



Township of Montville

BUSINESS OFFICES:

MUNICIPAL BUILDING
195 CHANGEBRIDGE ROAD
MONTVILLE, NEW JERSEY 07045-9498
(973) 331-3300 • FAX: (973) 402-0787
www.montvillenj.org

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
360 ROUTE 202
MONTVILLE, NEW JERSEY 07045-8697
(973) 257-4300 • FAX: (973) 334-4880

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – March 16, 2021

**The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) Hearing Requested by
Montville Township and Other New Jersey Communities in the Matter of
Request for an Investigation into the Operations of Altice USA in New Jersey –
Docket No. CX21010010**

Today, Tuesday, March 16, 2021, Montville Township continued its efforts to address the telephone, cable television and internet services provided by Altice USA in New Jersey. Through the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) sanctioned – *In the Matter of Request for an Investigation into the Operations of Altice USA in New Jersey – Docket No. CX21010010* – various municipal elected officials, appointed officials, attorneys, as well as citizens highlighted the Township’s concern about numerous service related issues received from our residents.

Today, Township Committeeman Dr. Matthew Kayne, who has been at the forefront of addressing the service related complaints from our Township residents, was the first to speak in which he highlighted the hundreds of complaints that he personally handled and the lack of adequate customer service which was noted to be severely lacking. As a suggestion to hopefully resolve this, Dr. Kayne recommended that the NJBPU “take every step and effort to provide and encourage competition to Altice so that residents of Montville Township and this state that are served by this franchise will have a choice.”

Next, the Township Administrator, Victor M. Canning, highlighted the State Cable Act of 2006 and New Jersey Governors’ Executive Order N. 25 as one of the statutes that addresses the telecommunication services provided by Altice USA and others. Administrator Canning believes the BPU has the authority to have Altice USA invest in fiber optics in Montville Township. It was noted that fiber optics is the most technologically advanced system currently available in other areas of New Jersey which would help improve the current service related issues we have with Altice’s existing, older technology. Additionally, the Administrator believes the State Cable Act of 2006 affords the NJBPU with the authority to force other telecommunication companies to also invest in Montville Township to create competition.

Township Attorney Fred Semrau addressed the most-favored-nation provision that Altice USA falls under in its NJBPU approvals to operate in New Jersey as well as in other areas of the United States and outside of the United States. This privilege afforded to Altice USA came with a high level of commitment from Altice to provide New Jersey with adequately sufficient telecommunication services. Mr. Semrau noted that it is within the most-favored-nation provision afforded Altice USA that the NJBPU has the legal authority to make them adequately address their current technology that has clearly proven to be inadequate for the needs of Montville Township and other New Jersey communities.

In closing out the Montville Township delegation at this investigative hearing was Township resident Ms. Jill Weiss who concisely articulated her extensive experience with Altice USA regarding her telephone, cable television and internet services. She highlighted that in the last year she has had at least 7 service related visits from Altice USA in an attempt to address the various service related problems she has been experiencing. One example that was very frustrating to Ms. Weiss was the fact that Altice USA customer service representative suggested that she purchase monthly insurance, in addition to her regular monthly bill, as a way to avoid a service charge each time Altice USA had to come out to address her service problems which, ironically, were related to the same problems that were never addressed properly by Altice USA.

We also want to inform the residents of Montville Township that consistent with Montville Township's complaint and comments, Rate Counsel, on behalf of the State of New Jersey, also testified in support of a further investigation by the NJBPU of Altice USA which is very important to our efforts to address this matter.

In closing, the NJBPU Presiding Chair Mary-Anna Holden noted that the full NJBPU will review all the testimony provided at the hearing as well as all written statements submitted, and determine what the next actions will be in regards to this investigation.