

**Exhibit LGD - 2 - Vermont PEG Access Related Community Needs and Interests**

**List of Supporting Documents**

**1. Vermont Public Service Board Public Hearing on Docket 8301, October 21, 2015.**

<https://www.cctv.org/watch-tv/programs/public-service-board-hearing-comcast-renewal-certificate-public-good> - also submitted in DVD format.

**2. Letters Identifying Community Needs and Interests Found here.**

Jaimie Williams, VCAM, Burlington

Lanpher Memorial Library, HCTV, Hyde Park

Town of Dorset, GNAT-TV

Lindsey Lathrop-Ryan, Brattleboro, BCTV

Bellows Free Academy, St. Albans, NWATV

Windham Regional Commission, BCTV

Vermont Department of Public Safety, MMCTV

Brattleboro Housing Partnerships, BCTV

Center for Communications in Medicine, Bennington, CAT-TV

Town of Guilford, BCTV

**From RETN, Burlington VT**

Deena L. Frankel

Helene Arnold

M. Kelley Hunter

Marilyn Maddison

Ron Bouchard

Sally Ballin

Trina Magi

Ginny Mullin

**3. RETN Submission of Public Testimony, October 21, 2015**

**<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLh3gFN29tuyj4rs8iLrlu6yRYpnIwHBJc>**

**Q. How are VAN's recommended findings supported by an assessment of community needs and interests?**

A. Vermont's Access Management Organizations (AMOs) work closely with the public on a daily basis. Hundreds of people use PEG facilities across the state and report their on-going community needs and interest to AMO's. These requests are well summarized by at least two dozen members of the public who testified in person at the Public Service Board's Public Hearing for Docket 8301 on October 21, 2015. We have also provided additional evidence, gleaned from recent assessments with VAN members, who address the challenges of responding to community needs and interests with aging technology.

**Q. How would you summarize the community needs and interests expressed by witnesses in the Board's public hearing held on October 21, 2015?**

A. In particular, the witnesses testified to local and statewide community needs and interest related to cable TV in general and public, educational and government access channels and services in particular. Witnesses represented communities across Vermont, via multiple Vermont Interactive Television sites in Williston, St. Albans, Montpelier, Middlebury, Rutland, Bennington, Brattleboro, Springfield, Williston, White River Jct., Randolph, Newport, Lyndonville, and Johnson.

Witnesses addressed community needs and interests, including:

- The high price of cable television subscriptions
- Shrinking basic cable TV package offerings
- Requests for remote origination sites, in particular for schools
- Requests for HD carriage of PEG content
- Request to include PEG channels and content on the Interactive Program Guide (IPG)
- Request for PEG content available via Video on Demand
- Concern regarding the eleven year length of the CPG in an era of rapid technological change, and
- Requests to upgrade PEG channels and content transport as the cable network improves over the course of the eleven year CPG.

**In Middlebury, John Frieden** spoke of community television “as necessary as the postal service, public schools and internet access to an informed citizenry.” Frieden contends that it is

essential to inform the public about local governmental affairs. Because local broadcast media and even local newspapers do not cover many of the public meetings, MCTV is the only place in Middlebury where people can learn about what is happening in local government. He added that local PEG channels help to educate local people about how televised media works, enabling them to become critical media viewers.

**Senator Kevin Mullin of Rutland County** also spoke to democratic importance of PEG access channels: “We have a problem in the state of Vermont in protecting our local democracy and that is we don’t have the local news programs we used to have...We had local radio stations and local press that were covering every single local meeting. So really the only good hard factual news that we are getting is from the local public access television programs....[The staff] do an outstanding job of making sure that the local school board meetings, selectboard meetings and local sporting events for children are covered on those channels. I can tell you that people watch these shows because I talk to people on the streets all the time. It’s just amazing to me how many people will watch the local access channels.”

**Jessamyn West** is community technology librarian at the Randolph Technical Career Center and Justice of the Peace. “I work at the elections every year...what we don’t have a method of getting that information out to our community members. We would like to see more tools that empower our community with the G of PEG programming, through the program guides,...so that people can consumer PEG information the way that they consume the rest of their content in HD, quickly and conveniently.”

**Pat McDonald** is satisfied with ORCA Media programming and encouraged the Board to renew Comcast's CPG. She produces programs that cover domestic abuse, suicide prevention, unemployment and the difficulties of rearing children in rural areas. Her community production work with Alzheimer's and dementia patients has helped to "massively increase their capabilities" and provided a benefit to "disabled and mentally handicapped who don't have much of a voice."

**Amy Shollenberger** spoke of community access as a social binder. "People to connect with other human beings in their community and know what kind of place they live in...it is really exciting to see what is happening in these local stations around the state. Many have mentioned the volunteer spirit...the variety of voices that you hear. Even in the same shows you get a variety of voices of different kinds of people."

**Seth Bongartz**, Chair of Burr and Burton Academy's Board of Trustees in Manchester, spoke to the "confusion and lack of flexibility" engendered by Comcast's unwillingness to provide a remote origination site at Burr and Burton Academy, source of sporting events, community and political forums of interest to the community. .

**State Representative Brian Savage of Swanton and Sheldon** spoke of his district's frustration with Comcast's inability to carry its informational town meetings and enable discussion live since NW Access TV lost its ability to carry two live channels simultaneously. He requested that

the Board order Comcast to make the necessary upgrades to allow the return of simultaneous broadcasts on each PEG channel. [This is related to Condition 25.]

**Mariana Gamache District Franklin 4** provided comments citing public access tv for “providing very valuable community programming and services.” Rep. Gamache suggest ways to improve TV communication to better serve the public, including opening the door to the Vermont Statehouse for constituents, prevented by distance and weather, to “unbiased information on the creation of the laws that affect their lives.” She thinks that the Board should also take the loss of VIT into consideration and ensure alternative ways of connecting Vermonters. Given the company’s use of the right-of-way, “Comcast is an excellent candidate for meeting these needs.”

**Jennifer Latham**, Brattleboro resident and Emmy Award Winning Producer, believes that “community television is essential to an open society and free press.” With increasing media consolidation, BCTV provides sometimes only place that some voices can be heard. Given her experience in the TV industry, Ms. Latham believes that it is really important that community television equity with other service providers...the media they produce is more important or as important as other channels provided by Comcast.”

A number of **experienced producers** lamented the quality of Comcast’s SD PEG channels, which, when viewed side by side with commercial channels appear to be of inferior quality.

(e.g., “Everybody is looking at so much media now that if you look at it, it looks terrible, you just keep moving. It changes what people choose to watch.”) These witnesses were able to explain that many of Vermont’s AMOs are producing content in HD, which is often converted into SD in order to reach the headend and always aired in SD. They were able to explain that this is either because a/ there is no direct fiber run between the Remote Origination Site (ROS) and the cable company headend and/or b/ because Comcast has yet to allocate HD channels for PEG purposes in Vermont. Witnesses emphasize that it is important for community television to have equity with other service providers because the media they produce is as important as other channels provided by Comcast.

