



Rogers TV
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Mr. Mike Finnegan
Chair
Durham Deaf Accessibility Committee
13- 575 Thornton Road North
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February 9, 2011

Dear Mr. Finnegan,

Thank you for your letter dated January 21st giving me the opportunity to provide clarification about captioning requirements for Canadian community television stations.

There currently is no requirement for captions on community television programming. However, when the CRTC held a public hearing into community television policies last spring, it did examine the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association's (CHHA) request that all community channels be required to provide 100% closed captioning for all programming. In its ensuing analysis, the Commission considered that "given that budgets for community programming are typically smaller than those for private and public broadcasting, captioning costs can be proportionally higher." As such, the Commission determined that its general policy on closed captioning would be applied to community television stations in the following manner (from CRTC 2010-622):

- The Commission intends to impose conditions of license requiring licensed BDUs that operate community channels to caption at a minimum 100% of original licensee-produced programming by the end of their next license term.
- The Commission also expects licensed BDUs to ensure that 100% of original access programming is captioned by the end of the next license term.

So while there is no current requirement for captioning community TV programming, the new policy will ensure an investment is made in these services in the coming years. Rogers TV is currently researching the new technologies that are slowly lowering the cost of captioning.

It is important to note that CRTC 2010-622 also brought changes to the funding formula for community TV. In short, funding levels have been frozen at 2010 levels with a modest, annual Consumer Price Index adjustment. So while Rogers TV will work to achieve the targets set by the Commission, the costs associated with the upcoming captioning requirement will be borne by that finite budget. As such, the captioning requirement will lead to a decrease in the overall amount of programming produced at Rogers TV. We hope to find either a technological and/or a policy approach to ensure the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing community can be met without compromising the quality or breadth of the overall offering.

As to your specific inquiry about captioning televised coverage of council meetings in the Durham Region, there are no current plans to provide this service at this time.

I hope I have been able to provide the information you requested and to reaffirm Rogers TV's commitment to delivering local programming in Oshawa.

Sincerely,

Lisa McClean Stellick
Station Manager, Rogers TV Durham Region