**Harwich Channel 18 Operational Procedures**

**A. Channel Designation**

The Town Government Channel is established on cable channel 18 for Comcast

Customers. Its designation shall be known as “Harwich Channel 18”

**B. Modes of Broadcast**

1. Live Broadcasts

A limited amount of live coverage will be provided. Generally, this will include broadcast of Board of Selectmen meetings, Annual Town Meeting and other selected public meetings of governmental bodies (e.g. Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Committee, Historical Commission etc.) and of Town sponsored events.

2. Delayed Broadcast

Many public meetings and events will be recorded for broadcast at a later time. Delayed broadcast will appear on Harwich Channel 18, YouTube and online On Demand Service.

3. Municipal TV Produced Programs

The Town may produce or contract for the production of programs which illustrate the functions or operations of Harwich Town government. These may include video documentary programs on the various Town services provided to and for citizens, public service announcements, crime prevention, outreach programs, emergency management information, Chamber of Commerce events and Town sponsored cultural events.

4. Outside Sourced Programs

Programming produced outside the Town may be broadcast so long as the programming is consistent with the governmental purpose of this channel and is consistent with the sponsoring Town board or department’s function and purpose.

**C. Access Policy**

The Town of Harwich’s Government Channel is not a “public access” channel; Access to the Town’s government channel shall be limited to the Town, its boards, Committees and Department Heads. In addition, programming concerning the operations and functions of the Monomoy Regional School District and of other governmental agencies may also be broadcast, subject to the approval of the Channel 18 Director.

**E. Program Content**

1. Public Meetings/Hearings

Public meetings, including but not limited to Board of Selectmen, Annual Town Meeting, Town Legal Counsel Workshops or any meetings of official public record, may be broadcast either live or in delayed replay, will be shown “gavel-to-gavel,” and shall not be edited for content.

2. Informational Programming

Informational programming may only be sponsored by and presented on behalf of regular appointed or elected boards and officials of the Town. Channel 18 Director must approve format and length. Such broadcasts are intended to provide information useful to Harwich residents regarding Town operations, services and events and must be consistent with the governmental purpose and/or functions of the sponsoring Town board or department.

3. Public Service Announcements

Video announcements of Town-sponsored events or informational messages about Town programs and services are produced as needed. These Public Service Announcements may be broadcast on the Government Channel. Public Service Announcements will identify the Town of Harwich and Town department.

4. Emergency Messages / Announcements

Government use of the Government Channel during emergencies and disasters declared by the Town’s Emergency Management Director or his designee has absolute priority over all other programming. During such emergencies or disasters, the Government Channel shall be permitted to accept live, recorded, character-generated or audio information from other governmental or non-governmental entities when such announcements are deemed necessary by the Town’s Emergency Management Director or his designee to provide important public information pertaining to the emergency or disaster or other conditions requiring protection of the public health, safety and welfare. During an emergency event the Channel 18 Director will pull all previously scheduled content and only air programming that pertains to the current emergency situation. This includes any regularly scheduled government meetings.

5. Other Programming

Channel 18 may, upon occasion, broadcast other programs such as, but not limited to:

1. Selected items from the official Town of Harwich website, including the calendar
2. Budget hearings and community forums
3. Town-sponsored events, job announcements, and programs via a video bulletin board. This service may be broadcast in conjunction with regular programming
4. Other local area governmental meetings. Such as Barnstable County Regional events.
5. Promotional announcements for Town-sponsored or sanctioned events
6. It shall be the policy of Harwich Channel 18 to broadcast acceptable and approved mature content programming during FCC specified safe harbor hours when children are less likely to constitute a significant portion of the viewing audience. When possible, acceptable mature programming will be preceded by verbal and/or text information stating that the programming content is intended for a mature audience
7. Open discussion at a public meeting of a Town governmental body, related to ballot questions, warrant articles, override issues or other voter informational issues.