**Patrick Moreland, Brattleboro’s Assistant Town Manager**, “HD has become the standard of the industry. The irony is that BCTV regularly records in HD but by the time it is shown to the public it is scaled back to SD. We think this is important and the community would expect that as well.”

**Deb Ritkis, community producer for the Greater Falls Connection in Bellows Falls**, is very reliant on FACT-TV and wants to “make sure that she is reaching her audience” for media campaigns on important community topics: the opiate crisis, smoking cessation, and parenting skills. Failure to include these program listings in the Interactive Program Guide make it hard to reach her clients and the community at large.

**A Bellows Falls producer adds** “How do you know what you are watching when it just says “local”? If you don’t have internet service and you are not as familiar with a computer, you have to figure out when it’s showing and then you can’t record it.”

**Marita Johnson** produces historical programs at SAPA-TV in Springfield. Community members “really appreciate the local educational programs...many of which are shared statewide on VMX, the Vermont Media Exchange.” Use of public access TV has helped with the broader mission of providing educational programming for senior citizens throughout Vermont. Several of our OLLI [UVM Osher Lifelong Learning Institute] sites throughout the state...allowing us to reach many more of our senior Vermonters in their home. Allows community members to stay informed on local issues and enjoy quality local programming.

**Bruce Johnson, a Springfield witness** remarked that Windsor County has enormous percentage of elderly people. PEG access gives them the ability to see local government programs, educational programs that they would love to attend but cannot. “We need to do a better job of getting the word out that this resource is available and for everybody.”

With this new CPG he hopes “the PSB will look toward the future.” The technological changes have been unbelievable. “We seem to be looking toward the past...we need to look forward to the future...it is important that Comcast has a plan for the future to bring those services to our community and to the state.”



**Nan Hart** runs elder service programs in Rutland County: For PEG TV to continue to be the voice of the people of our region and around the state, access has to be” intuitive, useful and of a high quality technologically speaking.”

**Berta McGinnis, Manchester Regional Chamber of Commerce** is served by G-NAT, which from her Chamber perspective is the “communications thread that unites our entire community our businesses, nonprofits, schools, town government, school board - all a reliant on the “excellent facilities”. Ms. McGinnis urged equipment upgrades, including new live origination sites, to better enable informed political decisions and educate local students.

**Jennifer Latham**, Brattleboro resident and Emmy Award Winning Producer, believes that “community television is essential to an open society and free press.” With increasing media consolidation, BCTV provides the only place that some voices can be heard. Given her experience in the TV industry, Ms. Latham believes that it is really important that community television has equity with other service providers...the media they produce is more important or as important as other channels provided by Comcast.”

**Mary Jane Dickerson** former UVM English Teacher, poet and community producer shared her views on the cultural impact of the local PEG AMO, MMCTV. “They are at every event. They make sure they know what is going on. They have collaborated with Vermont PBS. That collaboration that our local access channels do with other venues are so very important for our

cultural lives. They cover so much in my area. If all the local access channels do it that well, we are well served.”

**Jason Mittell**, Professor of Film and Media Studies at Middlebury, talked about a PEG station (such as his hometown MCTV) as the way a community talks to itself. “When you put a video onto your local PEG station, you are sharing with your neighbors, your fellow citizens, your constituents with the people you protect and serve...We have small towns. We don’t have major media but we have a vibrant community media. That is why I urge the PSB and fellow citizen that Comcast expands this vital service.”

**Chairman James Volz** concluded the meeting by saying that he’ “Picked up strongly the theme of the evening.”

The Public Service Board and Department of Public Service also received a number of letters from community leaders, producers and supporters of community media in Vermont who spoke directly to the

- Importance of PEG access for an open society
- Role of community media centers as vital and respected anchor institutions
- Function of local, community driven media in an era of media consolidation
- Range of programs produced with the support of community media centers by a diversity of producers on topics that range from neighborhood safety to international relations,
- Value of PEG access as vocational training and driver of the creative economy, and

- Vital importance of building “infrastructure that can provide our community with the capability of being relevant in 21st century.”

In particular, many of the correspondents echoed the advice of the Windham Regional Commission:

- List PEG programs individually on interactive program guides. This is the menu for all services on the cable so they can be searched and recorded like every other channel.
- Provide local PEG stations with high-definition channels and the financial support to make this possible. High-definition is the new standard for video quality. Unlike other channels, PEG channels are only offered in standard definition even though their programming is created in high-definition.
- Improved capacity for high-quality live programming by the PEG channels.

**A selection of community letters may be found below. These are a subset of the letters received by the Vermont Public Service Board in reference to Docket 8301.**

**Q. What indications of community needs and interests are provided by Vermont Access Management Organizations?**

A. In preparation for this Docket, VAN surveyed its AMO members in order to determine Comcast compliance with their current CPG conditions. Here is a sample of those findings, which are representative of a majority of Vermont’s AMO’s, namely:

- No Comcast AMO's have access to the **Interactive Program Guide** or navigational interfaces (Board Order, Docket 7077, Condition 23(3)).
- At least one AMO (NWACTV, BCTV) does not have the **ability to air live programs simultaneously on more than one PEG channel**. (Condition 25).
- At least one AMO is not able to switch live programming from its studio. (Condition 31).
- Obstacles to **Remote Origination Site** ("ROS") standard and non-standard installations. In order to preserve valuable cable network bandwidth for data services traffic (Title II), Comcast is electing to construct expensive fiber "home runs" for every ROS site. The company, with the Public Service Department's tacit support, subjects both standard and non-standard ROS requests to a cost-benefit analysis, contrary to the Board Order in Docket 7077 (Condition 22).
- **Additional Capital funding:** AMO's will continue to need access to additional funding over the course of the eleven year CPG to support capital purchases during this period of rapidly changing technology. (Condition 24).
- No Comcast AMO's have access to **HD channel capacity**.

**The following AMOs touch on the outstanding issues related to Comcast compliance to their current CPG and future PEG access services. These are a sample of outstanding issues:**

**1. Interactive Program Guide (IPG): (CPG Condition 23(3)):** Not one Comcast AMO has access to navigational interfaces to enable viewers to know what programs are airing and to allow them to record PEG content.

LPCTV (Colchester, Milton, George, Grand Isle) is just one of the AMO's unable to access the Interactive Program Guide. Their experience is comparable to AMO's in multiple service territories.

