
Statement on Larchmont's withdrawal from cable sharing agreement.

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Dear Friends,

Friday morning, I was surprised to learn that Larchmont was withdrawing from the cable sharing agreement that it entered into in 1982 with the Town of Mamaroneck and Village of Mamaroneck. Serving as an elected official for over two decades I would have thought that such a consequential action would have required a public discussion and a public vote. Yet in my search of the minutes of Larchmont Board meeting I can find no such discussion or vote.

Let me provide some history and context to this discussion. When the franchise agreement was signed nearly 40 years ago, all three communities expressed a strong and unwavering commitment to using the franchise fees derived from the agreements with the cable companies to fund and support LMC Media. LMC (the L stands for Larchmont) is a non-profit public access media outlet has knit our three communities together for decades.

After the financial collapse of 2008-09, the three municipalities, for the first time, started taking disbursements from the franchise fees to help balance their budgets. At the time, this still left ample resources to fund LMC.

In the past decade franchise fees from cable have been slowly decreasing. This has caused some adjustments in the disbursements. The Cable Board of Control (BOC), which is composed of one elected official from each municipality, has decreased payouts to all three governments and to LMC Media. While we have tried to ensure that the sacrifice was equally shared, I believe it is fair to say that Larchmont has resisted the reductions while the Town and Village of Mamaroneck recognized the need to make adjustments.

Over the last several years LMC has made progress in raising more money through fundraising and selling of services to become more financially independent. The reality is that franchise fees will probably slowly keep falling in the future and the municipalities and LMC need to plan accordingly. Yet, there are currently ample resources for LMC to keep doing the excellent job it is doing keeping us informed and aware of what is happening in our area.

A few months ago, Larchmont made a request of \$100,000 from the cable PEG funds. This fund is for cameras, light, microphones, physical structures etc. It is critical to LMCs operation. No municipality has ever take a disbursement out of this fund since the

inception of the cable agreement. The work that Larchmont stated it needs the funding for is work that the Town and the Village of Mamaroneck had already done at our taxpayers expense. Under the terms of the agreement, disbursements from the PEG fund must be made on a per capita basis. As a result, giving Larchmont \$100,000 would have required giving the Village of Mamaroneck \$279,000 and the Town of Mamaroneck almost \$197,000. This outlay would cripple LMC's ability to meet the needs of the community in the future.

The Village of Mamaroneck Board of Trustees discussed this issue at an open, public and televised work session (thank you LMC) on October 12th. You can view that discussion below. It was ITEM 1H on our public agenda:

<https://lmcmmedia.org/show/village-of-mamaroneck-board-of-trustees-work-session-10-12-21/>

During this discussion, in a rare display of unanimity, the members of the Village of Mamaroneck Board of Trustees all expressed their continued financial support and appreciation for the work that LMC does for our community. LMC Media is the place where residents can follow what is transpiring locally. It is an important thread that has helped bind our three communities together over the past four decades. I thank my colleagues for recognizing and appreciating this reality.

I would hope that Larchmont will reconsider their decision, but I respect my friends on the Larchmont Board and know they are doing what they believe is best for their community. I wish them well.

The Village of Mamaroneck looks forward to renegotiating new franchise agreements with our friends in the Town of Mamaroneck. With the Village of Mamaroneck's 20,000 residents and the Town's 13,000 residents, I am confident we will still have ample bargaining power to strike a good deal with the cable providers. We will miss Larchmont's 6,000 residents and hope they can strike a good agreement on their own.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and please continue to watch and support LMC Media. Their work is vital to the proper functioning of our local democracies.

Respectfully,

Tom Murphy

Mayor, Village of Mamaroneck