

Present: Armitage, Heldt, McLain, Thorsby - Birmingham
Heyman, McFadden, Pfeifer, Verdi-Hus – Beverly Hills
Ettenson – Bingham Farms
Eads – Franklin

Absent: Lurie, Urcan – Birmingham

Also Present: Borgon – Executive Director
Currier - Attorney for Cable Board
Rota - Bloomfield Community Television representative
Dr. Hoffman - Birmingham Schools representative
Armstead – Wide Open West representative
Brogan – Comcast representative
Jones – AT&T representative
Valentine - Birmingham staff representative
Prew – Beverly Hills Council liaison

Chairperson McLain called the meeting to order at 7:45 a.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road. McLain welcomed Robert Jones, new contact person from AT&T.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD DECEMBER 15, 2010

Motion by Eads, second by Heldt, that the minutes of a regular Cable Board meeting held on December 15, 2010 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF 2011 MEETING DATES

Motion by Heldt, second by Eads, to approve the 2011 dates for Birmingham Area Cable Board meetings as follows: January 19, February 16, March 16, April 20, May 18, June 15, July 20, August 17, September 21, October 19, November 16, and December 21.

Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF ANNUAL REPORT

Board members are in receipt of a draft Annual Report for fiscal year 2009-2010 prepared jointly by Bob Borgon and Elaine McLain. Several corrections and modifications were proposed by McLain and Borgon.

Motion by Heldt, second by McFadden, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board approve the Cable Board Annual Report for 2009-2010 as amended.

Motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

McFadden mentioned that the NBC Universal and Comcast merger has been approved by the FCC and the Department of Justice and will go forward. He commented on how this merger and resulting technology will accelerate changes in the industry and in the marketplace.

McLain suggested topics for upcoming Cable Action Committee meetings including new developments in choosing cable television service for multi-dwelling unit residents in the consortium communities, truck signage, and routine updating for the BACB website including Frequently Asked Questions.

PEG Committee

Heldt stated that he along with Borgon and McLain met with BCTV staff earlier in the month to discuss and review an extensive list of potential equipment replacements and upgrades. The meeting included discussion about strategic direction. A detailed package is expected to be distributed to Board members for approval at next month's Cable Board meeting.

The Cable Board's contract with Bloomfield Community Television expires on June 30, 2011. The PEG Committee will be looking at terms for a possible extension of that contract.

There are two Seaholm versus Groves High School athletic events proposed for telecast and taping. BCTV will do this at the same price as the previous events approved in September at \$1,950 per event.

Motion by Heldt, second by McFadden, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board approve an expenditure for the taping and telecasting of two sporting events between Groves and Seaholm High Schools by Bloomfield Community Television at a cost of \$1,950 per event. The events are as follows:

January 27, 2011	Groves v. Seaholm Boys Varsity Swim and Dive @ Groves 6:30 p.m.
February 2, 2011	Groves v. Seaholm Boys Varsity Wrestling @ Seaholm 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion passed unanimously.

Heldt said that Dr. Hoffman has provided the PEG Committee with a list of goals and objectives relative to involving students in ongoing broadcasts. This will be a topic of discussion at the PEG meeting following today's Cable Board meeting.

Personnel Committee

Ettenson had no report from the Personnel Committee. McLain mentioned that there is one Birmingham vacancy on the Board due to the resignation of John Decker.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Borgon reported on the eight official complaints received during the last month; all complaints were resolved. Board members are in receipt of updated financial reports. Borgon has prepared and distributed a cost comparison chart for the three cable providers currently serving the member communities. All quoted costs are at basic levels of service. Borgon clarified that all

providers are making new offers and providing incentives on a regular basis via mail, phone and television ads.

Beier Howlett has sent letters to each of the cable service providers in the member communities informing them that their firm will be performing a review of franchise fees and PEG fees charged and received by the cable providers during the preceding 24-month period. The Board is requesting that all records necessary for this review be made available.

Borgon related that WOW is eliminating analog converter boxes in the Spring of 2011. Comcast will phase out its standard basic package beginning February 1, 2011 and change to the Digital Starter package. The price will not change and increased programming will be added.

Borgon informed the Board that the BACB website has been invaded by a Spam Robot. He has been advised by our web host, Municipal Web Services, of a program called CAPTCHA, which can generate and grade tests (distorted text) that humans can pass but current computer programs cannot. Muniweb staff has indicated that the Spam Robot problem will take 2-3 hours to fix at \$85/hour plus a one-time \$99 fee for the program. He estimates the cost to remove this Spam Robot will be \$270-\$355.

There were questions and comments from Board members regarding the attack on what was presumed to be a secure web site. Further investigation was suggested by some members. McFadden remarked that a secure system one day does not mean it will be a secure system the next day. This is an issue that reflects what is taking place with respect to technology and the challenges we are going to face on an ongoing basis. McLain asked that Board member Eads coordinate with Borgon to communicate with the web host on this matter.

