

Present: Armitage, Heldt, McLain, Urcan - Birmingham
McFadden, Verdi-Hus, Woodard – Beverly Hills
Eads - Franklin

Absent: Abbott, Decker - Birmingham
Heyman - Beverly Hills
Ettenson – Bingham Farms

Also Present: Borgon - Executive Director
Currier - Attorney for Cable Board
Sommerfeld - Bloomfield Community Television representative
Martinico - Director of Technology, Birmingham Schools
Doughty – AT&T representative

Chairperson McLain called the meeting to order at 7:47 a.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road. McLain welcomed Mike Urcan, newly appointed Cable Board member representing the City of Birmingham.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING OF MARCH 18, 2009

The correction was made on page 2, paragraph 3, to correct the spelling of the Franklin Police Chief's name to "Patrick Browne".

Motion by Urcan, second by Eads, that the minutes of a Cable Board meeting held on March 18, 2009 be approved as amended.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

W.A. Zimmerman of Beverly Hills had inquiries regarding the extent of AT&T coverage in Beverly Hills. He said that AT&T committed to provide coverage to the citizens of Beverly Hills in its franchise agreement and that the company is required to submit an annual report specifying that coverage.

Borgon stated that AT&T is proceeding under the State Video Services Local Franchise Act of 2006. The plan submitted to the State indicated that their build out would extend to 25% of the residences in this consortium in their first year.

Lori Doughty, representative from AT&T, said that the company files an annual report with the Michigan Public Service Commission that addresses their commitment and what area they service to date. The next annual report is due in June of 2009. Doughty offered to assist Mr. Zimmerman if he had specific questions about service to his residence.

AT&T RELATED TOPICS

Lori Doughty reported that AT&T added CBET Channel 9 in Windsor to its channel lineup. On March 30, the City of Wayne put their PEG channels up on AT&T U-verse.

McLain stated that a resident of Lauderdale in Beverly Hills informed the Board at its February meeting that he and some of his neighbors ordered the U-verse product but could not receive AT&T service due to wiring issues. They had been told that AT&T U-verse was available in their area. McLain asked Doughty to follow up on this complaint.

Borgon stated that there was a complaint received by a Franklin resident who was having trouble receiving his \$200 cash-back offer from AT&T after subscribing to the U-verse service. He questioned why it takes so long to receive a refund when monthly bills are mailed on time. Doughty was provided with a copy of the complaint.

Heldt stated that the Cable Board and Birmingham Schools are in the process of getting educational programming up and running on AT&T U-verse channel 99. He understood that there was a problem in that AT&T will not allow a local elementary school to hook up to the U-verse product so that they could monitor the broadcast. The reason given was that AT&T cannot sell the service to a school, which is considered a business, due to the inability to control adult programming. Birmingham Schools wants to broadcast its programs, yet it is important for them to monitor their programming. Heldt is not satisfied with the reasons why an elementary school cannot subscribe to U-Verse in order to monitor PEG programming.

Doughty understood his frustration but affirmed that the product is a residential service and cannot be offered anywhere but to a residential service location. AT&T is working through licensing issues with broadcast channels and will have a solution for that problem soon. She noted that the other 12 communities that are broadcasting PEG programming on U-verse are in a similar situation.

McLain assumed that any installation that is not residential is considered commercial or business. She questioned whether there was a compromise position that would allow the schools to monitor programming over the Internet.

Doughty said that AT&T technicians talked to Lisa Martinico yesterday about hooking a monitor to a port on the back of the encoder to check for the signal. Martinico responded that this was not an acceptable solution for the reason that you could see the signal being sent out but could not view the programming.

McLain emphasized that it is the goal of the Cable Board to move forward with broadcasting School District programming on the U-verse product. Martinico has done a lot of work on the technical aspect of the hookup, and the equipment has been ordered. The municipalities and the public has been telling us that they want to see public access channels, municipal meetings, and school programs on the U-verse product that has been available in some areas for almost two years. McLain proposed moving forward with the hookup but remain in close contact with AT&T regarding our concerns. AT&T needs to place the monitoring issue at the forefront if they are serious about PEG programming. This is especially important now that the area is losing local newspapers and other news outlets. People want to receive this information.

Heldt said that this discussion will be continued at the PEG Committee meeting following today's Board meeting.

Lisa Martinico thanked the Cable Board on behalf of the Birmingham School District for approving a grant last month for equipment that would enable Birmingham Schools to send its PEG channel to AT&T U-verse. The equipment has been ordered and will be hooked up when it is received. Martinico reported on her contacts with Doughty and AT&T technicians in terms of proceeding toward connecting to the U-Verse product.

McLain informed the Board that AT&T technical people will meet with BCTV staff on April 23 to discuss the hook up of Channels 15 and 18.

GRANT REQUEST – BIRMINGHAM SCHOOLS

Martinico requested a grant on behalf of Birmingham Public Schools in the amount of \$67,000 to be used for capital expenditures for equipment to support video productions in Birmingham Schools for the purpose of cablecasting on our Educational Access channel. The BACB has been generous in allocating grant dollars to the Birmingham Schools in the past to benefit students from all four consortium communities.

