Gloria Morales filed a grievance and a law suit against channelAustin. She stated that the public access managers are calling her incompetent.

- c. Presentation on broadband internet regulatory issues. (Matthew Henry) (wp6,9)

Commissioner Rosenthal gave an overview of how some companies are trying to meter bandwidth usage.

Matthew Henry gave a presentation and presented a hand out on broadband usage caps and metered pricing, regulatory options for Austin. Cities have no authority to regulate the internet. He stated the Texas Attorney General's Office has the authority to investigate unconscionable and deceptive trade practices.

#### 6. Staff Briefings

- a. Legislative, Regulatory and Policy update. (wp7)

Rondella Hawkins, Manager, City of Austin, Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs, gave an overview of the Federal Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) (broadband stimulus funds) with a PowerPoint presentation.

- b. 2010 City Budget Reduction Proposal. (wp8)

Ms. Hawkins gave an overview with a PowerPoint presentation of the functions of the City of Austin's Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs (TARA) Office along with a report on TARA's budget reduction draft proposal.

- c. Public Access Television update. (wp1)

This item was covered under channelAustin's quarterly update on public access television.

- d. Grant for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOPs) report. (wp2)

No report was given. A quarterly report is schedule for this Commission's June 2009 regular meeting.

## 7. Old Business

- a. DTV Transition Task Force update. (Touvell) (wp4,6)

Commissioner Touvell stated a DTV Transition press conference was held today at City Hall regarding the transition happening on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

The DTV converter box coupons are again available and will expire 90 days after you receive them.

There will be a DTV transition information walk-in center at DeWitty Center from June 1<sup>st</sup> until June 12<sup>th</sup> and are looking for volunteers to staff the center.

- b. Technology Ascertainment Study update. (Williams) (wp3)

Commissioner Williams reported he is still looking for funding for the study.

He approached several individuals at the Governors Office and two state officials to bring them aware of what this study is about and what the city wants to achieve with the information.

- c. Access Television Funding Task Force update. (Rosenthal) (wp1)

This task force met on May 8<sup>th</sup> and added Keith Reeves with PIO/Channel 6 to this task force. They adopted as its goal to initiate a community dialog on the future form and funding of community media (including public access television) in Austin, culminating in a recommendation to Council. The next proposed meeting is June 8<sup>th</sup>.

At this time this task force has changed its name to Community Media Future Funding Task Force.

## 8. New Business

- a. Discussion on recommendations to Council for the 2010 budget. (wp8)

Commissioner Rosenthal would like this Commission to consider for next months meeting a resolution with regard to GTOPs funding and another re-establishing their commitment to a technology ascertainment study. Also a recommendation regarding city staff budget.

- b. Discussion and possible action on Time Warner Cable consumption billing for broadband Internet. (wp6,9)

Commissioner Rosenthal stated that Texas state law prohibits municipalities from establishing certain communication services. No provider has deployed metered internet in the Austin area at this time so this is a time of learning what our options are and begin exploring. He would like to consider this Commission to make a policy recommendation to Council to establish a legislative priority to re-examine.

Ms. Hawkins recommends the Commission pass a resolution to forward to City Council that Council file comments in response to the issue. The comments would be done through the TARA office with help in preparation from the City's Law Department.

Citizen Communications:

Michael Chaney stated concerns with consumption billing proposed by Time Warner Cable. Wants the City to press the law makers to open up the market for competition.

Krishna Trivedi against consumption billing for broadband Internet.

Troy Cox against consumption billing for broadband Internet.

- c. Update reports on networking relationships with other boards/commissions and groups, citywide and Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission (ACT&TC) information items.

Commissioner Williams reported he attended Identity Management Summit at UT with topic: The Digital Identity a Double Edge Sword and gave a brief summary of the summit.

Commissioner Rosenthal met with Gail Roper, CIO for City of Austin Communications and Technology Management Department regarding Commission's interest in the City's Website, Community Technology Issues and the City's response to disaster and technology qualified people to help in disasters.

He also attended a producer's forum at channelAustin that talked primarily about the impact of changes due to roof and wiring work at the public access studios and Denver Open Media systems they are deploying.

He and Ms. Hawkins gave a presentation to the Council Audit and Finance Committee on the Public Access Producers Grievance process and the GTOPs program.

Commissioner Rosenthal also gave a quarterly update to the Council Emerging Technology and Telecommunications Committee. Reporting to Paperless Initiative; GTOPs, and Public Access TV.

## **9. Discussion of agenda items for ACT&TC future meetings.**

Proposed items scheduled for June 10, 2009 regular meeting:

- o Presentation from African American Resource Commission. (Dr. Chiquita Eugene) (wp9)
- o GTOPs quarterly update. (Sheena Harden) (wp2)
- o Discussion and possible action on creating the GTOPs 2010 Task Force (Sheena Harden)(wp2)
- o Discussion and possible action on FY 09-10 budget resolutions.
- o Discussion and possible action on consumption billing for broadband Internet. (wp6,9)
- o DTV Transition Task Force update. (Touvell) (wp4,6)

- Technology Ascertainment Study update. (Williams) (wp3)
- Community Media Future Funding Task Force update. (Rosenthal) (wp1)

## **10. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.