

CableViews

Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association

Issue 3 2016

OCTA Annual Meeting Will Mark 50th Anniversary



The Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association's annual meeting will combine a celebration of the past with an eye toward the future as the OCTA marks its 50th anniversary.

The annual meeting, to be held Oct. 13 at the Longaberger Alumni House on the campus of The Ohio State University

in Columbus, will honor Ohio's cable pioneers and examine current and future trends in the industry.

Among the highlights will be a visit from Ohio Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor, who will be speaking during the government affairs breakfast. Among her duties is leading Ohio's "Common Sense Initiative," which is designed to help create a more jobs-friendly regulatory environment in Ohio. Taylor, a Republican from northeast Ohio, is Ohio's 65th lieutenant governor and she also serves as director of the Ohio Department of Insurance.

Fittingly, another highlight of OCTA's 50th annual meeting will be a panel discussion featuring several Ohio cable pioneers:

- **Steve Fry** – From his days on the frontlines to key positions in the rollout of new technology, Steve Fry has seen the evolution of the cable industry. He began his career as an installer in Canton in 1970 and moved to Columbus three years later with Warner Cable as part of the new build project. In 1977, he was director of tech ops for the rollout of Qube, the first interactive network in Columbus. Fry moved to Akron as general manager in 1981 and became president of the Northeast Ohio/Western Pennsylvania Division of Time Warner upon its creation in 1990. He oversaw the national debut of Road Runner High Speed Online with the rollout in Akron in 1996. He retired from TWC in 2009.

- **Dan Helmick** – Before retiring in 2015, Dan Helmick spent more than 30 years shaping public policy in both the legislative and regulatory realms at the local, state and federal levels, where he was a respected and knowledgeable advocate. Notably, he was the Ohio Cable Telecommunication Association's first full-time executive director, serving from 1980 to 1988. A Cincinnati native who earned his bachelor's at Xavier University and his MBA at The Ohio State University, Helmick also worked for Cincinnati Bell Telephone and then as a regional vice president for Sprint. In 2005, he joined the law firm of Ice Miller, where he provided government affairs advice and support to multiple clients at the state and local level.

- **David Huey** – Following an extensive and successful tenure in business and community service, David Huey in 1985 became an executive vice president at Buckeye CableSystem. In 1990 he was promoted to president and general manager. Among the changes during his tenure were the launch of high speed internet and telephone. In 2002, he was promoted to Buckeye's parent company, Block Communications, where he became

president and chief operating officer. He retired in September 2007.

- **Virgil Reed** – Virgil Reed retired in 2006 as President, Southwest Ohio Division, for Time Warner Cable, following 30 years in general management and executive positions in the cable television industry. Reed was actively involved in the community, earning numerous awards including Women in Cable's Accolade of the Year for his work in promoting the advancement of women in executive positions in the cable television industry. Among his other honors, he received the Time Warner Cable Civic Leadership Award and was inducted into the Midwest Cable Television Hall of Fame. Among his activities today, Reed volunteers as a policy advocate for AARP, specializing in utility issues and advocacy for Social Security and Medicare at the State and Federal levels of government.



Steve Fry



Dan Helmick



David Huey



Virgil Reed

Retired OCTA Communications Director Maryann Kafer will be the moderator.

The annual meeting will also feature a discussion on the future of cable moderated by industry veteran Steve Effros, a consultant who works with cable and internet companies.

Panelists for the discussion will be Katherine Gessner of MCTV, Ken Ashley of Armstrong and Sean Brushett of Buckeye Broadband.

The day will also include a keynote address from Charter Communications, state and federal government affairs and regulatory updates, as well as speed networking and Women in Cable Telecommunications breakout sessions.

The Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association extends a special thank you to this year's annual meeting planning committee: Bob Gessner, MCTV; Ed Niemi, MAVTV; Bonita Ash, Buckeye Broadband; Megan Lashutka, Charter Communications; Chris Thomas, Charter Communications; Sam Pietrangelo, Armstrong; Stephanie Shawler, Charter Communications and Women in Cable Telecommunications.

Face **to** Face

with Asim Haque, Chairman, PUCO

Asim Z. Haque was appointed to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio in 2013 by Governor John Kasich, who early this year reappointed Haque to a five-year term and tapped him as chairman, replacing Andre Porter.

An attorney, Haque began his professional career at a large general practice firm in Columbus where he represented a broad spectrum of clients in energy and utility matters. He went on to serve as internal legal counsel for a global auto manufacturer, a role he held immediately prior to his appointment to the Commission.

