



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 498-9011

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CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
JAMES L. SULLIVAN
City Manager

February 26, 1979

Community Antenna Television Commission
Executive Office of Consumer Affairs
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02202

Attention: Mr. Jeffrey R. Forbes
Executive Director

Dear Mr. Forbes:

In compliance with the Community Antenna Television Commission's Emergency Regulation 207 CMR 3.02(3), I am writing to advise you that:

1. Acting pursuant to Emergency Regulation 207 CMR 3.02(1), a group of Cambridge citizens secured and presented to me a 614-signature petition requesting that, as "Issuing Authority", I determine whether the Commission's prescribed licensing procedure for a cable television system should be initiated in Cambridge.
2. Acting pursuant to 207 CMR 3.02(2), I duly advertised a public hearing in line with the requirements of 207 CMR 3.01(2), and held this hearing on February 21, 1979. Copies of the hearing notices are enclosed for your records. A full report on the hearing will be forwarded after we complete transcription of the taped record of the proceedings.

After full consideration of the testimony given at the public hearing, I have reconfirmed my earlier position as to the licensing process and timetable most appropriate for Cambridge. This position is that Cambridge is best advised not to initiate the formal licensing process until a Cable Advisory Committee has reported its findings and recommendations on the issues a municipality should, if possible, deal with in depth before soliciting applications. In this connection, it is important to note that:

1. In my view, the issue as to cable television for Cambridge is

not whether, but rather how and when. We know that many municipalities already involved in franchises are wishing they had proceeded with greater care -- and on the basis of greater knowledge.

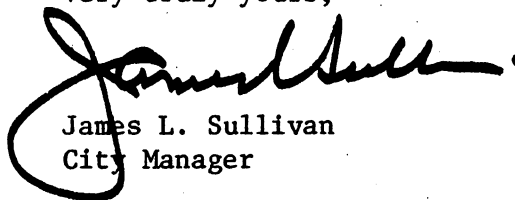
2. We also know that marked advances have been made in recent years as to both the technology of cable television and the public-control mechanisms best applied to its installation and operation. We want to allow a reasonable amount of time (e. g., one year) to develop for ourselves a base of knowledge on which we can, in the subsequent licensing process, put into operation a cable television system second to none in its capacity to improve our citizens' quality of life.
3. We know this will require that we deal effectively with the "invasion of privacy" issue. There is no question that "two-way interactive cable" systems could be used to collect miscellaneous information about participating households (e. g., the programs they select; and the answers they give to questions asked on "talk-back" programs). While our citizens will obviously retain the option not to participate in a two-way system, we want to devise controls that will make interactive participation possible with assurance that a family's privacy will not be invaded.
4. In particular, we want to structure a system that allows maximum flexibility for taking advantage of future technological advances. We have been advised that this is a key objective, due to the significant improvements now under development.
5. We do not at this time have an application before us (as contrasted with the situation that apparently sometimes faces a municipality at its first public hearing on cable television). Thus, by taking a year to study the issues, we are not delaying a potential franchisee nor risking the loss of such a firm's interest in Cambridge.
6. We are unusually fortunate in having a wealth of knowledgeable, deeply-interested citizens who want to serve on our Cable Advisory Committee. Eighteen applications, most with accompanying resumes, have already been received. I intend to appoint this committee in a matter of weeks, and to give it a challenging and demanding "scope of services" to work with. This scope of services will include, for instance, a thorough review of:
 - A. The basic technologies available at this time (e. g., cable, microwave, fiber-optics).
 - B. The advantages and disadvantages other municipalities have

experienced in the several ownership alternatives (e. g., municipal, private-sector, hybrid).

7. We are also most fortunate to have a high potential for integrating quality community-programming into our cable television system. The presence of Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in our city is a major factor in this potential -- but our wealth of smaller not-for-profit educational, civic, and performing groups is equally important. It is vital, in this light, that our process consider how to structure a system and franchise that take fullest possible advantage of this potential.

It is my intent that our Cambridge process move ahead with vigor, and that we reach the initiation-of-licensing point within a year's time. During this period, I will maintain contact with the Commonwealth's Cable Antenna Television Commission, and will welcome whatever information on new developments the Commission can make available to us.

Very truly yours,



James L. Sullivan
City Manager

JLS/mbf
Enc.

cc: City Council
Assistant City Manager for Community Development
City Clerk ✓
City Solicitor
Applicants for Advisory Committee Membership



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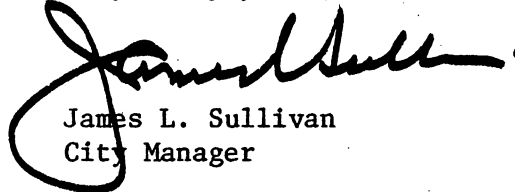
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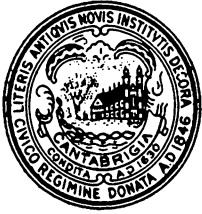
Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James L. Sullivan", with a large, stylized loop at the beginning.

James L. Sullivan
City Manager

JLS/mbf
Enc.

cc: City Council
Assistant City Manager for Community Development
City Clerk
City Solicitor
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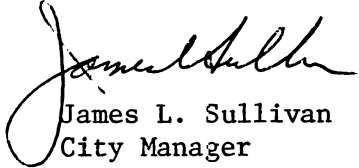
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
JAMES L. SULLIVAN
City Manager

February 26, 1979

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed is a copy of a communication which I have sent
to Community Antenna Television Commission relative to Cable TV
for the City of Cambridge.

Very truly yours,



James L. Sullivan
City Manager

JLS/mbf
Enc.

Agenda #19

S-105

Copy of communication sent to Community
Antenna Television Commission re: Cable
TV.

In City Council,
February 26, 1979

2/26/79

- Placed on File.