

Cable Franchise Agreement with Mediacom

Informational Sheet

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The Cable Franchise that the Town of Millville has with Mediacom relates solely to cable tv. The franchise does not cover Mediacom's internet service.

Mediacom is the only cable provider in Millville, Ocean View, Bethany Beach, and South Bethany (in our area) only because no other provider has chosen to offer this service. The cable franchise is non-exclusive and not as a written rule that we can only have one cable franchise.

Regarding internet service in our area, it is correct that Mediacom is the only option for most; however, Sea Colony has Comcast. Sea Colony was sued by Mediacom after Sea Colony did not renew the cable franchise agreement and Mediacom lost after 18 months of litigation. Comcast is also bringing internet to the Bethany commercial area and planning to move down RT 26 only offering commercial internet. Internet is not subject to franchise agreements and again, if any other company wanted to enter our area, they would be able to do so. There is no exclusivity provision/monopoly except for their being the only provider interested in being in our town.

Over the past few years, myself, and the Town Managers from Bethany Beach, Ocean View, and South Bethany have been meeting with Comcast to encourage their coming in our area to offer residential cable and internet. Comcasts decisions to provide service are economically driven and based on the cost to build and the number of customers to be gained. The towns shared detailed information on the number of residential units that had been approved and the number that had to be built. Comcast seemed extremely interested, but no decision has been made. We also included Sussex County in these talks.

When the Town Manager of Ocean View and I were made aware that Comcast signed Cable Franchise Agreements with the Towns of South Bethany and Bethany Beach, we were extremely disappointed that our Towns were not included. We immediately reached out to the representatives we had been meeting with from Comcast to express our opinion on how this was handled, and they did not even give us the courtesy of a phone call to explain why we were not included.

Of course, it is all about funding and we should hear from them in a couple of years to come into our towns.