LPCTV channels are not listed on any electronic programming guide, nor have we been provided access. When we have brought this up with Comcast, during contract negotiations, we were provided with the answer that it would be technically difficult and costly. Namely, that there is no way to effectively delineate / distinguish the programming data between the multiple access stations within Comcast's territory. We were informed that if a solution becomes available, LPCTV would be expected to absorb the cost of the upgrade or the monthly costs for channel listings. As a small AMO working with a limited operating budget, this would not likely be feasible.

Our goal is to work collaboratively with the cable providers and VAN, towards a mutually beneficial goal of having community TV program listings on the program guide. Stations like ours are "selling points" for cable, and the programming should be leveraged for marketing purposes. Access to the programming guides would be the most efficient and effective way of doing that – a solution should be deemed impossible.

**MMCTV** (Richmond, Underhill, Jericho) Because our channel is not listed there, we have spent a good chunk of our small advertising budget the last couple of years on getting the schedule to people in local papers.

**WOA:** (Windsor) I often receive complaints from viewers that they don't have access to our schedule via the Interactive Programming Guide. We do have our schedule on our website, but not everyone is on the web, particularly the many seniors that watch our channel.

**NEK-TV:** (Newport) We do not have a listing on the Comcast Guide channel. It just says local programming.

**BCTV:** (Brattleboro) IPG access is a major parity issue for public access channels. Consumers don't have access to programming on PEG channels if they are presented differently than all of the others. In June, I made presentations to every board that BCTV covers regularly and displayed a screenshot of how our listings appear compared to those of commercial channels. Board and audience members expressed surprise and concern that such a familiar feature of cable television viewing -- being able to search for and DVR a program using the remote -- is not available for local channels. We've heard the explanation that because BCTV, FACTV, SAPA, WOA and CATV -- all the AMOs along the Connecticut River (and maybe more) -- are cablecast on Channels 8 and/or 10 out of the same headend, there isn't a way to provide individual program listings.

The supposed options are: creating a separate “headend” for each one, which Comcast presents as logistically unfeasible and too expensive to undertake, or there’s the threat of reassigning channel numbers, which is very hard for our stations to recover from. As far as advocating for this feature, we’ve had no real data by which to evaluate whether being on the IPG is fiscally possible or logistically feasible for our small staffs. Condition 23(3) allows PEG AMOs to access the guide “and pay the fee” to have our schedules listed. We don’t know what the fee would be, and we don’t know if schedules would need to be submitted so far in advance that it would negate the value of the service. BCTV, like many AMOs, schedules programs five days in advance of the coming week. I suspect this would be inadequate turnaround time for a commercial feature such as this one. All we know is that this Obligation has not been fulfilled during the period of Comcast’s CPG.

**2. HD Channels:** Not one Comcast AMO is running PEG content on HD Channels.

**LPCTV:** We are ready for it. VTel was going to provide HD channels...my feeling is it is only a matter of time before Comcast will also, but the sooner the better. All new equipment is HD, so we are ready for it. We just invested in HD capability with our new master control equipment, so we are even prepared to transmit in HD is we had the channels.

**WOA:** The SD quality is sub par compared to the HD programming.

**MMCTV:** Because our new gear is HD, our staff spends time down converting material to SD for broadcast, and spending the extra time making an HD version for online and other distribution.

Our channel suffers technically due to its SD quality in comparison with the other channels by its side.

**NEK-TV:** We are not able to broadcast in HD.

**BCTV:** This is another critical parity issue. We renovated BCTV's studio in 2012 to make it capable of High Definition production because we could no longer purchase Standard Definition cameras. A mere four years later, the industry standard is moving to 4K in terms of cameras and monitors, and soon we'll be renovating for that change. As one testimonial from Windham County expressed to the Public Service Board: "HD is already old." By federal law, PEG channels must be part of the Basic Cable package, which for Comcast in our area includes approximately 20+ SD channels, from 2 - 23, and their HD equivalents, from 702 on. Viewers scrolling through the 700s to watch in HD on their industry-standard flatscreen monitors, or those who have set their cable guide to "HD only," won't ever scroll past or see PEG channels listed. This is a common practice for viewers because SD channels present such poor signal quality on HD/flatscreen monitors. That Comcast hasn't updated its entire Basic cable lineup to HD at this point when they are touting their HD streaming service is indicative of the company's prioritization of internet delivery over cable, to the detriment of the quality of cable service.



**ROS: With two exceptions Rutland and White River Junction, most Comcast AMO's**

**report** difficulty activating remote origination sites in their community. Installation costs for “nonstandard” ROS are estimated by Comcast to cost thousands of dollars, even to connect central AMO studios (example, NWATV in St. Albans). Those that are installed feature poor signal quality due to unwillingness by Comcast to use updated, modern technology to accomplish ROS.

**Rutland PEG-TV:** Uses QVidium, tested by Comcast as an alternative solution to hardwired ROS installations and “loves it!”

**FACT-TV:** (Bellows Falls) Reports intermittent static issues at regularly used ROS. Has been told by local techs to go and test site before each use. Also works around with Livestream.

**LPCTV:** Our remote sites (“Schedule A”) from our original agreement were never completed. There were 11 of them and we ended up with 3. They are RF / coaxial forward and return feeds – the signal quality was always an issue. We do not have this capability to control the ROS from our studio. We are on antiquated equipment, using RF demodulators in the studio, and RF modulators out on remote sites.

**MMCTV:** In July 2014, encouraged by our three town's stated desire that they'd like live streaming of some meetings/events, MMCTV asked Comcast to finally activate our two ROS, which had never been used. We were encouraged by Comcast to follow the path instead of

applying for a QVidium unit, which we were told had been tested and approved for use by Comcast. After waiting and providing more follow-up information, we are still waiting over a year later. In the meantime, we spent a tenth of our capital budget this year to purchase a Livestream unit/streaming service, which we have started using for major events and some meetings. However, we have one unit and many more community needs that it can serve. We were disappointed with Comcast's diverting us from activating the ROS sites and then not living up to its promise of a QVidium unit.

**WOA:** We do not use the ROS, as being a small station with limited manpower, the ROS are too difficult to use with the technology that is installed at these sites.

**NEK-TV:** We don't have this capability and we have asked for it. Originally we asked for it as far back as 2009.

**SAPA-TV:** (Springfiled) Has abandoned using Comcast ROSs because of reliability and maintenance issues

**LCATV:** Have no ROS sites. Milton Town attempted during in the last five years and were frustrated and gave up. Currently LCATV uses livestream for live events.

