

ESTABLISHING A MUNICIPAL CABLE TV ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## HOW TO ORGANIZE A CABLE TV ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Appoint people who are a good representation of the community. Also, pick an uneven number of people for democratic purposes. You might consider a member of a special interest group, because this almost guarantees use of the access channel. You should include a councilperson and an educator on the advisory committee. Some municipalities advertise in the local papers for people who are interested in joining the advisory committee.

### HOW TO SET UP AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- A. Request individuals who will be active (i.e. special interest groups).
- B. Select individuals who will monitor cable systems.
- C. Arrange for cable operator to meet with the Advisory Committee.
- D. Let the townspeople realize they should be active.

The Advisory Committee will:

1. Assess future cable needs of the town.
2. Make sure that the services promised in the franchise agreement are provided.
3. The Advisory Committee should be educated on cable tv matters.

TYPICAL NEW JERSEY FRANCHISE RENEWAL TIMETABLE

<u>Minimum Months</u> <u>From Franchise End</u>	<u>Action</u>
36-30 months	Cable operator files notice with municipality of desire to start renewal process, or municipality initiates renewal process.
36 -12 months	Municipality, with public participation, conducts review of operator's past performance and assesses future cable-related needs of the community.
12 months	Municipality issues report on operator's past performance and future cable-related needs of the community.
9 months	Operator files application for municipal consent with the municipality (within 60 days of report).
6-7 months	Municipality holds consent hearing (commencing 60 to 90 days after application is filed).
5 months	Municipality completes consent hearing (within 120 days of consent application filing).
4 months	Municipality makes decision to issue a renewal by issuing a consent ordinance or to recommend denial of renewal by passing a resolution of denial (within 150 days of application filing).
3 months	Cable operator files with the Board of Public Utilities for a certificate of approval (within 30 days of municipal decision); Director Office of Cable Television publishes notice.
2 - 0 months	Board of Public Utilities issues a certificate of approval (within 30 days of receipt of a complete application); municipality and cable company notified.

OR

Board of Public Utilities makes a preliminary assessment of denial and refers the matter to Office of Administrative Law for hearing (within 30 days of receipt of a complete application; municipality and cable company are notified

Hearing before an administrative law judge; recommendation to the Board

Board of Public Utilities issues a certificate of approval

OR

Board of Public Utilities denies renewal

Cable operator may appeal decision to federal district court or the Appellate Division of the New Jersey Superior Court within 120 days