

MetroVision makes plea for SWOCC approval

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

If progress can be measured by who shows up at the meetings, SWOCC was successful in one sense.

MetroVision President Henry Harris came from Atlanta to argue that the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission (SWOCC) approve the pending transfer of ownership from Newhouse to Time Warner Entertainment Advance Newhouse. The merger is official April 1.

Harris was able to shed little insight on the merger or provide

information SWOCC said it needs to grant approval the transfer. SWOCC tabled the matter until its April 4 meeting. The original March 1 deadline has been extended.

More than 70 percent of the cities have approved the transfer, including Livonia. SWOCC — which represents Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi — has not.

In particular, SWOCC's consultant Cable Television Information Center would like to see Newhouse's certificates of earning before taxes and TWEAN's long-

term strategic plan.

"To be honest with you, we've given (consultant) Mr. (Ed) Schaefer everything that is available," Harris said. "He is asking for items that are just not available."

SWOCC officials are worried MetroVision — and its 30,000 subscribers locally — will be shunted off to another owner. They also want assurances the system will be upgraded as the franchise agreement stipulates.

MetroVision's president could do little to quell their concerns.

"You yourself just said you have never met the Time Warner

people before a few days ago," Hills City Manager Bill Costick said. "What kind of deal are we getting into?"

SWOCC also wants MetroVision to bear the costs of the transfer agreement.

The commission has spent \$24,000 on a consultant, specifically to handle the transfer. Attorney fees are not included in that figure, SWOCC director Karen Collins said.

"It seems to me it's totally legitimate that the person making the request for a transfer should pay for this," Costick said.

Those expenses should be covered in franchise fees already paid to SWOCC, Harris said.

"(The consultant's) what's keeping our deal from getting done," Harris added.

More than 400 municipalities have already approved the transfer with little problem, Harris

said. He also mentioned Livonia OK'd the transfer recently. Said SWOCC chairman and Farmington City Council member Bill Hartsock: "I'm sure a lot of those franchisees didn't have a cable commission or a consultant. I'm sure for some of them it was an automatic process."

CARRIER OF THE MONTH: FARMINGTON

Nick Tomoff, 12, delivers the Farmington Observer in the Farmington Ridge subdivision. He has been delivering the paper about 3½ years.

The Walled Lake Middle School 7th grader's favorite subjects are math and geography.

His hobby is playing sports with friends. He holds the mile run record at Maple Elementary in sixth grade.

He plans to go to college and would like to become an engineer. Being organized and being on time are some of the skills he has developed on his route.

If you want to be a Farmington Observer carrier, please call 591-6500



Nick Tomoff

Cable commission to take a long look at transfer

CABLE CONNECTION



KAREN COLLINS

Those are two words you may have heard quite a bit around our SWOCC office. And right now we are in the middle of both. But, what do they mean? You may have read that Newhouse (MetroVision's parent company) is merging with Time Warner. Even though you may only be concerned that you get your favorite program when you turn on your TV set, under FCC guidelines our communities have a right to accept or deny this "transfer." It is our obligation as a commission to thoroughly review all aspects of the transfer to assure that the public interest is not ill-served.

Most importantly, since we will be dealing with a new company we want to be sure that all the obligations made by the old company are satisfied before we move forward.

Then we have the "renewal" to deal with. In the renewal, we look at a new contract for cable services. Many have asked, "Why don't we just bring in a new company?" The Cable Act of 1992 puts many restrictions on this. You can deny a renewal to a cable operator if it fails to meet one of four requirements listed in the Act. Fortunately, MetroVision has performed at a level above those stipulations.

In addition to those benefits we now enjoy in the present contract, we want to include provisions for technology and services for each of our three cities in the future.

Our contract with MetroVision expires in May 1997, but we've already begun the process by hiring a consultant, CTC Associates, affiliated with the Cable Television Information Center. And they've already prepared a financial and technical audit of MetroVision.

In January, we hosted city council members from Novi, Farmington and Farmington Hills here at our SWOCC/Info TV-12 studio. Our consultant, Harold Horn, was on hand to give every one an overview of the renewal and transfer process and to present his firm's initial findings. This is important since city councils will eventually vote on this renewal contract and ordinance.

Right now, Wayne State University is conducting a telephone survey of subscribers and non-subscribers. Then we'll hold public hearings (hopefully in late spring) before we pull it all together and draft a franchise agreement.

Sounds complicated, right? Well, there is a lot of information to pull together and we do want your input, so keep an eye on the bulletin board in our SWOCC/Info TV-12 office or your local newspaper for public meeting notices.

Karen Collins is the executive director of the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission.

CHANNEL 12 Monday, March 13

- 10 a.m. — Volunteers
- 11 a.m. — Coffee and conversation: makeover
- Noon — Farmington Hills Police Journal
- 12:30 p.m. — See it on two wheels
- 1 p.m. — Seniors on the move
- 1:30 p.m. — The word of life: the truth about death
- 2 p.m. — Novi talkin' history: Novi's first city council
- 3 p.m. — Cash talks: Novi fire station
- 4 p.m. — Motorsports: racing at Bonnevill
- 6 p.m. — Farmington Hills Fire Department: hot stove
- 6:30 p.m. — Eagle and talk with Tracy and Phil
- 7 p.m. — Multicultural/multiracial community council: annual workshop
- 8:30 p.m. — Scrabble world
- 9 p.m. — A bit of Ireland
- 9:30 p.m. — Groove session.

Tuesday, March 14

- 10 a.m. — A bit of Ireland
- 10:30 a.m. — Novi 1995 state of the cities
- 11 a.m. — Summit University
- Noon — Adventures with Pirate Pete
- 12:30 p.m. — The Great Escape: sailing
- 1:30 p.m. — Praise, praise, praise
- 2 p.m. — Salon glamour and etiquette with Gloria
- 3 p.m. — Good health: asthma
- 3:30 p.m. — Farmington Focus: Farmington Historical museum
- 4 p.m. — Eric Johnson's Detroit ballet
- 5:30 p.m. — Living with your additions
- 6 p.m. — Seniors on the move
- 6:30 p.m. — Business and residential news
- 7 p.m. — Car talks
- 7:30 p.m. — Viewpoint
- 8 p.m. — Salon glamour and etiquette with Gloria
- 9 p.m. — Let's talk with Ben Marks

Wednesday, March 15

- 10 a.m. — Capitol report
- 10:30 a.m. — Madonna magazine
- 11 a.m. — Study in scripture
- 11:30 a.m. — Amvets
- Noon — The way the truth and the life
- 12:30 p.m. — That's Italian
- 1 p.m. — Rising tide
- 2 p.m. — My Russian friend: family
- 2:30 p.m. — Paws with a cause
- 3 p.m. — Reading recovery program
- 4 p.m. — Crisis in the modern family
- 5 p.m. — Impact video
- 5:30 p.m. — Groove session
- 6 p.m. — Senior messenger
- 7 p.m. — The word of life: the truth about death
- 7:30 p.m. — My Russian friend: family
- 8 p.m. — Women on the move: Linda Heard
- 8:30 p.m. — Lansing Connection
- 9 p.m. — Speakers row

Thursday, March 16

- 10 a.m. — Farmington Musical: Zip A Dee Doo Dah

A scholarship gave me the chance to soar with the eagles



Tony Cowser got through college on scholarships, beginning with one at OCC. Tony was the very first recipient of the OCC Pontiac Center Community Scholarship — a start that enabled him to earn a four-year degree and land a great job in advertising. Today, he's an important player on the Bozell Advertising team working on the Jeep Eagle account — and is flying fast up the career ladder.



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