

**COMMUNITY ASCERTAINMENT  
AND  
FRANCHISE RENEWAL  
SERVICES**

**2010**

**COPEN & LIND**  
CONSULTING

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## Community Ascertainment and Franchise Renewal Services

Copen & Lind Cable/Access Consultants provide municipalities with overall assistance in performing Community Needs Ascertainments and Franchise Renewal Negotiations. Our firm takes a comprehensive approach to franchise renewal and community ascertainment to provide a thorough and realistic evaluation of the community's current and future cable-related communications needs.

Cable communications are becoming an integral part of any community's economic and cultural infrastructure. The franchise renewal is an opportunity for municipalities to assess and obtain those important communication services, in exchange for the use of the public right-of-ways, over the term of the new franchise. Copen & Lind work closely with the municipality in all phases of franchise renewal including:

- Multi-community unified renewals;
- Franchise document review and compliance analysis;
- Technical assessment and cable plant review;
- Recommendations for system architecture, capacity, capability, construction timetable and other technological characteristics of the cable system;
- Identification of future municipal and educational cable-related interests and needs such as: distance learning, I-Nets, data transmission, access to the InterNet, and other telecommunications infrastructure needs;
- PEG access evaluation including assessment of current and future operational, capital, facility and equipment recommendations;
- Assessment of possible changes in customer service policies and practices;
- Financial impact projections;
- Updating of local cable/telecommunications ordinances;

- Community needs ascertainments including subscriber surveys, interviews and community focus groups, with questionnaires, for educators, government representatives, producers, viewers and nonprofit organizations;
- Ascertainment Report and Telecommunications Vision Plan creation;
- Development of the Request for Renewal Proposal (RFRP) and the “model” Cable Franchise Contract;
- Workshops with Cable Advisory Boards and Municipal Governments to establish the renewal team structure and guidelines for periodic updates throughout the process, and;
- Negotiating, along with the local negotiating team, the final Cable Contract with the cable provider.

## **Personnel Biographies**

### **Gennah Copen**

Gennah Copen has worked in cable communications since 1981. She has served as board member and then Executive Director for The Center for Community Access Television at Amherst. She was a national board member and the Northeast Region chair for the Alliance for Community Media (formally NFLCP). As a consultant and general partner in the firm of Copen & Lind Cable/ Access Consultants she works with city and town governments, telecommunication regulators, educators, access boards and cable committees. Her areas of expertise include: community needs assessments through surveys, interviews, focus groups, document review, compliance analysis, and franchise contract negotiations; access startup, planning, evaluation, executive director searches, performance management agreements, and management consulting; as well as access facility site surveys, renovation estimates, design and site and contractor negotiations.

### **Paul Lind**

Paul Lind is an Electronic and Broadcast Engineer with an extensive background in computers, video and cable communications. With more than 20 years experience in these fields and as a general partner in the

firm of Copen & Lind Cable/ Access Consultants he regularly works with governments, corporations, access/ media centers, schools and universities consulting on cable communications, management issues, RFRP creation and refranchising, contract development, and compiling, analyzing and reporting on community ascertainment statistics. In his technical capacity he evaluates equipment and facility needs, budgets and services; designs community television facilities; determines adequacy of system bandwidth and I-Net proposals; and analyzes and reports on customer service records, system outage reports and interfaces, as needed, with Copen & Lind's RF specialist, Joanne Bandlow on cable system performance and other Broadband related issues.

### **Barbara Wolf**

Barbara Wolf has been involved in Community Television since 1979 in staff, administrative and board positions. She began in access as trainer/facilitator and then executive director of Campbell County Community Cable Access (Four Cs), a nonprofit corporation in Northern Kentucky. Later she was a board member then President of the Board of the Cincinnati Cable Access Corporation (CCAC). She served four years on the Board of Directors of the Alliance for Community Media (formerly NFLCP). For the past ten years, as an associate of Copen & Lind Cable/ Access Consultants, she has, in concert with other C&L staff: developed survey instruments; conducted phone surveys of access centers; prepared and edited written materials including proposals, questionnaires, operations and procedures manuals and final reports.