

CAMBRIDGE CONSUMERS' COUNCIL

831 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA 02139

Tel. (617) 349-6150

349-6153

City Of Cambridge

Paul J. Schlaver
Executive Director

serving the
residents of:

Cambridge
Boston

TO: Robert Healy
FROM: Paul Schlaver
THROUGH: Benjamin Barnes
DATE: October 14, 1998

RE: Council Order #085, dated 9/28/98 RE: Report On Communication From Cesare DiFave Concerning MediaOne Complaint

Mr DiFave certainly handled his issues with MediaOne as a smart and determined consumer. No direct intervention was called for based on his letter but he certainly was helpful with the information and ideas he offered in his letter.

I took the liberty to forward a copy to Tim Murnane at MediaOne as the contact person I use for any complaints or issues raised by Cambridge consumers. In addition to the words Tim used in his letter to me and the letter he sent Mr. DiFave (see attached), he indicated to me that the questions asked at the Sherman Street office should have been answered for him on the spot. The training and computer-based information available to the employees on duty are sufficient to answer such inquiries.

I used this correspondence to again emphasize to MediaOne the value of prompt, proper local service. Mr. DiFave is typical of many Cambridge residents that like to do business in person and not only through "Call Centers". This letter is also another indication that any in-home service activities by MediaOne representatives must be done with full disclosure to consumers of what they're doing, the choices being presented and handled in a manner that successfully answers all of the customer's questions right on the spot.

The Consumers' Council will continue to monitor MediaOne activities and to vigorously intervene in disputes as needed. This office will also participate, as requested, in the three-year process now underway to review MediaOne's performance under the present franchise agreement and to prepare for a new agreement.

While competition between cable TV companies can benefit Cambridge residents, it will be the agreements with BOTH companies (if a second one enters the Cambridge marketplace) that will go a long way to determine how services are actually provided.

Cambridge cable TV customers need both fair prices and good service from their chosen cable company. Competition will not automatically offer both of these goals. The good services and consumer protection components must be guaranteed in the contractual agreement and through vigilant state and local enforcement or dispute settlement intervention.

Consumers are now beginning to switch long distance telephone companies more frequently based on price and services and make some other consumer decisions in a similar manner. I would not anticipate, though, that consumers would flip back and forth between cable companies merely because a new program offer becomes available or when they are a bit disgruntled with their service. Therefore, we must strive to achieve the customer service standards needed through contractual agreements and regulations and not just leave that task to marketplace competition.



This is Broadband. This is the way.

October 14, 1998

Mr. Paul Schlaver
Cambridge Consumers' Council
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Mr. Schlaver:

I am in receipt of your facsimile of Saturday, October 10th pertaining to a customer related issue.

As discussed, MediaOne's facility on 88 Sherman Street does provide customers with information pertaining to our products and services. The experience that Mr. DiFava had at our local payment office is of concern. The requested information by Mr. DiFava should have been handled at this location. Please be assured that this is a situation that is being investigated.

Please find attach a letter sent to Mr. DiFava apologizing for the inconvenience.

As always, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

Timothy G. Murnane
Manager of Government Affairs

Attachment

October 13, 1998

Mr. Cesare DiFava
96 Otis Street
Cambridge, MA 02141

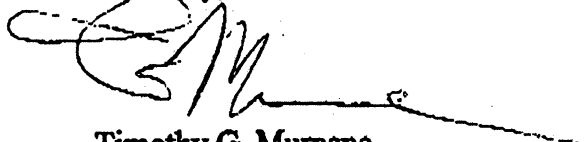
Dear Mr. DiFava:

Your recent letter to Councilor Toomey regarding your customer service experience has been forwarded to me for review and response. We, at MediaOne, are committed to superior customer service and customer feedback is the most important measurement tool available to us. This information provides us with an opportunity to learn from our experience and make the adjustments necessary to improve our service to our customers.

MediaOne regrets that our customer care representatives were unable to provide you with the information you requested. We strive to ensure that all representatives have adequate resources available to them. The information you provided us with gives MediaOne the opportunity to learn from this experience and make the adjustments necessary to improve our service to our customers. I would like to thank you for taking the time to bring this matter to our attention.

You are a valued MediaOne customer and I thank you for your feedback.

Sincerely,



Timothy G. Murnane
Manager of Government Affairs, MediaOne

cc: Councilor Timothy Toomey, Cambridge City Council

330 Billerica Road

Chelmsford, MA 01824-4193



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

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5.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

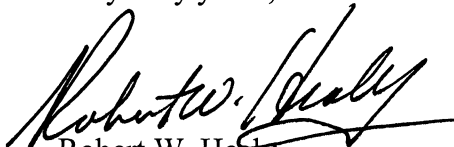
RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

November 9, 1998

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 11, regarding a report on the communication from Cesare DiFava concerning MediaOne complaints, received from Executive Director of the Consumers' Council Paul Schlaver.

Very truly yours,


Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachments

Consent Agenda #5

7135

Relative to AW #11, regarding a
report on the communication from
Cesare DiFava concerning MediaOne
complaints.

In City Council November 9, 1998

Placed on File.