

September 3, 2026 Cable TV Committee Meeting

Present: Richard, Kathy, John, Lou, Jim, Pat, Barry, Danica, 1 Member of the Public

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 4:03 PM.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda

Richard would like to add a discussion about Council meeting audio quality to the agenda.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.a August 3 Meeting Minutes

Motion by John, seconded by Kathy, to approve the August meeting minutes.

Vote: Unanimous.

4. New Business

4.a. Welcome Barry Dodd, Public Access Director

Committee members introduced themselves to Barry. Barry shared information about his background and experience with the Committee as well as his goals for the program.

4.b. Public Access Building Update

The Committee was presented information about the detected mouse activity that was discovered in the Public Access facility. Barry started cleaning in the facility and took down some ceiling tiles, discovering a significant amount of droppings between the tiles and insulation. This has been identified as the source of the lingering odor in the building. Staff brought ServPro in for an estimate of how much it would cost to remediate. Their proposal involves removing nearly all porous surfaces from the building for approximately \$50,000. The Director of Code Enforcement has been consulted and completed a walkthrough of the building. The

Director is familiar with these situations and believes the necessary work can be done at a lower cost by a different company. He will be assisting Barry and Danica with a path forward that will likely include issuing a Request for Bids. Work at the facility should not begin until we are confident that the building is clear of rodents. A pest management company is coming in next week to begin the eradication process.

Richard expressed concern about the political ramifications of asking the Council for this funding. He noted that the amount needed for cleanup is about the same amount that was requested for new equipment.

Danica outlined potential ways to move forward, including asking to dip into the 20K difference between the FY27 program budget and FY27 estimated revenues. She assured the Committee that in all internal conversations, there has been no suggestion that anyone is interested in selling the building or relocating the program; all conversation has focused around how to move forward in that facility. Conversations with the Interim City Manager indicated that we could request that the Council funds remediation out of contingency. She has explained to the Interim City Manager the history of the misappropriation of franchise fee funds.

Barry and Danica are meeting with SMPDC on Tuesday to talk about alternative sources of funding other than cable fees to support remediation of the building. Some members of the Committee expressed hesitation with seeking grant funding.

Richard asked if he can come into the building to film. Out of an abundance of caution, the Code Enforcement Director said that the public should not enter the building, especially because the areas that are used to film are enclosed with low airflow. The committee discussed seeking a temporary space to film, such as at McArthur Library.

4.c. Programming: Channel 3 vs. 85

Government Access programming is currently on Channel 3 and Community TV is on Channel 85. Richard and Jim noted that this is a departure from past practice, where community programming was split between both channels. The idea was that people might come for the municipal programming and stay for community programs or vice versa.

Channel 85 is viewable in Saco. We also have channels 1301 and 1302, and they play what is on 3 and 85, respectively.

Barry has set up a bulletin board on Channel 3 highlighting current events. Previously, meetings were playing at random times in a loop and getting cut off when we go live. Because there were no titles on the meeting, it would be unclear whether the meeting that a viewer was seeing was live or not.

Jim would like to see the live meetings go on 85 because there is an on-demand way to watch city meetings already but there isn't a way to watch community programming. Richard would be more comfortable with the split if the channels were adjacent and in lower numbers.

Barry shared that the long-term goal is to have on-demand access to all programming that we do, and that he will cross-promote the content that is on each channel, so it would be easy for people to move between channels to find the content they want to see. He said he can talk to the Government Relations person with Spectrum about moving Channel 85 to a lower number, but these kinds of things will likely require reopening the franchise agreement. He has also talked to them about getting the channels into HD, but the process has changed since he accomplished that in Westbrook.

Committee members confirmed that they were once cablecasting live out of the studio.

5. Other Business

John and Lou are not getting emails from Richard but got Danica's emails. Danica believes this has to do with differences between City-issued and personal email accounts, and she will contact IT for support.

John would like to discuss at a future meeting having Committee renamed to the Public Access Committee.

6. Adjourn

Motion by Kathy, seconded by Pat, to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.