**MCTV:** 7 sites, uses 2 regularly. All are at least 10 years old. No ongoing problems other than signal quality. Was told it would cost \$10,000 to upgrade an ROS to fiber. We recommend that the Board make sure that Comcast is complying with FCC Technical Specs in the Cable Act: 47CFR section 76.605. Footnote: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/47/76.605>

**BCTV:** In Exhibit A of Comcast's 2014 PEG Operator's Report, BCTV has 12 ROS listed, all of them as activated. While these sites are listed in BCTV's contract, only four are activated and currently in use; the rest have been listed as "needs activation" in our AMO Annual Report every year. They are sites that may have been active at one time, but have not worked for at least 10 years. BCTV has not pursued reactivation of sites because the RF modulator transmission method is so antiquated and complex that only full-time technical staff are trained to use it. This is another example where Comcast touts its ability to deliver video over IP, and yet relies on RF modulator technology to fulfill Condition 22 of its CPG. BCTV increasingly receives requests to cablecast events live, as live programming has increasingly become the highest value of television in a world of on-demand viewing.

While we have not yet invested in a streaming coder/decoder device such as QVidium or LiveStream, we have developed a low-budget method, using our nonprofit YouTube account with a gaming device, to livestream events to YouTube as we're recording them for future broadcast. This, however, does not necessarily provide live programming to cable customers, because of the extra technological step required to deliver the stream to our server, which adds staffing costs. The rapid adoption of IP as a reliable transmission method from any location with

adequate internet upload speed to a broadcast server makes it an obvious replacement for

Comcast's current 1970s-era ROS technology.

**3. Spike Funding (Condition 24):** AMO's will continue to need access to additional funding over the course of the eleven year CPG to support capital purchases during this period of rapidly changing technology.

**LPCTV:** (Ludlow, Proctor, Cavendish) In our original contract, we were allotted 2 capital requests (commonly referred to as "spike") payments, as well as a "digital equipment" spike payment circa 2005, to assist with the digital transition. The 2 capital requests were granted, during the last 2 years of the contract term; both of these requests were for our building construction project. The digital equipment payment was used to help fund our first computer-based master control server, which was purchased in January 2006. In the new (2013) contract, we receive ongoing, quarterly funding for annual capital needs such as equipment.

**NEK-TV:** We have asked for it but have not had one since I have been here which was 2007.

**BCTV:** As advised by Greg Epler Wood, BCTV submitted a substantial capital spike funding request as part of our contract proposal to Comcast in 2008 (\$52,000) for digital transition. After years (decades) of sub-standard capital funding from Adelphia and then Comcast, BCTV's equipment was extremely outmoded and analog. We developed a capital budget to overhaul our field and studio equipment, but Comcast denied the request during our initial contract talks - it

really went nowhere. The best we could do during that negotiation was to achieve a capital funding level of 0.5%, which is the average for PEG AMOs.

**4. Channel Re-assignment (Condition 19):** Channel re-assignment protocols need to be rational and enforced.

**LPCTV:** There was lack of communication up front regarding the launch of our channels in the Town of Mount Holly, which was added to our service area in 2005. The channels did not “go live” for another couple of years. Just before they went live, we were informed that we would be on different channels than we are on in the rest of our service area. This was because Mt. Holly cable subscribers are fed out of a different head-end, so the channel make-up is different. To this day, there is confusion over what channels we are on where.

**BCTV:** BCTV was contacted in late September of 2011 about a potential reassignment of Channel 10 to WWDP, a home-shopping channel, due to a “must-carry” provision. In November, we were notified that WWDP would not be launching as planned. This was a wake-up call to how disruptive it would be to direct our viewers to a new channel number, especially if our channels were separated on the lineup. This is a vulnerability for PEG channels.

**5. Infrastructure to go live on both channels at the same time (Condition 25):**

**BCTV:** BCTV has one frequency (subchannel 6) assigned to its I-loop, which we use to transmit programming from our RO sites to Comcast. In order to go live on both channels simultaneously, we would need to have a second subchannel assigned for our use. Again, this is an outdated technology and we don't want to expend energy or funds to invest in this transmission method. However, live programming is extremely valuable, and BCTV would certainly use the capability of transmitting two live programs simultaneously if modern methods were available and affordable.

Our acronym is NWATV.

**5. Ability to control ROS from Studio (Condition 31):** There are several AMOs that cannot switch live programming from their studio: LPCTV, NWATV, HCTV, NEK-TV, BCTV, WCTV8, MCTV.

**BCTV:** If we had an RF modulator that was permanently installed at a ROS and was always powered on, then our switcher could be set to use it as a source at any time - which would be one way of "controlling" it. However, if one modulator is on, then no other ROS on the I-loop can transmit, and there's no way of remotely turning modulators on or off (that we know of). So our answer is no, for our purposes, we can't remotely control ROS from our facility.

**MCTV:** Unplugs at studio and then drives to ROS to plug in.

**6. Request for Annual Meetings (Condition 29):**

**FACT-TV:** The Executive Director really wants an annual meeting, even if with all of VAN, with Dan Glanville or someone else that actually has power to make decisions, rather than always meeting with regional reps with no power. He also wants a Comcast tech person at all these meetings.

Oct 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jaime Williams and I am an independent video producer here in Vermont. I've been working in this field for 6 years now and I've come a long way. And I would say without hesitation that VCAM was vital in my training.

I didn't go to school for video production, but found myself employed and in charge of producing a cross-country 17 episode documentary series. My employer funded some private classes for me with a filmmaker in Montpelier and gave me a budget to buy gear. I had no idea where to start. It was VCAM that I turned to. Not only did they help me figure out the best gear for my needs, they trained me on how to use it. I was never turned away when I had questions. I participated in workshops, I received help in editing, and they even calmed my nerves and while recovering footage I thought would be lost forever. I have also been able to try out new gear through VCAM, have borrowed some gear for shoots that fit the criteria and have been able to call on them whenever I find myself in a pinch.

VCAM also aired my series when it was released, and I've always felt comfortable knowing that they are around and I hope that they are for a long, long time. I am now working successfully in this field and loving my profession. VCAM is such a valuable resource to our community and to the future of independent video production.

Sincerely,

Jaime Williams  
360-901-7139  
[www.vondiervideo.com](http://www.vondiervideo.com)





Lanpher Memorial Library  
P.O. Box 196  
141 Main Street  
Hyde Park, VT 05655  
802-888-4628

hydeparklibrary@yahoo.com  
lanpherlibrary.org

October 16, 2015

Dear Christine Peterson at the Department of Public Good,

I am writing in support of Green Mountain Access Television (GMATV) as they look forward to renewing their Certificate of Public Good.

I am the Library Director of the Lanpher Memorial Library in Hyde Park, VT. We have relied on GMATV staff to come to our events and film them to air to a wider audience. Many important programs have been aired this way, including a Copley Health Talk with the Hospital Pharmacist as she gave important information about the meaning of "nutrition" in nutritional supplements; a program about the Universal Recycling Law from the Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District; and recently, a program where long time Hyde Park residents shared stories of yesteryear, giving us a glimpse into the past of our town.

