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WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Three Musketeers: FCC Holds First Open Meeting With Trusty

The FCC's June Open Meeting lacked the flashy fireworks that might be seen come July 4, but there were at least some sparklers during Chairman *Brendan Carr* and Commissioner *Anna Gomez*'s press conferences afterward regarding the agency's ongoing matters.

The three items on the agenda Thursday came and went without much pushback. The Commissioner trio—[now featuring Olivia Trusty](#)—unanimously adopted rules that streamline cable rate regulations and reduce administrative burdens, leading to the removal of approximately 27 pages, 11,474 words, 77 rules or requirements and 8 forms. Carr, Gomez and Trusty also voted to remove the requirement that a state-licensed engineer must certify biannual Broadband Data Collection filings, now allowing for approval from qualified engineers who are well-versed with networks and hold a certain amount of experience. Lastly, the FCC proposed updating the Telecommunications Relay Service standards to be more consistent with modern usage of TTY-based relay services.

While the items were promptly addressed by the FCC, topics that weren't on the agenda took much of the focus once the meeting adjourned. Gomez, the lone Democrat on the commissioners' bench, voiced her trepidations about the FCC's probe into *EchoStar's* [spectrum usage](#), specifically about the "public nature of what the FCC is doing and the market harm it does to spectrum licensees." She added that the agency shouldn't

base its decisions "in a way that reflects the party in power" or whether it directly benefits or harms a particular party.

Carr, meanwhile, reportedly [met with](#) President *Trump* and EchoStar CEO *Charlie Ergen* in recent weeks, in which Trump pushed for a deal on the company's wireless spectrum. Carr neither confirmed nor denied the report and joked they should ask its author, *Bloomberg's* *Kelcee Griffis*, for confirmation since she was in attendance at Thursday's meeting. However, he noted "all options are still on the table at the FCC," but a decision on the matter should come soon.

"Right now, we are really working hard to make sure that this valuable public resource of spectrum is put to use," Carr said during his post-meeting press conference, later elaborating, "My position has been clear. I think the bottom line, in my view [and] in my view of all the conversations I've had, is that the status quo needs to change. We need to move quickly. I think there's a narrow window of opportunity here, but the FCC still has a number of our proceedings that are sort of sitting there, and we'll see if we need to reinvigorate those or not."

The supposed imminent clarity would be welcome at EchoStar, considering it opted not to make a \$326 million cash interest payment on its senior spectrum secured notes in late May. The 30-day grace period expires Sunday, meaning the company will be in default if a payment isn't made. *Bloomberg* [noted](#) Wednesday that Ergen asked EchoStar's creditors for a reprieve on its debt.

Carr was asked about the Media Bureau's recent public no-



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tice to “refresh the record in the National Television Multiple Ownership Rule proceeding,” saying that he’s receptive to whatever result the process leads to. However, he reiterated his North Star of strengthening local broadcasters, as well as his belief in the public’s lack of trust in media.

“We’re very open-minded as to the outcome. There’s a whole range of options that could be possible,” Carr said. “One of the themes that I’ve tried to be pretty clear about, and maybe some people would think I’ve been too blunt about, is I want to work to empower local broadcasters. I think if you, again, look at trust in media across the board, trust in national programmers, particularly when it comes to **ABC, CBS, NBC**, trust in those outlets is at an all-time low.”

Gomez sang a more hesitant tune when it came to possible ownership rule adjustments. She acknowledged that local stations are facing a high level of pressure in the current market, but hopes to see a more targeted approach when providing some form of relief. Her view is that relaxed ownership rules would give large media conglomerates more power at the expense of independent stations.

“I would say this is where we need a scalpel, not a chainsaw,” she said. “These licenses are to use the public airwaves, and broadcasters have a responsibility to use this public resource for the public good. So while I think that we do need to think in a targeted way about how to give relief, something that’s really just tailored for billionaire companies to profit at the expense of local journalism is problematic.”

There wasn’t much of an update on the pending **Paramount Global-Skydance** merger beyond that the FCC is running its normal review playbook, despite the 180-day shot clock already showing zeroes. That could be due to the ongoing lawsuit between Trump and Paramount about **CBS News’** “60 Minutes” interview with *Kamala Harris*, though settlement talks have been underway. A mediator proposed a \$20 million settlement, according to a [WSJ report](#) citing people familiar with the matter. It’d include a \$17 million donation to Trump’s presidential foundation or museum in addition to payments for legal fees and PSAs on Paramount-owned networks to fight antisemitism. Those discussions are ongoing, and a resolution may still not be reached.