Haque has represented Ohio's interests in energy and utility matters within the state, nationally and internationally. He has testified before members of the Ohio General Assembly, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and has educated regulators abroad through formal partnerships with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Haque is heavily involved in the community. He is the immediate past president of the board of directors of the non-profit organization Community Research Partners. He is also the immediate past president of The Columbus Academy Alumni Board, and has served on the board of trustees of The Columbus Academy. Additionally, he is a graduate of the FBI Citizens Academy, and was a long-time mentor in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters school-based mentor program.

Haque is a graduate of Case Western Reserve University where he received a bachelor's degree in chemistry and political science, graduating cum laude with department honors. He received his juris doctorate from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, and received the Outstanding Recent Alumnus Award from Moritz in 2015.

Haque resides in Columbus with his wife, Dr. Huma Ansari Haque, and their son, Laith.



Jonathon McGee: You served on the commission for several years prior to becoming chairman. How has that experience prepared you for the chairmanship?

Asim Haque: More than anything, being a member of the commission has helped build up my knowledge of the issues. I think it is really hard to do this job if you come in cold. I came in with a few years of litigation experience but never a deep immersion in the issues, so to be able to have three years where I was just deeply immersed in all of the issues, all of the cases, learning on a day-to-day basis from staff and from all of the interveners and stakeholders, I think it has really prepared me for the job.

JM: As chairman, you are not just a member of the commission, you are also the chief executive officer of the agency. What have been some of the biggest adjustments and challenges for you in that aspect of your new role?

AH: How I have to manage my time and my daily schedule is different now that I have to captain things like the budget and stay up-to-date on what's going on with HR and, frankly, just the lead on how orders initially come out to the rest of the commission. It's a much heavier lift if you want to be successful as the chairman. I think you need to chart a path and figure out what you want your legacy to be. I want to, first and foremost, create an environment of total inclusion. Everybody that comes here, they know they will get a fair shake. If you are an intervener here, you get a fair shake and

Fast Facts:

Favorite Team Colors: Gold with Maroon & Gray (Columbus Academy)

Last Movie Seen: "Star Trek Beyond"

Currently Reading: Briefs, testimony, dockets, trade press, everything associated with these lovely industries that we regulate here

Favorite Cable Channel: HBO

Quote to Live By: "We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

a very independent, non-partisan, fact-based, data-based, law-based rubric of decision making. Not that this wasn't what this place is or has been perceived to be, but under my leadership, that's where I would like to start.

JM: When you were sworn in, you commented on the importance of finding "mutual solutions" and working cooperatively with the diverse range of those with issues before the commission. As a leader and policymaker, how do you approach these complex issues to find solutions?

AH: It's hard. It's hard here at the commission because every stakeholder is represented typically by counsel and they represent different segments of their respective industries.

Continued on Page 5

Capital Update

Legislative Update

Derickson and McClain Resign: On the heels of filling a pair of vacant seats in the Ohio House of Representatives, House Republicans have two new vacancies.

Tim Derickson, a Republican from Butler County, announced Aug. 16 that he would be stepping down from the 53rd District seat to become executive director of the Ohio Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors, which licenses and regulates embalmers, funeral directors and funeral homes.

Meanwhile, Jeff McClain, R-Upper Sandusky, will become the Ohio Chamber of Commerce's director of tax and economic policy. McClain recently announced his resignation, which takes effect Oct. 2. The 87th District he represented covers Crawford, Morrow and Wyandot counties, and parts of Seneca and Marion counties.

Both Derickson and McClain were unable to seek re-election due to term limits. Their terms expire at year's end and House Republicans are responsible for choosing a successor for the remainder of their terms. Both seats lean Republican. There are two candidates running for Derickson's seat this fall: Republican Candice Keller and Democrat Suzi Rubin. Wes Goodman, R-Cardington, is running unopposed for McClain's seat.

PUCO Update

Pole Attachment Proceedings: The PUCO has now issued decisions in all of the pole tariff cases in which the OCTA intervened. Most recently, the commission issued orders in the remaining four cases effecting the six investor owned electric utility companies' tariffs. The OCTA has reviewed these decisions, and, except for a minor issue in the DP&L case, will not seek rehearing on the decisions. For details on any of these cases, including the new rates, please see the tracking spreadsheet posted on the OCTA website in the Members Only section at www.OCTA.org.

IP Transition Collaborative: As part of the ILEC deregulation provisions of House Bill 64, a collaborative process was created to study the IP transition and to assist the PUCO when an ILEC is preparing to abandon BLES service. The collaborative has been meeting since late last year. It is now scheduled to meet again on Oct. 4, at which time the PUCO staff is expected to present their preliminary report to the General Assembly on the information it has gathered from the collaborative process. Look for a report on this meeting in the October Capital Update.

