

CTTAB  
June 14, 2011  
Office of Cable Communications, Director's Report

**Public Access Update:** On Wednesday June 15, the Energy, Technology and Civil Rights Committee will act on legislation authorizing the CTO to enter into an agreement with the Seattle Community Colleges to provide public access television services. Passage of the legislation by full Council is expected on June 20. If approved by Council, SCCtv will begin cablecasting public access programming on July 1.

**Legislation re. Public Access Building:** The Council passed legislation allowing DoIT to accept ownership of the building formerly used by SCAN to provide public access services.

**Broadstripe Cure Plan:** According to data submitted by Broadstripe they are now half way through the cure plan. The latest data reveal that they have corrected 4316 violations.

**Broadstripe Internet Tax:** Broadstripe has mailed refunds (including interest) to all its subscribers that were erroneously assessed a tax on Internet service. In about 3 months we will return to ask CTTAB for ideas on what to do with any money that could not be refunded for any reason.

**MDU seminar:** The seminar for apartment buildings owners and managers and condominium association presidents was a great success. Thirty four people attended, representing approximately 50,000 Seattle households. The majority of them were currently in negotiations with the cable operators to renew agreements. They found the information presented to be very helpful. The seminar was recorded and the video will be available on our website soon.

**Comcast Rate Increases:** Comcast is going to increase its rates for cable and internet service and most equipment effective July 1. What is notable is that for the first time that I can remember they are increasing the cost of Internet service (by about 7%). Comcast usually justifies cable rate increases on increased programming costs that it passes on to subscribers. There are no such costs for Internet service and there could be no justification for such an increase because the cost of transmitting a bit of data over an optical network decreases by half every nine months (Butters' Law of Photonics). The limited basic rate for cable will remain at \$13.73, however; rates for other tiers will increase by about 5%.

**Meeting w/Century Link:** We met with representatives from CenturyLink to get acquainted and to learn more about CenturyLink's plans for Seattle. CenturyLink has retained the local Qwest staff and empowered local staff with greater decision-making authority. They are very interested in working with the City to see if they can obtain some modifications to the SDOT directors' rule pertaining to above-ground utility cabinets in residential areas. They continue to assert that the rule inhibits their ability to invest in broadband infrastructure in Seattle. If CTTAB is interested we can provide a presentation about the differences between Cable HFC infrastructure and Telco xDSL infrastructure and their respective capabilities.

**Meeting w/ Departments re. FCC ROW NOI:** We met last week with a national telecom law expert and staff from SCL, SDOT, SPU and DPD to review the FCC's notice of inquiry relating

to right of way practices and tower siting decisions. We expect to participate in a joint filing with other Washington jurisdictions.

**Cable Office Video:** Cable Office staff completed a Public Service Announcement about the services provided by the Cable Office. The PSA is running on the Seattle Channel and is also available at our website: [www.seattle.gov/cable](http://www.seattle.gov/cable).

**Privacy statement and CCBOR notices:** Last week Comcast sent to all subscribers the Privacy notices required by Federal and Seattle law. Seattle's privacy provisions are more stringent and apply to Internet as well as cable service. It also requires the operators to include a self-addressed, stamped postcard that subscribers can use to opt out of any disclosure by Comcast of their name and address for marketing purposes. Comcast must also provide an insert that explains the additional protections accorded to subscribers by the City.