

BIRMINGHAM AREA CABLE BOARD MEETING MINUTES – February 15, 2017

Present: Bozell, Eick, Heldt, McLain – Birmingham
 Delaney (alternate), Maly, Verdi-Hus – Village of Beverly Hills
 Stakhiv – Village of Franklin

Absent: Ettenson – Village of Bingham Farms
 McAlear, Weller – Birmingham
 Borgon, Gugni – Village of Beverly Hills

Also Present: White – Executive Director
 Currier – Attorney for Cable Board
 Rota – Bloomfield Community Television
 Black – Bloomfield Community Television

McLain called the meeting to order at 7:48 AM in the Village of Beverly Hills Municipal Building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

AMEND AGENDA

Motion by Stakhiv, seconded by Heldt to amend the agenda to add one item:

COMMITTEE REPORTS - Personnel Committee.

Motion passed.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD January 18, 2017

Motion by Eick, seconded by Bozell to approve the minutes of the Regular Cable Board Meeting on January 18, 2017, as presented.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

MUNICIPAL SUPPORT SERVICES GRANT REQUEST – VILLAGE OF BINGHAM FARMS

Kathy Hagaman, Clerk of Village of Bingham Farms, was unable to attend the meeting. White reported that on behalf of the Village Hagaman was asking for a Municipal Support Grant to cover its website hosting for the year, the hosting of Village ordinances and search engine, and the hosting of Village minutes and search engine. The total amount being requested was \$1,470.00.

Motion by Stakhiv, seconded by Maly to approve the grant request from the Village of Bingham Farms in the amount not to exceed \$1,470.00 to cover the cost of website hosting, hosting of Village ordinances and search engine, and hosting Village minutes and search engine for the FY 2016-2017.

Referring to the February 2, 2017 letter from Bingham Farms, Heldt had a question regarding the beginning and end dates of the Village's fiscal year and how it would impact the Cable Board's

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fiscal year which is July 1 to June 30. White will confirm the dates. She suggested that this item be postponed and put on next month's agenda for consideration.

Stakhiv amended her motion.

Motion by Stakhiv, seconded by Maly to approve the grant request from the Village of Bingham Farms in the amount not to exceed \$1,470.00 to cover the cost of website hosting, hosting of the Village ordinances and search engine, and hosting Village minutes and search engine for the FY 2016-2017, pending confirmation of the dates of the Village's fiscal year.

Motion passed, as amended.

AUTHORIZATION TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL DAC OUTPUT BOARD (additional cost than previously authorized)

White reminded the Board that last month it had authorized the purchase of a DAC Output Board from Grass Valley for the total of \$766.20 which was anticipated to cover the board and any shipping. However, the quote was a little more. The grand total is \$981.50 with no shipping cost. Since the Board had previously authorized a specific amount, she was asking the Board to consider authorizing an additional \$215.30 to cover the full amount. This would come from the PEG Fund.

White advised the Board that she did not approve the additional amount since this was for the "spare" board and there was no immediate need for it. Rota explained the additional cost.

Motion by Bozell, seconded by Heldt to approve the additional cost of \$215.30 for the purchase of a DAC Output Board from Grass Valley, with the final total cost being \$981.50.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion Passed (7-0)

AUTHORIZATION TO PURCHASE WINTER UNIFORMS FOR BCTV STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Rota reminded the Board that last budget year new uniforms were purchased for the full time and part time staff members. He is now proposing the purchase of long sleeved polo uniforms and sweatshirts with hoodies for the winter weather. The uniform would be a good marketing tool with the website and Cable Board logo on the back and the logo on the front. He is requesting \$995.66 for winter uniforms to be purchased from KTM LOGO GEAR LLC, Birmingham, MI.

McLain clarified with Rota that although the crew is not working outside on production during the winter, there are times when it is necessary to transport gear in and out of buildings or even for events, such as baseball games or tennis matches when the temperatures can be chilly and long sleeves would be more optimal than short sleeves. The visible branding of the Cable Board

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logo would be advantageous and help in exposing its existence to the public, as was suggested at last month's meeting.