Ohio Cable★PAC

Ohio Cable Political Action Committee

Company Participation

(January 1 – September 7, 2016)

Company	Amount Raised	Goal
Armstrong Cable	\$2,496	\$2,496
Buckeye Cable System	\$2,575	\$10,972
Comcast	\$2,500	\$1,430
Cox Communications	\$115	\$3,068
G.L.W. Broadband	\$0	\$400
MCTV	\$25,000	\$3,270
Suddenlink	\$0	\$1,400
Total	\$32,686	\$23,036

Individual Contributions

Broadband Express LLC
Dan Kanaan

Buckeye Broadband
Brad Mefferd
Rick Mlcek
Geoff Shook
Keith Wilkowski

OCTA
Jonathon McGee

Precision Broadband Installation
Chris Steingier

Ohio Cable Represented At Conventions

Ohio's cable industry was well-represented in both Cleveland and Philadelphia for this year's Republican and Democratic national conventions.

Among the many highlights was hearing from Steve Scully, C-SPAN's veteran political editor and senior executive producer, on the important role cable has in covering the conventions.

Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association Executive Director Jonathon McGee said the conventions were an opportunity for the cable representatives to meet with lawmakers and key officials.



C-SPAN's Peter Kiley (left), vice president, affiliate relations, with Gary Underwood, regional vice president – government affairs for Charter Communications, at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.

Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association Executive Director Jonathon McGee with Charter Communications Regional Senior Director, Government Affairs Megan Lashutka at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland.

Report Details Costly Miscues of Government-Owned Networks

We at the Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association have long had concerns with government-owned telecommunications networks.

Local governments in Ohio and across America are well-positioned for many important responsibilities, but are simply not designed or equipped to keep pace with rapid technological advancements in the telecommunications arena.

Diverting tax dollars from important health, safety and education priorities to develop and deploy an advanced communications network is just bad public policy – and, as a new report from the Taxpayer Protection Alliance shows, there are costly consequences for taxpayers as well.

This report, appropriately titled "THE DIRTY DOZEN: Examining the Failure of America's Biggest & Most Infamous Taxpayer-Funded Broadband Networks," details the cost overruns, credit rating downgrades and outdated technology associated with these efforts – and all with the taxpayers footing the bill.

Individually, the "Dirty Dozen" serve as cautionary tales of government miscues. Collectively, these failures have cost the public more than \$2 billion and illustrate a larger pattern of failed government-owned internet networks.

In Utah, for example, the iProvo network was plagued by financial difficulties and rapidly-aging technology. Ultimately, Google bought the system for \$1, agreed to take over the city's remaining bond payments and pledged to update



the outmoded network. And in Memphis, residents lost \$20.5 million after Memphis Networkx collapsed.

"By any objective measure," the report says, "the growth of municipal broadband networks has been one of the most disastrous movements to hit local and state governments in decades. Government internet projects unnecessarily put tax dollars at risk, needlessly reduce the resources available for valuable government services and unfairly compete against private businesses in the marketplace."

A national survey conducted for the Taxpayers Protection Alliance by Public Opinion Strategies, one of the nation's leading public opinion research firms, found that across the political spectrum, voters oppose local governments incurring debt to build their own high speed networks. In fact, the survey found nearly two-thirds of respondents (64 percent opposed with 48 percent of those strongly opposed) would not support their local government going into debt so that it could sell high speed internet access directly to consumers.

State policymakers in Ohio play an important role in enhancing connectivity and the cable industry, as the dominant broadband provider, stands ready to work with them and their communities in meeting their needs. However, throwing taxpayer dollars at government owned networks is not the solution.

A copy of the report can be found here: bit.ly/TPADirtyDozenReport

So, it is often times challenging to derive mutual solutions when there are so many disparate voices out there. I'll just use a very basic analogy. So, you have a pie and 10 pieces of that pie are cut. If there are 25 people that want pie, then that's a very challenging environment to work within. So, what I would say is, I don't necessarily know why everyone can't have a few bites of the pie, so long as it's what's right for the public benefit for the State of Ohio. I just want the stakeholders that typically intervene here, typically get involved in cases here, I want them to start thinking about what's best for the state as a whole as opposed to just a "put their flag in the ground, draw the line" advocacy position. Because in the end, I guess this goes back to my MLK quote, in the end we are all in this together. There will always be disparate financial interests and that then goes to the pie analogy, which is, "I think there is a way for a lot of folks to succeed here all at once."

JM: You earned your law degree from The Ohio State University and last year you received the Outstanding Alumnus Award. What drew you to the law?