Having these programs filmed is of great benefit to the Library and to the community we serve. Many people are unable to attend a program at the Library for one reason or another, and are able to watch the program on GMATV later. Even people who did attend programs are grateful for the opportunity to be able to reference it again on GMATV. Of particular importance is the recording of the stories of yesteryear. Many of the older people who shared stories have great information to share of our past will not be around forever, and being able to capture it on film is valuable to future generations.

We are grateful to partner with GMATV and for their professional staff who have a willingness to come to the Lanpher Memorial Library, no matter how big or small the program, and film it for the community.

Please feel welcome to contact me with any questions, or if you are in need of further information.

Sincerely,

Amy Olsen  
Library Director  
Lanpher Memorial Library

# Town of Dorset, Vermont



Dorset Town Offices:  
PO Box 715  
112 Mad Tom Road  
East Dorset, VT 05253

Dorset Town Manager's Office:  
Phone: 802-362-4571 x 3  
Fax: 802-362-5156  
Email: [townmanager@gmail.com](mailto:townmanager@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.dorsetvt.org](http://www.dorsetvt.org)

=====Chartered 1761=====

September 9, 2015

Christine L Peterson

Consumer Affairs/ Vermont Department of Public Service

112 State Street

Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear Christine,

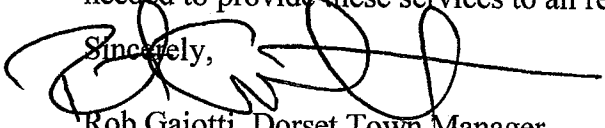
Please accept this letter as participation in the Bennington County focus group meeting of September 9, 2015. I sent an RSVP for the meeting but will not be able to attend due to office commitments.

The Dorset community is served well through the services and programs offered by GNAT-TV. Dorset residents are able to view important public meetings via television and also online. This service is a vital resource that keeps our community connected to the workings of the Town. In addition GNAT-TV has supported our community members, schools, and non-profit organizations immensely by providing a platform for broad communication.

As is relates, Comcast as a business partner in our local community could work to provide a more complete infrastructure that will allow all our community members to benefit from all the vital information that is broadcast through Local Access TV. As a town administrator I often hear from residents that are cut out of these opportunities based on where they live in Town. These residents often contact Comcast about running new service and the quotations for infrastructure service are simply not realistic for a resident to cover alone.

Dorset supports any effort that the State of Vermont and Comcast can forge that would further enhance the resources available for Local Access TV and the fundamental infrastructure needed to provide these services to all residents in our rural community.

Sincerely,



Rob Gaiotti, Dorset Town Manager

October 20, 2015

Dear Public Service Board:

While I regret that I can't attend the October 21 meeting, I'd still like to voice to Comcast the services that I think they should provide Vermonters. As a very large company, and one that runs their cables under public land, Comcast should have no problem with this request to make this a fair exchange.

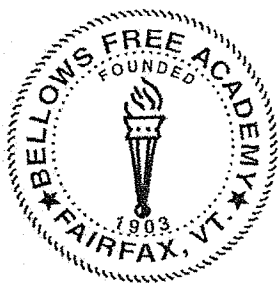
The most important thing that Comcast do is support Public Access TV in every way possible. Public Access TV is so very crucial to our state and people. We depend on it to both provide and receive information, and for some Vermonters, this is their main source of information.

Like many others, I'd like to see Comcast provide the following, at least:

- **a statewide, Ultra-HD cable channel**
- **local shows and meetings listed in Comcast's digital program guide**
- **a way to watch work produced in HD**
- **every library in Vermont received a premium, HD cable subscription**
- **a giant Ultra-HD TV for every library in Vermont**
- **quarterly (at least) statistical reports to the public access TV stations that are available to the public with info about how many people watch the public cable channels? How many watch at different times on which days? What are the most popular things for people to watch? And so on...**

Thank you.

Lindsey Lathrop-Ryan



75 Hunt Street  
Fairfax, VT 05454  
Phone 802-849-6711  
Fax 802-849-2611  
www.bfafairfax.com

## BELLOWS FREE ACADEMY

John T. Tague, High School Principal  
Thomas J. Walsh, Elementary/Middle School Principal  
Geri-Lyn Witalec, Pre K-8 Assistant Principal/Athletic Director 7-12



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elaine Carpenter, Chair    Rachelle LeVau    Jasen Boyd    Paula Dearborn, Clerk    Scott Mitchell  
Jake Hakey, Student Rep    Meadow Linderman, Student Rep

October 30, 2015

Christine Peterson  
Coordinator of Consumer Affairs and Information  
Vermont Public Service Department  
112 State Street, Third Floor  
Montpelier, VT, 05620-2601

re: Docket 8301

Dear Ms. Peterson,

I am writing in support of the Vermont Access Network (VAN), and specifically of member Access Management Organization Lake Champlain Access Television (LCATV), in the upcoming Certificate of Public Good renewal process for Comcast. LCATV and organizations like it across Vermont offer community members the opportunity to utilize the vital tool of cable television to provide a local means of expression, education, discourse, and entertainment.

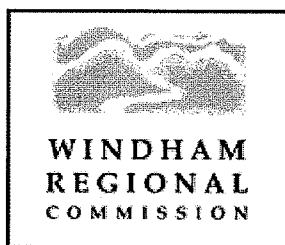
Our school has been a part of an on going project with LCATV's educational outreach programming. Each year students in my public speaking course work for two weeks with LCATV producing Infomercials to demonstrate their understanding and proficiency in argumentative writing and speaking. The partnership with LCATV gives the students an authentic audience and clear purpose for their infomercials. Our school has also utilized LCATV to create public service announcements to encourage student voting. "My Vote Is My Voice" was an engaging project which improved our student voter turnout at the polls, increasing our students' involvement in the civic voting process.

I encourage you to support VAN's and LCATV's efforts to gain access to new and existing technologies to better serve Vermont communities and to remain vibrant and essential local media outlets for years to come.

Sincerely,

Sara Villeneuve  
High School English Teacher

*Committed to ensuring all students become informed, literate, critical thinkers who demonstrate responsible social and civic behaviors.*



October 31, 2015

Ms. Susan M. Hudson  
Clerk of the Public Service Board  
112 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620

RE: Docket 8301 Renewal of the Certificate of Public Good of Comcast of Connecticut/Georgia/Massachusetts/New Hampshire/New York/North Carolina/Virginia/Vermont, LLC, d/b/a Comcast, expiring on December 29, 2016, to provide cable television service

Dear Ms. Hudson:

I am writing on behalf of the Windham Regional Commission to offer comments on the Certificate of Public Good of Comcast, and specifically the provision of public, educational and government (PEG) access television channels. Among the 27 towns of the Windham Regional Commission are the towns of Athens, Brattleboro, Brookline, Dummerston, Grafton, Guilford, Halifax, Jamaica, Londonderry, Marlboro, Rockingham, Searsburg, Stratton, Vernon, Wardsboro, Westminster, Weston, Windham, and Winhall included in the Board's order dated July 30, 2014.

