



**Town of Newton
Newton Cable Committee
2 Town Hall Road
Newton, NH 03858
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
Cable@newtonnh.net
August 4, 2022**

Call to Order: 6:30pm

Roll Call: Marilyn Landry, Chairwoman, Sally Woodman, Secretary; Diane Morin, Christine Kuzmitski, Patricia Masterson.

Chairwoman Landry read the following:

The Cable Committee will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, August 4, 2022 beginning at 6:30pm at the Newton Town Hall, 2 Town Hall Road, Newton, NH for the following:

The Town of Newton, NH Cable Committee is holding a public hearing on the Comcast Franchise agreement. Residents are invited to attend. A draft version of the proposed agreement is available at the Town Hall and at <https://www.newton-nh.gov/cable-committee>.

No members of the public attended the public hearing.

Ms. Morin read the following letter received from Mr. Roger Hamel of Spruce Lane into record.

Statement for the August 4, 2022 Public Hearing on the Comcast Franchise agreement.

I am Roger G Hamel. I live at 17 Spruce Lane, Newton NH.

I request that you consider reducing the Franchise Fee of 5% that is listed in the agreement. This fee (or Tax) is not paid by Comcast. It is paid by the Newton residents that subscribe to Comcast video services. Comcast collects this tax from the Newton residents that subscribe to their video service and directly remits the money to the Town of Newton. Any reduction in the Franchise Fee will appear, dollar for dollar, on the Newton residents Comcast bill.

These funds are deposited into the Cable/IT Revolving Account. This account funds IT equipment for the benefit of all Newton residents. I feel that it is not justified for Comcast subscribes to subsidize the cost of non-cable expenses. The cost of computers for the town should be borne by all Newton taxpayers.

I realize that there are some costs for equipment and operation of the cable station, so some level of Franchise Fee is justified. Shifting the cost for other IT equipment to all the Newton taxpayers would result in some increase in the Real Estate Tax rate paid by all property owners in Newton, but I feel that that is a more just allocation of the cost of running the town.

Thank you for any consideration you give this matter.
Roger G Hamel

The committee discussed Mr. Hamel's concerns and agreed that the franchise fee should be lower. Currently, the agreement with Comcast has the franchise fee at 5%.

Secretary Woodman moved to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the franchise fee for Comcast be set to 3%. Seconded by Chairwoman Landry with a unanimous vote.

Chairwoman Landry closed the public hearing at 6:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Sarah C. Woodman
Secretary**