Motion by Heldt, second by Armitage, that the Cable Board authorize up to \$500 to remove the Spam Robot from the BACB website at the discretion of Board Chairperson McLain, Vice-chair McFadden, and Board member Eads in consultation with the Executive Director.

A report will be made to the Board at the February meeting regarding the nature of the problem, what was done to resolve the issue, and risks to the website going forward.

Ettenson opposed authorization to spend money to remove the Spam problem on the BACB website without further investigation. Heldt responded that the three individuals mentioned in the motion have the discretion to determine whether to spend money on the website or to wait. He does not want to delay until the February meeting if it is determined that there is a problem that should be dealt with immediately,

Roll Call Vote:

Armitage - yes
Heldt - yes
McLain - yes
Thorsby - yes
Heyman - yes
McFadden - yes
Pfeifer - yes

Verdi-Hus - yes
Eads - yes
Ettenson - no

Motion passed (9 – 1).

COMCAST RELATED TOPICS

Leslie Brogan reported on an announcement made yesterday from the Federal Communication Commission and the Department of Justice giving regulatory clearance for the Comcast and GE joint venture for NBC Universal. She referred to a press released dated January 18, 2011 from Comcast Executive Vice President David Cohen discussing some specifics of the transaction. It will be a 51% ownership by Comcast and 49% by GE, which makes Comcast the manager of NBC Universal. Comcast is excited about the merger of these two companies with cable networks, broadcast networks, motion picture studios, a library of thousands of films and TV shows, and international theme park, national multi-platform distribution capabilities, and innovative technology. This is meant to be an “anywhere on any device” kind of video distribution for the future. Brogan outlined some of the key conditions and commitments of the transaction as stated in the January 18, 2011 memorandum.

Attorney Tim Currier questioned the impact of this merger on future rates increases. Over the years, providers would explain that their rate increases were partially due to increases charged by the parties providing the programming. Comcast will have control over a lot more programming; Comcast is on both sides of the table now. These are questions that citizens will be asking the Cable Board. Currier asked Brogan to provide the Board with more information on this matter in the next few weeks.

Dr. Hoffman stated on behalf of the Birmingham School District that it was a great opportunity for Comcast to offer a low cost option of \$9.95/month for Internet broadband for students who meet lunch subsidy standards in public schools.

Hoffman offered kudos to Comcast for its Leaders and Achievers Scholarship. Seaholm High School student, Elizabeth Harris, was a recipient of a \$1,000 scholarship. A statement read at the School Board meeting last night said, “This award funded through the Comcast Foundation recognizes High school seniors from Comcast communities for commitment to community service, academic achievement and demonstrated leadership.”

McLain reiterated her occasional request that Comcast consider providing a senior entry level tier that would be less costly than what is now available.

AT&T RELATED TOPICS

Robert Jones, new representative from AT&T, stated that he is working with Elaine McLain on resolving a PEG issue with the Birmingham Area Public Access channel. McLain provided background on the ongoing encoder problem. AT&T staff will be talking to the people at the Birmingham Community Television studio to resolve this issue.

WOW RELATED TOPICS

Kathy Armstead provided an update on the WOW installation in Beverly Hills and Birmingham. Construction in Beverly Hills has been completed. There are 28 active nodes in Birmingham; WOW is working on two more.

Armstead stated that letters were mailed to all WOW customers who have an analog converter box. She described the changeover process. WOW will be participating in Beverly Hills' Winter Family Fun Day on Sunday, January 23 in Beverly Park from 1-4 p.m. WOW representatives will be serving S'mores.

BAMA/BAPA REPORT

Steve Rota presented the Bloomfield Community Television report on programming taped for Municipal Channel 15 (BAMA), PA Channel 18 (BAPA), and programming from BACB area organizations during the last month (information included in BCTV monthly report for December 16, 2010 – January 19, 2011).

Rota reported that seven people attended the recent camera workshop at BCTV. Of those, two are interested in producing their own shows. A Program Development Committee meeting has been scheduled for 1 p.m. on Monday, January 24.

Borgon asked Rota how reception issues or emergency announcements can be communicated to BCTV staff on weekends. Rota responded that someone would have to go into the studio to broadcast an emergency announcement. There is a staff member on call from BCTV every weekend. Borgon can call BCTV and leave a message; the person on call will be paged.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

McFadden related that the following Resolution is required in order to authorize the Treasurer, Board chairperson and Executive Director to conduct the financial business of the Board.

Motion by Eads, second by Thorsby, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board resolve to authorize Elaine McLain, Chairperson, Ken McFadden, Treasurer, and Bob Borgon, Executive Director to be signatories on checks/transfers/financial documents on behalf of the Board.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion passed (10 – 0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMENTS

None

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 a.m.