



TOWN OF HOLLAND

Select Board

27 Sturbridge Road
Bettina Schmidt - Chair
Lawrence Mandell - Member
Ernest Fancy - Member

October 2, 2018

Holland, Massachusetts 01521

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Janine C. Drake - Town Administrator

Shonda Green, Secretary
Department of Telecommunications and Cable
100 Washington St.
Boston MA 02118-6500

Re: Public Hearing on Cable Television Rates 10/30/18 Cox Cable/Holland MA
D.T.C. 17-7

Dear Ms. Greene:

In response to your request for written responses to the proposed cable rate increase, the Select Board of Holland would like to provide the following:

With the understanding that as cable company costs increase, these costs may be passed on to the consumer. As a result, we are not necessarily opposed to the proposed increase. Our issue is that since 2015 with one increase already imposed, and this second increase pending, there has been no perceptible increases in service. To the contrary we have seen a reduction in service.

We had addressed this issue in 2015 during the last rate increase but we feel that as fiduciaries to the town, we have the responsibility to re-visit this. Specifically, in 2014 Cox eliminated WBZ as an available channel option that they had been providing to our town for many years. During the last rate increase hearing, the town of Holland provided the commission a petition signed by over 300 residents supporting a request to have Cox restore this channel.

A Boston station is a critical link between our town and our state capital. News from the Boston area is essential to our residents in our ability to obtain information and an understanding of what is going on in our area. News, sports and weather from Boston have a direct impact on what is happening in our town.

Although, Holland is technically in Hampden County, we border Worcester County. As a result, the preponderance of our political and social orientation is

Boston, not Springfield. For Cox to deny us at least one channel with access to the Boston market prevents town residents from obtaining information that is relevant to their day-to-day lives.

Our understanding is that generally speaking, television market access is an FCC issue and not under the jurisdiction of the Department of Telecommunications and Cable. That being said, the town in the past has had access to at least one Boston channel so there must be a procedure in place to grant an occasional exception to the general guidelines.

If in fact you approve the proposed increase, we ask the Department to look into this issue and exert whatever influence that you have in including a requirement of having Cox once again provide Holland access to at least one Boston channel.

Respectfully,

Holland Select Board by:



Bettina Schmidt



Larry Mandell



Ernest Fancy