

Michigan Chapter – December 2007

- 1) Following last month's announcement from Comcast that it plans to move PEG channels to the 900 tier requiring a digital converter, Mi-NATOA sent Comcast a letter asking for more explanation. After receiving the reply, a meeting was held with Mi-NATOA leadership and Comcast representatives. Although they remain adamant that this change will happen on Jan. 15, they did agree to look into some of the issues we raised. Pending Comcast's response, Michigan communities are investigating their options. Several municipalities did pass resolutions opposing the move.
- 2) The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) sent a survey out to some communities asking for feedback on the state law so they can prepare their report for the legislature (one year anniversary of the law). Once Mi-NATOA realized that not all communities were included in this mailing, we tried to work with the Michigan Municipal League and Michigan Townships to get the word out. MTA followed with additional information on their website but the turnaround time was too short for much more than this (surveys are due Dec. 31). Michigan NATOA also distributed the survey and suggested responses on its website and through a member mailing.
- 3) Not much action on the AT&T front regarding PEG, Clinton Township is still the only municipality to offer PEG on AT&T as a test.
- 4) Member cities have received small franchise fee checks for second and third quarters from AT&T. Since the state law requires cities to fill in the blank regarding PEG fees (over the 5% franchise fee), several entities dollarized the PEG contributions from the incumbent and noted a fee above 2 percent. AT&T disputed this but in a meeting with one city, agreed to continue to pay this amount for the time being.
- 5) Michigan NATOA met with Michigan's Alliance for Community Media to attempt to work together on the myriad of issues bombarding us. Alas, we are finding our resources are sparse and our top priorities are not necessarily identical, although we share concerns about all the same issues.