We recognize the importance of access to cable television to the residents and businesses of the Windham Region by Comcast and other providers not only for entertainment purposes, but increasingly for information about local government decision-making and education. Apart from our PEG channels, we ostensibly have no local television coverage with the exception of occasional major stories that may be picked up by the Burlington area-based television stations. Vermont Public Radio provides more frequent reporting about events in our region but it is also occasional and topical. As the local daily newspaper, The Reformer, struggles to retain its personnel and its ability to cover local news, our local PEG channels including Brattleboro Community Television (BCTV) and Falls Area Community Television (FACT TV) assume increasing importance as they provide broadcasts of meetings of town selectboards, planning commissions, and other town functions.

PEG channels also broadcast meetings and hearings of state agencies and boards; myriad workshops, trainings, presentations and seminars provided by a wide range of governmental and non-governmental organizations; tapings of local cultural events; and unique home-

grown programming. The Windham Regional Commission has also begun to solicit the services of BCTV to record and broadcast its meetings and events, thereby providing much broader access to the public of our activities. We will increase our use of our region's PEG services to capture and broadcast our events and trainings for towns, town officials and the general public. This also enables us to archive the recordings and make them available for viewing on an on-demand basis on our own website. The programming provided by PEGs is an essential service that is only growing in importance. It should be further enhanced.

As is stated in the Windham Regional Plan adopted September 30, 2014, it is the policy of the Windham Regional Commission to:

- Support greater penetration of public access, educational and government programming (PEG) through new PEG group formation and regional agreements. Encourage cable companies and other video programming service providers to support PEG operating and capital budgets. Encourage cable television companies to provide coverage of regular town meetings and other important local events as part of their cable franchise agreements.
- Support increased access to information about local events in user-friendly electronic formats.
- Encourage increased access for residents to state and local public meetings and hearings through Vermont Interactive Television, PEG channels, and other electronic means.

In support of these policies, we urge the Board to require the following as conditions of a renewed Certificate of Public Good.

- Require continued and more robust support of PEG operations and programming.
- List PEG programs individually on interactive program guides. This is the menu for all services on cable so they can be searched and recorded like every other channel.
- Provide local PEG stations with high-definition channels and the financial support to make this possible. High-definition is the new standard for video quality. Unlike other channels, PEG channels are only offered in standard definition even though their programming is created in high-definition.
- Improved capacity for high-quality live programming by the PEG channels.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the renewal of the Comcast certificate of public good. Access to cable television is important. PEG programming is increasingly essential to public engagement in local, regional and state governance, civic education, and our region's social fabric.

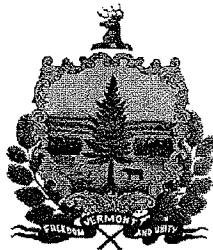
Sincerely,  
Chris Campany  
Executive Director

COMMISSIONER  
TEL. NO. 802-244-8718  
FAX NO. 802-241-5377

DIRECTOR  
VERMONT STATE POLICE  
TEL. NO. 802-244-7345  
FAX NO. 802-241-5551

DIRECTOR  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES  
TEL. NO. 802-244-8786  
FAX NO. 802-241-5557

DIRECTOR  
VERMONT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
TEL. NO. 802-244-8721  
FAX NO. 802-241-5556



STATE OF VERMONT  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
103 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
WATERBURY, VERMONT 05671-2101  
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SEARCH & RESCUE  
TEL. NO. 802-241-5656  
FAX NO. 802-241-5551

LEGAL COUNSEL  
TEL. NO. 802-244-6941  
FAX NO. 802-241-5377

October 30, 2015

Christine Peterson  
Coordinator of Consumer Affairs and Information  
Vermont Public Service Department  
112 State Street, Third Floor  
Montpelier, VT, 05620-2601

re: Docket 8301

Dear Ms. Peterson,

I am writing in support of the Vermont Access Network (VAN), and specifically of member Access Management Organization Mount Mansfield Community Television (MMCTV), in the upcoming Certificate of Public Good renewal process for Comcast. MMCTV and organizations like it across the state offer community members the opportunity to utilize the vital tool of cable television to provide a local means of expression, education, discourse, entertainment, and in our case dissemination of public safety information.

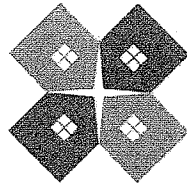
I have worked personally with Jim Hering at MMCTV on a collaborative project to develop a public educational video on backcountry skier safety. Each year numerous skiers go out of bounds and get lost, requiring extensive and extensive search and rescue efforts. Preventative efforts, such as the video that we produced with Mr. Hering's assistance help us in this effort. This programming was widely used by other public access stations throughout Vermont, and I received a lot of positive feedback from member of the public who saw it. This type of exposure would simply not be available to us without the VAN.

I encourage you to support VAN's and MMCTV's efforts to gain access to new and existing technologies to better serve Vermont communities and to remain vibrant and essential local media outlets for years to come.

Sincerely,

**Neil Van Dyke**

Neil Van Dyke  
Search & Rescue Coordinator



Brattleboro Housing  
PARTNERSHIPS

Susan Hudson, Clerk of the Board  
Vermont Public Service Board  
112 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2701  
[psb.clerk@vermont.gov](mailto:psb.clerk@vermont.gov)

RE: Docket 8301

Dear Ms. Hudson:

I am writing on behalf of our organization to express strong support for our local community cable station, BCTV. I understand that BCTV is included in the review of Comcast.

BCTV is a critical means of information for our over 500 low income residents and program participants in the Brattleboro area. Our monthly Commissioner meetings are taped and shown at various times over BCTV as well as now available through web streaming. Many of our residents are elderly, families with young children and/or disabled. They rely on BCTV to keep up with what is happening at BHP and in their neighborhoods. We rely on the broadcasting of our meetings to pass along a wide variety of resident information.

Additionally, our residents rely a great deal on the community broadcasting done by BCTV to watch community events from the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade to Town Meeting. This is a very important means for many in the community to remain engaged and informed about what is going on in their Town.

BCTV needs to be as up to date in terms of technology as possible in order to remain the viable and reliable information source it has become. Viewers need to be able to access the program schedule on Comcast's cable guide as many do not receive a local paper, further, BCTV and its counterparts across the state, need to be on and using the latest technology possible. Even though BCTV does so much now, it could do even more if it were not a lag behind on the technology front.