AH: I remember writing my law school admissions essay about how I have had no epiphany that I should go to law school. And I remember giving it to one of my college professors and that professor saying, "You're playing a dangerous game here." The essay was about how I don't necessarily know that I will be a legal practitioner my entire career, but what I know is that I like to research and write. I was told that my writing had a lot of clarity to it and I was always very good on my feet and was always a good advocate. So, I picked the career path or the degree that most fit my skill set. I'm also one of these people that, I won't feel good about what I'm doing or where I'm at unless I feel like I'm one of the better people in that crop. I'll give you an example. I was a dual major in college. I was a chemistry/political science double major. I did chemistry primarily because my father is a physicist and he wanted someone in the family to at least be a hard science major, but in part it was because I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. So, about 75 percent of my overall effort in college went to trying to maintain a B average in chemistry and 25 percent went into my A-plus average in political science. When I looked around in my physical chemistry lab, my six-hour physical chemistry lab, my senior year, second semester, I was the worst student in that class. So I said to myself, you have to make a choice here. You are part of a select few that has made it this far at a science school so you can do this or you can chose to do something where, if you work hard enough, you can probably excel. So, I chose the law. No grand jurist epiphany. I did not have a Supreme Court justice idol. But, it fit my skill set and my personality is whatever I do I would like to be considered one of the better folks in the field.

JM: Tell us a little bit about your family. I understand that your wife is a physician and you have one child. Tell us a little bit about them.

AH: My wife does the Lord's work. She is a palliative care physician. So, she deals with end of life care. It's one of those things where I don't think that I could do it but I'm glad that someone is doing it. She is a very sweet person, a very kind person and so she's got the bedside manner for it and she likes working with families. I've got a little guy less than two

years old and hopefully more in the future. I was born and raised in Columbus, so my parents are close by as well.

JM: Did you meet your wife here in Columbus?

AH: We met through the vast network of what I will call the "India aunties and uncles." She was doing her residency in Dayton at Wright State and I was working in downtown Columbus, and we had a parent's friend say, "Hey, there's this girl over here, you should go take her out." And of course, one thing led to another and we got married and we spent three years in Springfield, with me commuting to Columbus and her commuting to Dayton every day.

JM: What hobbies or interests do you enjoy in your spare time?

AH: They are very, very simple. I'm totally family-oriented. So, any opportunity that I can get to spend quality family time, I will. I am a pretty avid sports fan, so the Olympics were on every night. Cloud nine with the Cleveland Cavs victory. Big Buckeyes fan. Would like to see the Blue Jackets make the playoffs.

JM: I know that you played football and basketball, and ran track, at Columbus Academy, and you were a Columbus Dispatch Scholar-Athlete honoree. Are there any current sports-related activities that you participate in?

AH: Honestly, I loved playing sports. I was the neighborhood kid who was outside with his buddies all summer, missing in action, playing sports my entire life, loved to compete. And then I would say, probably when I got married or a few years before that, I just shut down. I don't play anything anymore. Actually, I do love to play pick-up basketball but I tore my hamstring like three times in a row over a span of two years and I just hung it up. I really loved playing basketball. I get very nostalgic going into a high school or small college gym.

JM: Do you have any advice for the cable industry?

AH: Listen, you guys know your industry far better than I know your industry. When we are talking about offering services, not only your industry but all industries – even competitive retailers, electric, gas – I think there is an opportunity to potentially offer services that are beyond what you would consider to be traditional services. Just thinking outside of the box for your consumer and who they are and what their demands are. I don't want industries, especially competitive industries, to get complacent with offerings. They should constantly be thinking about what their customers are interested in, and it changes massively among different demographic groups. I think that in order to really make these industries work to the benefit of consumers, this kind of outside the box thinking to match consumer demand in all of these different demographics is really the key.

Read more *Face to Face* interviews online.
Click on *CableViews* at www.octa.org



Cable Calendar

Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association 2016 Annual Meeting

www.octa.org/annualmeeting

When: Oct. 13, 2016

Where: Longaberger Alumni House
Columbus, OH

ALEC State & Nation Policy Summit

www.alec.org

When: Nov. 30 – Dec. 2, 2016

Where: Grand Hyatt
Washington, DC

CTAM Think

www.ctam.com

When: Nov. 2, 2016

Where: Convene
New York, NY

NCSL Capitol Forum

www.ncsl.org

When: Dec. 6-9, 2016

Where: Marriott Wardman Park Hotel
Washington, DC

NARUC 128th Annual Meeting

www.narucmeetings.org

When: Nov. 13-16, 2016

Where: La Quinta Resort and Club
La Quinta, CA

SCTE Penn-Ohio Chapter Training Seminar

www.pennohioscte.org

When: Nov. 17, 2016

Where: Comfort Inn & Suites
Pittsburgh, PA

SAVE THE DATES! 2017 OCTA EVENTS

March 1 – Legislative Luncheon

May 23 – Legislative Reception

June 12 – Golf Outing

For all the latest news and events updates, OCTA members can sign up to receive our weekly broadcast email bulletin. Contact abarowman@octa.org to subscribe.

www.octa.org

172 E. State St., Suite 302
Columbus, OH 43215