CHARTER-DISNEY DISTRO DEAL EXPANDS TO HULU

Spectrum TV Select customers will soon be able to watch **Hulu** (With Ads) at no additional cost. That’s the result of an expanded distribution agreement between **Charter** and **Disney** that also bundles ad-tier **Disney+** and **ESPN’s** upcoming

DTC streaming service with the cable package. When **Hulu** launches on TV Select later this summer, users will be able to access the service via the **Xumo** Stream Box or any other Hulu-supported device. The new deal also puts eight Disney-owned linear channels back on Spectrum’s lineup, including **Disney Jr, Disney XD, Freeform, FXX, FXM, Nat Geo Wild, Nat Geo Mundo** and **BabyTV**. Charter says that the addition of **Hulu** and **ESPN DTC** to TV Select brings the retail value for customers to over \$100 per month.

TRUSTY’S CREW

It might only be her fourth day on the job, but new **FCC** Commissioner *Olivia Trusty* made her Open Meeting debut Thursday. “I will just offer my thanks to you, Chairman Carr, Commissioner Gomez and the entire FCC staff for making such a warm and wonderful welcome,” Trusty said in her initial remarks. “I truly look forward to working with each of you on addressing some of the most critical and pressing issues across today’s communications landscape.” The former University of North Carolina gymnast was part of the unanimous approval of the three items on the agenda, but of course, her inclusion was significant in that the meeting wouldn’t have happened if she hadn’t been confirmed and thus enabling the FCC to meet its three-commissioner quorum. Carr said July and August are set to be busy months in terms of the number of items the FCC has waiting in the wings. “I think it’s going to be a sort of trial by fire for Commissioner Trusty,” he said. “We’ve already started [to] tick through what our priorities are going to be, and it’s going to be accelerating infrastructure builds, freeing up more spectrum, helping make sure the U.S. continues to lead in the space economy, national security.” In her opening remarks, Trusty credited her staff with helping her prepare for the meeting, but who is it that makes up her personnel? *Krista Senell* will be Trusty’s Chief of Staff/Senior Counsel. Senell has over two decades of experience in communications law and policy, having made stops at **CTIA, Meta** and the **FCC** once already from 2006-11. *William Holloway* joins from the FCC’s Broadband Data Task Force and steps in as Acting Legal Advisor. *Jessica Kinsey* is also on staff as an Acting Legal Advisor after spending time with the Enforcement Bureau as an Attorney Advisor in the Telecommunications Consumers Division. Trusty’s Acting Confidential Assistant is *Andi Roane*, who’s served in the offices of former Chairs *Jessica Rosenworcel, Ajit Pai* and *Tom Wheeler*, as well as former Commissioner *Nathan Simington*. Roane also worked under Carr when he was still a commissioner.

NEW XFINITY INTERNET PLANS

Comcast continues its efforts to address pain points leading to churn after the operator lost 199,000 domestic broadband customers in 1Q25. In April, Comcast introduced a five-year price lock for new sign-ups, and now the ISP is further streamlining its Xfinity internet plans, ditching the 1.2 TB monthly data cap in the process. Previously, Comcast customers had to pay overage charges for going over the cap or opt to pay an additional \$30/month for unlimited data or an additional \$25/month to bundle the Xfinity WiFi Gateway. The new unlimited data plans, ranging from 300 Mbps to 2 Gigs, are offered at three pricing tiers. Plans are priced at \$40-100/month with a one-year price lock or \$55-115/month with a five-year price lock. There's also an "Everyday Price" tier that doesn't come with a price lock and costs \$70-130/month. These plans also bundle the advanced Xfinity WiFi Gateway as well as one Xfinity Mobile line with unlimited data at no extra cost for a year.

VERIZON, NOKIA SECURE U.K. PROJECT

Verizon Business, in partnership with **Nokia**, won a contract to deploy Verizon Private 5G Networks to industrial campuses across logistics, manufacturing and innovation sites in the River Thames Estuary region in the U.K. The private networks will serve the industrial campuses of the Thames Freeport, one of the U.K.'s busiest maritime hubs and a free trade zone established to boost economic growth and create jobs in the area. Verizon will deploy the networks to three key sites in the region: DP World London Gateway and DP World Logistics Park, the country's largest deep-sea container port and logistics facility; the Port of Tilbury, Thames Freeport's largest mixed-use port; and Ford Dagenham, the largest manufacturing site in London. Nokia is the hardware and software vendor for the networks, which will use its Digital Automation Cloud platform and edge computing platform MX Industrial Edge. Verizon says the networks will support AI-driven data analytics, process automation, autonomous vehicle control, safety monitoring, real-time logistics monitoring and R&D efforts in Thames Freeport.