On behalf of our residents and many others who rely on this outstanding local station, I hope you will recognize its needs to remain current and definitely supported as we go further in our technological world.

Very truly yours,

Christine H. Hart  
Executive Director

PO Box 2275, Brattleboro, Vermont 05303

p: 802-254-6071 \* f: 802-254-5590 \* [brattleborohousing.org](http://brattleborohousing.org)



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160 Benmont Ave. • PO Box 197 • Bennington, VT 05201 • 802.442. 5800 • [www.SpeakSooner.org](http://www.SpeakSooner.org)

20 October 2015

To: Vermont Public Service Board  
Re: CAT-TV

I am writing in support of the vital role that CAT-TV provides our community in presenting programming that educates and engages local citizens about relevant topics affecting their lives. Many people in our area rely on this media outlet to keep informed about news, events and activities that can impact their lives.

As Executive Director of a nonprofit whose mission is to educate the public about improving communication with healthcare providers, I can attest to the value of CAT-TV in helping us produce and distribute our programs to Bennington community. The Center for Communication in Medicine is just one of many civic, humanitarian and nonprofit organizations that rely on public access TV to disseminate information that would otherwise not be available.

CAT-TV deserves recognition for its role in meeting local programming needs and should receive support for building infrastructure that can provide our community with the capability of being relevant in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Yours truly,

Bernard M. Bandman, PhD  
Executive Director

**Speak Sooner.org**  
a center for communication in medicine initiative

October 22, 2015

Susan Hudson, Clerk of the Board  
Vermont Public Service Board  
112 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05602-2701

Vermont Access Network  
c/o Cor Trowbridge  
Brattleboro Community TV  
Suite 201  
230 Main St  
Brattleboro, VT 05301

Dear Ms. Hudson and Mr. Trowbridge:

I am writing to express my concerns with the Certificate of Public Good renewal (docket #8301) for Comcast and the continuing need of public, educational, and governmental services (PEG) provided through our local access channel Brattleboro Community Television (BCTV).

I appeal to Vermont regulators to ensure that cable providers meet the obligations of providing high-quality service. Over 80% of cable subscribers in Vermont are served by Comcast. Comcast needs to invest in the region by providing high-definition programming, cable guide updates, and faster internet speed as it is in the best interest of the public. The bottom line is that PEG channels need to be on equal footing with basic commercial channels.

As the Public Service Board, you must keep public television appealing to local audiences. Community members rely on public access TV. Through public access television, citizens are informed and can participate in local issues, promoting civic engagement and openness in local government. Services provided by BCTV are essential to the region and the town for dissemination of information.

Whatever efforts the Department of Public Service can provide to Vermont residents to ensure cable operators provide service upgrades for local access channels will be much appreciated. The Department needs to redefine regulations and set higher standards for public access television in order to protect its future. Thank you for taking these thoughts and ideas into consideration.

Sincerely,

Ron Lenker, Interim Town Administrator  
Town of Guilford, Vermont

**RETN PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

# DEENA L FRANKEL

1061 Pine Street, Burlington, VT 05401

deena@deenamedia.com

October 17, 2015

Mrs. Susan Hudson, Clerk  
Vermont Public Service Board  
112 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620

Re: Docket 8301

Dear Mrs. Hudson:

These comments are being submitted in writing because I cannot attend the October 21 public hearing. As an avid viewer, learner and stakeholder of Vermont public access television, I want to provide my input in the Comcast Certificate of Public Good renewal and the services I think Comcast should provide to Vermonters in connection with a new term.

The importance of Vermont's 11 year CPG renewal requirement is that it gives the state the opportunity to evaluate how technology and society have changed and what those changes mean to the public obligations of a cable company whose facilities use the public rights of way. So much has changed since the past re-licensure. With that evolution, Comcast should be required to provide meaningful, up-to-date support to public, educational and government access television.

PEG provides a services that is more vital than ever to a democratic society because it facilitates access by a diversity of voices to make and to view non-commercial, educational and civic programming. Freedom of speech, raising technologically literate children, and strengthening local government are just a few of important values critically advanced by public access TV.

At a minimum, Comcast should provide the following:

- A statewide, ultra-HD cable channel.
- Local shows and meetings listed in Comcast's digital program guide.
- A way to watch work produced in HD.
- Every library in Vermont received a premium, HD cable subscription.
- A giant Ultra-HD TV for every library in Vermont.
- Periodic (quarterly) statistical reports to the public access TV stations with detailed information about program viewership.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Sincerely,

*Deena L. Frankel*

(submitted electronically)

# Comcast Public Hearing 10/21

HeleneWafic FaourArnold <wkzfaour@gmavt.net>

10/22/15

to psb.clerk

Dear Public Service Board Members-

Last night I had the opportunity to attend the public hearing at VIT in Williston concerning Comcast's upcoming contract renewal. I had to leave before I could testify so I am writing to weigh in. I appreciated the statewide hearing and left feeling like a better informed citizen. I agreed with the testimony that strongly supported continuing Public Access TV and asked for future improvements in service, particularly public show content listings in the Comcast digital program guide, and updated Ultra-High Definition viewing capability of locally produced content.

I do not believe that the requests to Comcast are unreasonable or will undermine the profits of the Comcast behemoth, and do believe that the company has a responsibility to provide worthwhile community service in exchange for use of a public land and a captive Vermont customer base.

In addition to adding local public TV listings in the Comcast guide and HD viewing of locally produced content, I also support creating a business plan and means of holding Comcast accountable for the services they are supposed to provide to local Vermont communities. Why not also include a statewide HD cable channel and large TV screens with a HD cable subscription for Vermont libraries?

Children, including my own in Chittenden County, and in other towns across Vermont, have been able to work with their local educational and public TV networks to learn to create and produce films for their local communities. These are rich opportunities in a world of increasing reliance on digital technologies and content. Please keep Public Access TV alive and democracy healthy by requiring Comcast to conduct their business in Vermont in a socially responsible manner.

Thank you,  
Helene Arnold  
50 Durand Rd.  
Richmond, VT 05477

# PSB Docket #8301

Kelley Hunter <kellhunter@earthlink.net>

10/20/15

to psb.clerk, director, scottc

To the Public Service Board,

Since I am unable to attend the October 21st hearing in Burlington, I am sending this email to communicate my views on the Comcast contract renewal, so that this company is not simply rubber-stamped but charged to improve services to be relevant to Vermonters today.

I am a firm supporter of community radio and television. I urge the PSB to insist that Comcast include MORE attention to this valuable local State resource.

Vermonters need an **up-to-date, statewide HD cable channel for live events**.

We are a spread-out population, with challenging winter weather, that needs access in our homes to what is going on in the State House, local meetings, the arts, social events, sports and other community programs. This would foster the sense of community that is the heart of Vermont.

