



# Town of Concord

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## Town Officials and CCTV Board Announce Merger

CONCORD, MA— It has been nearly four months since Town Meeting voted for Town officials to reconsider a contract extension to local non-profit, Concord Carlisle Television, Inc. (CCTV) for PEG-Access Services. CCTV has been the Town's provider for Public, Educational and Governmental (PEG) Cable Access Services since its inception in 2004. Funds for the operation are provided via a Comcast surcharge fee of approximately 4.8% of the company's total revenue earned in the host community. This money, approximately \$380,000 per year for Concord and an additional \$85,000 for Carlisle as of July 2018, funds the PEG-Access operation for both communities. CCTV first began contract extension negotiations with Concord officials in 2014, pending the expiration of their 2004 10-year contract, in the hopes of continuing to provide PEG-related services for both communities.

At the time of these negotiations, the PEG operation had seen a great deal of growth – boasting five full-time, benefitted, staff members and a budget of nearly half a million dollars. The idea of merging the PEG-Access operation into Concord's fold was first proposed during that time. However, it was agreed that a three-year contract extension would be entered-into by the parties as a way for the Towns to learn more about the PEG operation and to change some of the terms of the contact in order to comply with new and changing financial and labor regulations.

Since the April 2018 Town Meeting, the Town Manager's Office Staff and Members of the Select Board have been working closely with members of the CCTV Board to set realistic goals and objectives relative to PEG-Access for Concord. Over the last several months, the parties have met in-person almost weekly in an effort to understand each other's operational constraints and to come to a mutual agreement on how best to move forward. *"The ability for the groups to sit down and discuss concerns, areas of improvement, and opinions regarding PEG services in Town has been helpful in developing a plan to move forward,"* said Chris Whelan, Town Manager.

Over the last several months, CCTV has also had to contend with some recent staff turnover – one staff member will be relocating out-of-state this coming September and a second was let go in early July. *"Given the uncertainty of CCTV's future, coupled with our lack of staff infrastructure, we realized the most practical plan for the immediate future of PEG Services was to let the contract expire September 30, 2018 as planned, and for the Town to assume the responsibility for PEG-Services effective October 1,"* said Neville Webb, CCTV President. That Town-run operation would, initially, be for a period of time between one to two years. During this time, CCTV, Inc. does not plan to disband, but rather will endeavor to work closely with the Town and the newly-appointed PEG-Access Advisory Committee (PAAC) to set

new Divisional standards for PEG-Access including updated goals, objectives and technological advancements.

Once these baseline standards are set, the Town will have a clearer picture of what is needed, and desired, from a PEG Provider. The goal, at that time, would be to issue an updated Request for Proposals (RFP) to the community at large for PEG Service. At that time, should CCTV, Inc. be inclined to submit a proposal, it would be reviewed by the Town Manager, Select Board and members of the PAAC. The PEG-operation will be managed by Assistant Town Manager Kate Hodges, in conjunction with the Public Information Office. Hodges said that she is, *“excited to work with members of the PAAC and CCTV to develop a business model and plan of action that could work to elevate PEG-Services in Town.”* Hodges further stated that she will rely heavily on Public Information Officer, Erin Stevens, for content ideas and development given Erin’s expertise and success in this area since her hire in September of 2017.

The PAAC meetings are publicized on the Town’s Website and are open to the public should any member of the community wish to offer feedback, suggestions or ideas regarding the Town’s plan for a PEG-Access Division. The committee’s general email for those who wish to correspond with them in this fashion is: [paac@concordma.gov](mailto:paac@concordma.gov).

For more information on Product:  
[www.concordma.gov](http://www.concordma.gov)

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