

COMMUNITY MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY PLANNING WORKSHOPS

**For Immediate Release
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MVTV, in cooperation with the towns on Martha's Vineyard are seeking your input on the future of cable service, community media, and technology that will be available for the next 10 years. Comcast has submitted a request to have its cable franchise agreements renewed. The community process that is being undertaken will examine the past performance of Comcast and future services that citizens, schools, community groups, businesses and local government would like to include in a new cable franchise agreement.

Only once every 10 years do local government have the opportunity to examine the past services provided by cable/video service providers and renegotiate the franchise agreements. Given the enormous changes in technology and media over the past 10 years the process of granting a new franchise to Comcast merits serious consideration and opportunity for public input.

As a part of the process of exploring the future cable communications needs of Martha's Vineyard, the Towns in conjunction with MVTV are hosting a series of focus groups on November 16, 17 and 18. The focus groups will provide a chance for interested community members to learn about franchise renewal and provide their opinions regarding future services that could be available through the cable system serving Martha's Vineyard.

These focus groups will be conducted by Sue Buske of The Buske Group, a nationally recognized public policy consulting group hired specifically to assist during the cable franchise renewal process. The focus groups will provide information on: (1) the cable franchise process that the Towns are currently conducting; (2) how the cable system works and what it could be like in the future; (3) public, educational, and government access; and (4) the ways that community groups and organizations, schools, businesses, citizens, and government agencies could use a cable communication system. The focus groups are designed to get input from participants through brainstorming and completing a brief questionnaire.

In addition, the public is also invited to participate in an on-line survey by going to the MVTV website at <http://www.mvtv.org/> and clicking a link for the survey.

The focus groups are free of charge. Persons interested in attending should select the one that is most appropriate or convenient and RSVP on line using the MVTV Website at <http://www.mvtv.org> or by contacting Julie Turner at **508-696-9760** or focusgroup@mvtv.org The schedule of the focus groups is as follows:

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Tuesday, November 16

Health & Human Services:

2:00—4:00 pmVineyard Haven Public Library, 200 Main Street, Vineyard Haven

Arts & Cultural Organizations:

7:00 – 9:00 pm Featherstone Center for the Arts, 30 Feather Stone Road, Oak Bluffs

Wednesday, November 17

Religious & Spiritual Groups:

10:00 am – Noon.. Edgartown Public Library, 58 North Water Street, Edgartown

Educators and Teachers:

4:00 – 6:00 pm MVRHS Library Conf. Rm, Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road

Thursday, November 18

Municipal Groups, Town Departments:

10 am-12pm VTA Conference Room, 11 A Street, Airport Business Park, Edgartown

Nonprofit Organizations:

6:00—8:00 pm West Tisbury Public Library, 1042 State Road #A, West Tisbury