I have been impressed with the services and programming provided by **local access stations like RETN and ORCA MEDIA**. In fact, I have been taking advantage of their educational services to improve my technical skills for professional outreach. **These stations need HD channels for their programming**, which is so enriching to the lives—and education— of Vermonters.

It will be a win-win for **libraries and schools** to be able to air such programs. Therefore these valuable community hubs should have free premium HD cable subscriptions and televisions.

It should be needless to say that Comcast's interactive program guide should include such local programming options for easy access.

For Comcast and other such telecommunications projects/companies to be relevant to Vermonters, towns and the general public needs to be heard to give their input on all levels. Is this not the job of the PSB, to truly promote public service?

I thank you.

*M. Kelley Hunter* Ph.D.

802-456-1078  
844 Bayne-Comolli Rd  
East Calais, VT 05650

## PSB Docket #8301

Marilyn Maddison <marilyn2m@aol.com>

10/21/15

to psb.clerk

Dear Public Service Board:

I can't be at the October 21 meeting but want you to know what I think are important and very reasonable requests about the services I think Comcast should provide to Vermonters.

We need Comcast to do everything possible to support Public Access TV. If they are going to run their cables under public land, they at least owe the public specific services in exchange. Comcast is a huge for profit company and I am sure would benefit in more ways than one in supporting public access in Vermont.

I'd like to see Comcast provide the following, at least:

- **a statewide, Ultra-HD cable channel**
- **local shows and meetings listed in Comcast's digital program guide**

I hope that our voice is heard.

Thank you~

Marilyn Maddison  
South Burlington, VT

November 1, 2015

Ron Bouchard  
236 Clearwater Road  
Shelburne, VT 05482  
[ronaldabouchard@gmail.com](mailto:ronaldabouchard@gmail.com)  
802-238-7529

RE: PSB Docket #8301 - RETN

Dear PSB, I am writing to support an organization that provides great benefit to our communities: RETN. My direct experience with the positive benefits stem from the fact that I have served on the Town of Shelburne Planning Commission for many years and, increasingly over time, I have been approached by fellow town folk to discuss items important to them and the well being of our town. I realize how many would not be aware, informed and involved of what is happening in our town if not for the broadcast of RETN. RETN stand up to its acronym: Regional Educational Television Network. It educates our citizens. I support expanding it's funding.

Yours truly,  
Ron Bouchard



Testimony, Public Service Board, 10/19/15

In connection with Comcast's wish to renew its contract with Vermont for the next 11 years, I urge the Public Service Board to consider the range and depth of services Comcast provides for our community now and what we will require over the coming decade.

I work with college students who use the resources of RETN every semester. I'm an English instructor at the Community College of Vermont in Winooski. In my public speaking course, students spend an afternoon at RETN learning about the opportunities it offers:

- using the studio and facilities for original programming,
- learning to use and borrowing equipment, and
- discovering the powerful experience of being on-air—speaking directly to their community,

all of which is available to them because of the work and commitment of this media center.

In my years of working with the staff at RETN, I am impressed by their commitment to educating students and teachers in how to use the public airwaves to express opinions and ideas and participate in the cultural and educational aspects of our community. They provide an invaluable resource for implementing the First Amendment and learning about the practical and ethical uses of broadcast media-- all essential for a healthy democracy.

Some of the things that will support RETN's endeavor to make community media accessible are the following:

- statewide HD and Ultra-HD cable channel for live events;
- HD channels for local cable stations;
- the ability to search for shows using the interactive cable guide; and
- free premium HD channels and TVs for every school and every library in Vermont.

Please take these important needs into account in your deliberations. Vermont is a small state and Chittenden County is a small market, but we need as much as any community to have full access to up-to-date media resources in order to be full participants in local, national, and global conversations.

Sally Ballin, Instructor

CCV-Winooski

# PSB Docket #8301

trinamagi@burlingtontelecom.net

10/21/15

to psb.clerk, director, scottc

Dear Members of the Vermont Public Service Board,

I am writing in response to your call for community input concerning the renewal of the certificate of public good of Comcast to provide cable television service.

As a professional librarian at the University of Vermont, I am acutely aware of the essential and significant role that access to information plays in the vitality and well-being of individuals, communities, and our democracy. If we the people are to be our own governors--as a democratic society requires--we must be informed and broadly educated. We must have the means to share our ideas, to hear from others, and to hold our government accountable. We are incredibly fortunate to have three high-quality providers of access television serving our area and helping to make this possible.

The work of RETN, CCTV, and VCAM, supported by funds from Comcast, makes it possible for Vermonters to:

- observe the work of their elected representatives through coverage of city council meetings, school board meetings, and other official meetings
- gain access to a wide range of news and views through diverse programming
- hear local voices on a broad range of topics
- be introduced to local talent in music and art
- learn how to create video and share their work with the community

I am particularly appreciative of the funding model that has been employed in Vermont--with monies going directly from Comcast to the access organizations. I understand that in some parts of the country, this is handled differently, with funds being channeled through government agencies, putting accountability and transparency at risk.

As you review renewal of the certificate of public good for Comcast, I urge you to consider ways that the public good can be further enhanced, such as:

- requiring Comcast to include local access programming on its digital program guide, making it easier for Vermonters to find and view programs
- requiring Comcast to provide a statewide cable channel
- requiring Comcast to provide every library and school in Vermont with premium, HD cable subscriptions, as a way to help bridge the digital divide and make it possible for all Vermonters to view important programming such as the presidential debates

Thank you for your consideration, and for the work that you do on behalf of Vermont.

Sincerely,

Trina Magi  
78 Charlotte Street  
Burlington, Vermont 05401

# PSB Docket #8301

Virginia Mullen <ginny.mullen@gmail.com>

10/23/15

to psb.clerk, me

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing about RETN and the work they do in our community to help people have access to the means to create their own media. This work is crucial if we are to have an involved and intelligent citizenry. RETN's work helps to create a community of active participants rather than passive consumers of media. There is no better way to educate people about how media works and how to prepare and present interesting stories on topics of relevant concern. Beyond texts, e-mails and instagrams, the visual and moving aspect of video deepens experience for all. So much more can be communicated and conveyed.

Specifically, I write to support the continuation of such programs as the Teacher Training Workshops. I was fortunate to be part of one group. Our class learned about video production through clear presentations from skilled teachers, who were also adept in video production. The class was engaging, exciting and very worthwhile. To realize that each teacher then impacts a much larger group, speaks volumes about the benefit to community and the important role that RETN plays in increasing communication skills of Burlington's citizens.

I strongly urge you to assure the complete and continued funding of RETN. It is an essential ingredient in a well informed and well educated society. Burlington needs RETN!

Best,  
Ginny Mullen  
community Arts Educator