6. Prohibited Broadcasts

The following activities are NOT permitted to be broadcast on the Harwich Channel 18:

1. Commercial advertising or other information which promotes the sale of any product or service. Including for profit entities and business advertisement.
2. Programming which directly promotes religious beliefs or religious philosophies
3. Subject matter which is defamatory in nature
4. Programming content which, in the opinion of the Board of Selectmen and/or the Channel 18 Director is indecent, obscene or illegal.
5. Programs containing copyrighted materials without proper copyright authorization. Outside agencies submitting programming for telecast are responsible for obtaining all necessary copyright clearance and shall hold the Town and its successors, departments, officers, employees, servants, attorneys and agents, harmless in any case of copyright infringement
6. Materials provided by or for declared candidates for elected office. Candidates for elected office may not use the Government Channel as a part of a campaign effort. This exclusion does not apply to persons who receive air time as part of official public meeting coverage, candidate forums and special election coverage.
7. Programming related to support a certain political campaign purposes, such as the election of a candidate or the passage or defeat of a ballot question or override-related article, as well as programming advocating support or defeat of town meeting warrant articles.

7. In-Service Training

Production of videos for training and education of Town employees and/or Town Boards and Committee’s which are not intended for the general public, may be considered for broadcast. Such videos may include training from Town Counsel regarding but not limited to: Open Meeting Law, Ethics, website training and software training.

**F. Use of Town Equipment**

Use of Town-owned video and related production equipment shall be restricted to Town activities and by personnel/volunteers identified by the Channel 18 Director. Loaning of equipment for personal or outside agency use shall not be authorized.

**G. Videography and Production**

1. Requests for Programming

a. Requests for programming must be made to the Channel 18 Director via email at [jgoodwin@town.harwich.ma.us](mailto:jgoodwin@town.harwich.ma.us) In order to allow for sufficient time for production, scheduling, and publicity, requests must be made at least two weeks in advance of the intended broadcast date.

b. Requests for information to be broadcast on the scrolling video bulletin board must be submitted in writing, along with the start and end dates of the announcements at least one week in advance of the start date. Printed flyers or email attachments are accepted. Harwich Channel 18 cannot guarantee that requested announcements will be broadcast.

2.Video and Audio Recording of Boards & Committees

Any Board or Committee that conducts a public meeting in either the Donn B. Griffin Room or the Small Hearing Room, located at, 732 Main Street, Harwich, MA 02645 MUST assume that they are being recorded for public broadcast/record any questions regarding this procedure can be addressed by the Harwich Channel 18 Director.

3. DVD Duplication

Viewers are encouraged to record programs from the cable channel, and unrestricted access is allowed for the recording of programming off the air for private use. Citizens may request copies of previously broadcast materials still retained within the town video archives. These will be provided in DVD format only, for a service fee of $5.00 per copy. Such requests may be executed at Harwich Channel 18 Studios, located at 100 Oak Street, Harwich, MA 02645 and accompanied by a check or money order for the total fees due. Checks payable to “Town of Harwich”

**H. Program Content**

1. Technical Standards

Before externally produced programs or other productions may be scheduled for broadcast, they must be approved for minimum technical and broadcast aesthetic standards, to be determined by the Harwich Channel 18 Director.

2. Human Errors

Should human error result in the broadcast of incorrect information over the Government Channel, the Town of Harwich, its officers, employees, and volunteers shall be held harmless. This includes any board/committee who fails to record a meeting in an “unmanned” hearing room.

**I. Boards and Departmental Responsibilities**

Boards and Departments requesting program development must be willing to assist in writing and producing the program in its entirety. The requesting entity shall be responsible for content development. Length and content to be finalized by the Channel 18 Director.

**J. Staffing**

1. Paid Staff

To administer the Harwich Channel 8, there are currently two full-time staff positions and one part-time videographer. Part-time staff positions may be created as needed per the town recruitment procedure. All operational positions will work under the supervision of the Channel 18 Station Manager, who will be guided by the Town Administrator, on matters related to video broadcast and channel operation and use.

2. Volunteers

Volunteers for Harwich Channel 18 function under the volunteer policy of the Harwich Council on Aging. In addition to this policy Channel 18 volunteers will not be held responsible for failed recordings, operational errors or other unforeseen issues.

**M. Funding**

Funding for equipment, personnel, maintenance and repair of equipment and software is provided by the Town through the Comcast Cable Television Franchise Fee Agreement.

Approved by the Harwich Board of Selectmen on November 5, 2018