CARRIAGE

DirecTV is adding a curated selection of **Paramount's** news, entertainment and sports networks to its various Genre Packs, including **CBS**, **MTV**, **Comedy Central**, **BET**, **Paramount Network** and **Nickelodeon**. With the addition of Nickelodeon's channels, DirecTV is now also launching a new Genre Pack called MyKids, which will feature content from Nick, **Disney**, **Cartoon Network** and more. The carriage agreement with Paramount also means that DirecTV can now begin adding **CBS** local stations to the MySports and MyNews Genre Packs. – **Weigel Broadcasting** has signed a multi-year carriage deal that will add seven of its networks as well as WCIU, the independent local station that broadcasts the Chicago Sky's **WNBA** games, to the **Fubo** streaming platform. Pro and Elite plan subscribers will gain access to **MeTV**, **H&I**, **MeTV+**, **MeTV Toons**, **Catchy Comedy**, **MOVIES!** and **Story Television**, while customers in the Chicago DMA also get access to WCIU.

FIBER FRENZY

Astound launched a \$34 million construction project to bring its fiber network to more than 19,000 homes and almost 4,000 businesses in Orland Park, Illinois. The ISP will offer symmetrical speeds of up to 5 Gigs and will bring first addresses online in August, with completion of the project expected by the end of 2026.

RATINGS

The 36-day **Karen Read** retrial brought plenty of eyes to **Court TV's** coverage of the proceedings. The June 18 verdict resulted in the network's most-watched trial moment since the conclusion of the **Johnny Depp/Amber Heard** trial in June 2022. Court TV viewership peaked at nearly 650,000 on linear during the reading of the Read verdict. Across the 36-day trial, Court TV's **YouTube** channel livestream got over 17 million views. – Sounds like "Downton Abbey" fans have welcomed the move to 1880s America. "The Gilded Age" Season 3 premiere was the show's biggest to date, says **HBO**. The episode, which released Sunday, delivered 2.7 million cross-platform viewers in its first three days in the U.S., a 27% increase when compared to Season 2 and a 30% improvement from Season 1.

| BASIC CABLE P2+ PRIME RANKINGS* (06/16/25-06/22/25) | | |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|
| MON-SUN | MC US AA% | MC US AA (000) |
| FNC | 1.076 | 3413 |
| MSNBC | 0.333 | 1055 |
| CNN | 0.263 | 836 |
| HGTV | 0.181 | 574 |
| TNT | 0.165 | 525 |
| ESPN | 0.164 | 520 |
| TBSC | 0.161 | 512 |
| USA | 0.157 | 498 |
| HALL | 0.157 | 497 |
| HIST | 0.123 | 390 |
| INSP | 0.123 | 389 |
| DISC | 0.119 | 376 |
| FOOD | 0.110 | 350 |
| TLC | 0.110 | 349 |
| NWSMX | 0.097 | 307 |
| GSN | 0.091 | 290 |
| HALLMY | 0.091 | 288 |
| A&E | 0.088 | 279 |
| TVLAND | 0.085 | 269 |
| LIFE | 0.076 | 240 |
| WETV | 0.075 | 239 |
| ID | 0.073 | 231 |
| FS1 | 0.067 | 212 |
| MLB | 0.065 | 206 |
| TUDN | 0.065 | 205 |
| BET | 0.062 | 197 |
| BRAVO | 0.061 | 193 |
| OXY | 0.060 | 192 |
| REELZ | 0.060 | 190 |
| AMC | 0.060 | 190 |
| FRFM | 0.060 | 190 |
| FX | 0.058 | 185 |
| ADSM | 0.057 | 180 |
| PRMNT | 0.053 | 167 |
| NAN | 0.051 | 162 |
| TRAVEL | 0.050 | 158 |
| NATGEO | 0.050 | 157 |
| COM | 0.048 | 154 |
| NWSNTN | 0.047 | 149 |
| FX | 0.046 | 147 |
| MTV | 0.046 | 145 |
| MGNLA | 0.045 | 144 |
| IFC | 0.044 | 141 |
| FETV | 0.044 | 139 |
| SNDNCE | 0.043 | 137 |
| SYFY | 0.042 | 133 |
| LMN | 0.039 | 124 |

*P2+ L+SD rankers are based on national Nielsen numbers, not coverage.