

RESOLUTION NO.14-107

REQUESTS NEW CASTLE COUNTY COUNCIL IMPLEMENT BOTH LIVE AND VIDEO ON DEMAND VIDEO BROADCASTS OF ALL PUBLICALLY ADVERTISED NEW CASTLE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETINGS

WHEREAS, “Citizens should pay attention to their government. Society should use every means possible to make that act easier. And that includes being able to watch it on a television or computer screen,” as stated by the *Wilmington News Journal* Editorial Board (*Wilmington News Journal* Opinion 12/19/2013); and

WHEREAS, various legislative bodies have advanced communications with its citizens via broadcasts of its deliberations and public voting process including the United States Congress, Sussex County Council, and Wilmington City Council; and

WHEREAS, “live” and “video on demand” broadcasts provide more information than the required post-meeting minutes and the extra after-the-event recording, providing citizens with a real-time view of its government in action; and

WHEREAS, “live” refers to a television production broadcast in real-time, as events happen, in the present. “Video on demand” is a planned system using video compression to supply programs to viewers when requested, via integrated services digital network or cable; and

WHEREAS, live broadcasts by various legislative bodies throughout the United States of America have enhanced public trust, greater transparency and accountability; and

WHEREAS, live broadcasts provide more information than the required post-meeting minutes and the extra after-the-event recordings, providing citizens with a real-time view of its government in action; and

WHEREAS, live broadcasts enable citizens to carefully consider various points of view, which they may not have previously considered; and

WHEREAS, live broadcasts enable citizens to personally observe real-time deliberations, presentations and decision making; and

WHEREAS, due to advancements in social media and internet technology, citizens now have an expectancy of real-time access to their national and local governments’ deliberations; and

WHEREAS, all publically advertised County Council meetings should be broadcast because each elected County Councilperson is participating in conducting the public’s business and spending the taxpayers’ public funds. Televising meetings is not an invitation for elected officials to pontificate and make long statements and political speeches, but to allow each citizen to observe their elected officials at the convenience of each citizen’s personal schedule; and

WHEREAS, the public has a right to observe and determine if their elected officials are maintaining the highest standards of ethical behavior and fiscal prudence; and

WHEREAS, the media is able to both report upon and analyze elected officials’ and citizens’ collective comments, even when the media is unable to attend; and

WHEREAS, it now is economically and practically feasible to video broadcast County Council proceedings at a nominal cost due to advancements in modern technology. Video services are a low cost solution for streaming and televising government meetings. Council can contract a television production company. Another example would be to contract a fully-branded channel for our organization that allows our citizens to watch when they want, where they want with live video streaming; and

WHEREAS, New Castle County Council would safeguard and archive all video and recorded meeting recordings to ensure the integrity of the recording; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by and for the County Council of New Castle County that County Council hereby implement both live and video on demand video broadcasts of all publically advertised New Castle County Council meetings.

Adopted by County Council of
New Castle County on 04/22/2014

President of County Council
of New Castle County

SYNOPSIS: Same as title.

FISCAL IMPACT: There will be a fiscal impact upon the adoption of this legislation. There are numerous factors that will impact the cost to implement video broadcasts. Install video streaming software and hardware for the dissemination of County Council Meetings and allow live video streaming from County Council during monthly meetings. Purchase and install a digital video recorder that can save these meetings to a disk for viewing or retrieval later.

In order to determine the exact cost of this legislation, further fiscal review and analysis would need to be made before this policy is implemented.