

At this time Councillor Graham questioned a previous statement relative to the cable system being isolated from the potential process when another speaker reminded the Council that once a franchise is awarded it must be enforced. She further stated that the only way to enforce something of this nature is with local/official overview. Furthermore, she questioned the lack of minority participation regarding the two contracts which have been awarded to conduct feasibility studies. She questioned why minorities and Third World people were not invited to participate. Finally, she stated that she still has a problem with the two-way capability of cable. She stated people should have the opportunity to decide for themselves whether or not this kind of equipment should be in their homes. Mrs. Rice responded to the last statement by stating she beleived that some systems may only be one-way capability.

At this time the Committee heard from Mr. Alan Bell of Bell Associates, a local businessman who followed-up on some of Councillor Graham's statements. He questioned the methodology of the feasibility surveys which have already been done. Furthermore, he stated that he was very concerned that no public bidding or advertising had been done by the City administration. Mr. Sakey responded by stating that although two contracts have already been awarded and the reports completed, the City is not at this time actually in the Cable TV franchise process. He stated that public bids, R.F.P.'s, etc., would be done at the time a decision is made on whether or not to pursue cable. He further stated that prior to entering into either contract he and members of the Advisory Committee had met with the City Manager.

The hearing adjoured at 9:45 PM.

For the Committee,

Daniel J. Clinton  
City Councillor

Chairman  
Cable TV Committee

DJC/smc

At this time the Committee heard from New York University Professor George Stoney who outlined how useful Cable TV to a community and how important public access to it really is to all concerned. He further presented to the Committee several short films on what other communities are doing throughout the country. Professor Stoney further stated that it is imperative that once the City awards a franchise it should enforce it.

At this time Mayor Vellucci questioned how the elderly will be able to afford cable since there were approximately fourteen thousand (14,000) elderly in Cambridge on fixed incomes. He further stated that a \$515 installation fee as mentioned earlier would prevent many elderly persons from subsidiary. Mrs. Jean Rice, principal consultant with Rice/Ritcher Associates responded to the Mayor's question by stating her firm had taken his idea into consideration during their Economic Feasibility Study of public ownership. She further stated they reviewed and recommended a "low-price" tier, specifically because of the fact that elderly persons are on fixed incomes. Secondly, she stated her firm looked into the researched three major areas of concern when a municipality considers public ownership, specifically, the first amendment constitutional question, second the possibility of the City being vulnerable to antitrust suits and the current general laws of the Commonwealth. She further stated at the present time there were no Supreme Court decisions against public ownership. Furthermore, she said her research has indicated the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has a clearly articulated policy on cable by way of the State Cable TV Commission which administers said policy. She further stated that her recommendation would be that public ownership would be good for Cambridge and the City should be looking for a public organization or educational group to operate it. Furthermore, she recommended that the ownership of the system be isolated from any political process. She further stated her survey indicated a tremendously high interest from Cambridge residents on the installation of cable. Finally, Mrs. Rice stated it was her company's belief that after looking at all the information and figures available, cable through public ownership would cost approximately \$21 per month per subscriber.

At this time the Committee heard from Ms. Chris Connair, Executive Director of the Arts Council, who questioned what the best access route would be for the general public and particularly for organizations involved in the arts and public celebrations. Professor Stoney responded to the question by stating Cambridge should have at least two access channels for such a purpose.

At this time the Committee heard from Ms. Nancy Ryan, Executive Director of the Women's Commission, who questioned the best use of Cable TV for women and the fact that the Commission did not believe women have been adequately represented through the process so far. Professor Stoney responded to the first part of the question by stating that women should get directly involved in the kinds of programming which they believe best fits their needs and desires. Mr. Rossi responded to the second part of the question by stating the City Manager was in receipt of a communication outlining the Commission's concerns which he said the Manager would respond to it in the near future. He further requested that the Commission meet with Mr. Sakey, Cable TV Commissioner, and articulate their concerns.

# City of Cambridge

---

*In City Council*..... September 13, 1982.....

**The** City Council Committee on Cable Television and the City Manager's Advisory Committee on Cable conducted a joint informational meeting on Thursday, August 26, 1982 beginning at 7:12 PM. The purpose of the meeting was to receive status reports on both the Construction Feasibility Study and the Economic Feasibility Study on public ownership.

Councillor Clinton, Chairman of the Cable Television Committee, opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and acknowledged the members of the Advisory Committee for their diligent efforts and many meetings over the past several months. At this time, Mr. Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager, stated that the process of reviewing the cost and operation of cable in the City has been slow in order that the administration may have all the information possible prior to making any decision on a franchise. At this time the Committee viewed a ten-minute film prior to hearing from Mr. Berge Ayvazian of Kalba-Bowen Associates. Mr. Ayvazian outlined the work his firm did on the Construction Feasibility Study. He stated that it was the purpose of this study to provide the City with essential background information regarding the design feasibility and construction cost of a city-wide cable television system. He further stated this study included a review of the demographics and population and the best alternatives for Cambridge. Furthermore, he outlined several options for various designs and channel capabilities indicating that his firm believed that a dual network with seventy-five (75) downstream channels and four upstream channels would be the best for Cambridge.

He further stated that option two would provide Cambridge with a ten-mile "institutional network for public and educational use." He stated the approximate cost of such a system would be \$13.7 million dollars which would bring the installation cost to \$515 per household, assuming a sixty-five percent (65%) subscribership.

At this time Mayor Vellucci questioned what other countries are doing in cable area. He also questioned if any country is currently using satellite for transmission as opposed to cable. Mr. Ayvazian responded by stating that other countries have in the past operated a system without using cable, but when you have a high demand for usage you have to have an alternative transmissional feasibility. Mayor Vellucci stated he believes the City should undertake a new study to determine whether or not the new technology may be developed in the near future which will make cable obsolete.

At this time Mr. Joseph Ailello of 286 Franklin Street, stated that he is very familiar with the electronics industry and he was aware that public satellites were now being used for the transmission of Home Box Office (H.B.O.) programs. He further stated the City should begin looking into this very seriously.

5-578

**REPORT**

**Committee on** Cable Television re:  
status reports on the Construction Feasibil-  
ity Study and the Economic Feasibility Study  
of public ownership of cable t.v.

In City Council,

Septmeber 13, 1982

Sept 13, 1982

Placed  
ON  
File