

BOS 9/25 (3)

Maryjane Kenney

From: elisabeth colleran [elisabeth.colleran@verizon.net]
Sent: Sunday, September 24, 2006 7:03 PM
To: Board of Selectmen; Cable Advisory Committee
Subject: Verizon Fios

To: The Board of Selectmen,

I have carefully watched the development of potential competition for video services. As you are probably aware, not everyone in town is pleased with the price/value/service relationship offered by Comcast. I was very excited to see Verizon spending the significant amount of capital required to upgrade our local infrastructure to offer a competitive product. Last winter I had FIOS broadband installed, as did over half of the houses on my road, and have eagerly awaited the arrival of the video product. Thursday, I was interested to see that Boxborough had approved a video franchise for their town.

It is my understanding that the Selectman do not intend to approve the Verizon Franchise request in light of the senior discount issue. While I certainly support providing elders in need with assistance, I would like to highlight the significant benefit that competition **will bring to the entire town as well as senior citizens**. As you are probably aware, even the threat of competition has already resulted in some changes in behavior from our current monopoly provider. We had a Comcast representative going door-to-door in our neighborhood recently offering their triple-play bundle at an attractive rate and our recent Comcast bill offers a price discount for a 2-year contract. My concern is that without approval of the Verizon application this competitive behavior will quickly abate. I am sure you are aware that the rates for Verizon's video offering are significantly less than Comcast. And, the service is at least as good, if not better (someone I work with lives in Winchester, where the video product is offered). The service prices are very easy to compare. From the Verizon website the FIOS Premier Package that includes a long line-up of channels, costs \$39.95 and the Standard Box is \$3.95. This compares to the \$4.5 per cable box provided by Comcast as well as the \$48.90 we pay a month for Standard Cable. Since the senior citizen discount is \$5.2 for Comcast's Standard package, I frankly can not understand how the potential \$9.50 (\$8.95 pricing difference on the service and the \$.55 for the box) savings per month is not more and would not benefit senior citizens as well as the entire community.

According to the Verizon press release announcing the Boxborough franchise, Boxborough, Burlington, Hamilton, Ipswich, Lynnfield, North Reading, Reading, Stoneham, Tewksbury, Wakefield, Wenham, Winchester and Woburn have granted franchises. In these towns, according to my numbers above all residents, including seniors, have the opportunity to save \$114.00 annually compared to the \$62.4 available annually to seniors in Acton. Competitive response from Comcast should quickly result in video prices across Acton coming down.

I urge the Selectman to move forward in providing Acton residents access to the benefits of competitive video services.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth Sannicandro
Guswood Road

One follow up question: Are minutes from Board of Selectman meetings posted to the town website? I do not see any recent postings.