Martinico requested funds to be used for laptop computers, editing software, and wireless microphones. She is asking to provide elementary schools within the consortium area with 10 digital flip cameras for student video productions. District-wide equipment is also being requested to replace old playback equipment. Martinico stressed that, although Birmingham Schools face a funding deficit, the School District continues to commit funding and staff toward cable production. Television production is taught in both of the high schools.

Heldt questioned the timeline and budget implications for approval of this item. Martinico said that she is able to get good prices on laptops if they are ordered with other laptops that the school district is purchasing for curriculum purposes this summer. Borgon noted that money is budgeted in fiscal year 2008/09 for this grant.

Motion by Heldt, second by Woodard, to approve the grant request from Birmingham Public Schools in the amount \$67,000.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion passed (8 – 0).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

Armitage stated that the committee met on March 26 to discuss pending items. There were no new action items to report.

McLain stated that the Birmingham Area Cable Board will be represented at a Michigan NATOA meeting on April 29 at the SWOCC studios in Farmington.

PEG Committee Report

Heldt stated that PEG Committee items were covered earlier during discussion of AT&T issues. The PEG committee is working on getting its public, education, and government channels on the AT&T U-verse product.

McLain stated that there will be meeting of the Program Committee on April 23 at the Bloomfield Community Television facility. John Decker and Alan Haymen will be in attendance.

Personnel Committee

No report

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

Borgon welcomed new member Mike Urcan from Birmingham and encouraged his involvement on a Board subcommittee.

Franklin Bank will be known as First Place Bank as of April 13, 2009. The bank has assured the Board that there will be no disruption in service. PEG Funds are deposited in this institution.

Borgon reported that he and Steve Rota moved the old production truck from its rental storage unit to the back parking lot at the Beverly Hills municipal site. Borgon reviewed and disposed of old records stored in the truck and stored six boxes of current Cable Board files in his office.

The Public Utility Law Committee of the State Bar of Michigan has issued an invitation to a luncheon with the Michigan Public Service Commissioners on Wednesday, May 13 at the University Club at MSU. Borgon thought that this might be an enlightening presentation. He asked Board members who are interested in attending to contact him.

Borgon commented on revised income and expense budgets for the current fiscal year. He provided Board members with a copy of the proposed Cable Board budget for 2009/2010. This will be an agenda item for next month's meeting.

The Board received one new complaint this month from Comcast, which has been resolved. Two additional complaints were received since the Executive Director's report was distributed. Borgon referred one of the complaints to Lori Doughty from AT&T. He asked Comcast to provide a response to a complaint that involved a question relative to the digital transition.

McLain had an inquiry about the income and expense budget overview related to segregating restricted and unrestricted funds. Carrier believed that the budget document adequately designated those funds. He suggested that the money reserved for future purchase of a production truck over the appreciation period may need further explanation for the reason that this Board has no taxing or bonding authority.

COMCAST RELATED TOPICS

John Gardner was not present at this meeting.

MLTV15/ PA18 REPORT

David Summerfeld from Bloomfield Community Television reported on programming taped for Municipal Channel 15 (BAMA) and PA Channel 18 (BAPA) during the last month and noted upcoming programs of interest (information included in BCTV monthly report for March 19, 2009 through April 15, 2009).

Upcoming shows scheduled for next month include the Beverly Hills Memorial Day Parade and Carnival, Race Relations & Diversity Task Force Diversity Champion Honor Roll Breakfast, League of Women Voters, Birmingham Concert Band and Birmingham Bloomfield Coalition's Youth Day Dialogue for Student Athletes.

Six individuals attended the volunteer workshops held on April 8. Three volunteers have already signed up for potential shoots.

Eads announced that the Village of Franklin will be holding a fund raiser for the Kreger house project on Saturday, June 13. There will be a 5K run, pancake breakfast, a dog contest and other activities. He requested that this upcoming event be broadcast by BCTV.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

McLain stated that John Gardner from Comcast informed the Board that the Value Plus LD Triple Play bundle is available as of March 30, 2009. Subscribers should call Comcast if they are interested in the new products.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMENTS

Currier commented that the Birmingham Eccentric has announced that it will cease publication on May 31, 2009. The City of Birmingham has been in contact with the publishers of the Eccentric to inquire about their plans for any other publications to cover the Birmingham, Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms and Franklin areas. There is no intent by the owners of the Eccentric to cover the four communities currently served by the Birmingham Eccentric.

Currier said that the Eccentric on the whole has done a good job of covering local events and being fair in their publications to all involved. He suggested that people consider sending an email to the Eccentric encouraging them to consider continuing some sort of publication for this area. They are closing all the Eccentric papers but they are keeping open a few of the Observer newspapers and are forming a new South Oakland newspaper. Without the Eccentric distributed in the area, receiving local news and views as well as historical context will be difficult.

Borgon suggested that this may be topic for discussion at the next Program Committee meeting in terms of considering a local news program.

Verdi-Hus observed that the Eagle is a small community newspaper with the potential for expansion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 a.m.