Rota mentioned that KTM is the original supplier of the current polo shirts and, therefore, already has the logo.

Motion by Heldt, seconded by Stakhiv to authorize the purchase of uniforms per the two (2) quotes (No. 012505 and 012506 Revised) totaling \$995.66 from KTM, dated 1/25/17 and 2/8/17, in the amount not to exceed \$1,000.00.

McLain confirmed with White that the cost is a budget line item for "Uniforms".

Roll Call Vote:
Motion Passed (7-0)

COMMITTEE REPORTS**Cable Action Committee**

Verdi-Hus reported there was no meeting last month due to the fact there was no carryover from the previous Board Meeting. The next meeting will be on Thursday, March 2, 2017 at 5:30 PM in the Baldwin Library in Birmingham. McLain noted there may be a couple items on the March meeting agenda so Board members should look for an email from White and Verdi-Hus.

PEG Committee

McLain noted that McAlear, Chairman, was not able to attend the meeting this morning but there would be a brief meeting after this Board meeting concerning equipment and PEG initiatives for this year.

Personnel Committee

Stakhiv announced that she had emailed each Board Member with an evaluation sheet for the Executive Director for its annual appraisal. She requested that the members fill it out and return it as soon as possible. The Personnel Committee, consisting of McLain, Verdi-Hus, Ettenson, and herself would be meeting in the next couple of weeks. Afterwards it would meet again to do the performance appraisal.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

White referred to her monthly report dated February 5, 2017. There had been three complaints, since the last meeting: all involving issues with Comcast. Two were problems with service and getting a technician who could actually diagnose the problem. Service has been restored for both and both complaints are now closed. The third complaint was from a Birmingham resident who had entered into a two (2) year pre-arranged price contract with Comcast. Several months into the contract Comcast changed its price and would not honor the original contract agreement. Her dated report stated that the case was pending, but it has now been resolved. The resident has a new package and a credit. The complaint is now closed.

McLain reminded residents that when dealing with an entity with which they have a contract get the name and ID of the person they are dealing with and insist that the person send something by

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way of email or through the mail confirming what has been agreed to. This is especially pertinent and very important if there is a cancellation of service, either by the resident or the provider, as there might be a penalty charge to the consumer if service is discontinued.

Delaney was curious as to whether the subscriber had been given an explanation for the original cancellation. Since no providers were present at the meeting, McLain commented that the Board had not received anything and the provider usually deals with such issues on a case-by-case basis and they speak directly with the subscriber. For this reason residents should take notes on every conversation. McLain would like more clarification about this from Mazurek, Comcast representative, and would like to see if the provider has some sort of policy statement on this matter. Delaney stated that it appeared to be a “consumer protection” issue.

McLain requested that White check with Mazurek when he comes to the next Board meeting to clarify Comcast’s policy.

The account balances for the MBS, BBCU, and Beverly Hills accounts were provided to the Board, in addition to the Revenue and Expense Budget reports for the month of January, 2017.

Since her last report, White has written three (3) checks on behalf of the BACB: the largest one being the quarterly contract payment to BCTV, one was payment for the filming of two (2) December sports events, as well as one for Comcast internet service for BCTV.

Additional Notes:

Michigan Public Service Commission issued its annual report on the status of competition for video services in Michigan. Highlights of the 2016 report include: an increase in competition since Public Act 480 of 2006 was adopted, a decrease of 38 video/cable providers compared to 43 in 2015, an increase of 6 franchise agreements in 2016, a decrease in video/cable customers in 2016. The MPSC received 393 video/cable customer complaints; the most frequent of which were billing charges, cable issues, equipment service problems and other issues. McLain noted that full funding for Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) had expired 12/31/15 and when the MPSC does take direct complaints (which BACB does not do) it takes two (2) weeks to send them to the providers and respond to the consumer. It is not the local escalated turnaround that BACB has with its providers and representatives.

White also provided copies of the Annual Report for FY2015-2016 to her Executive Director’s Report which is issued every year. The report would be transmitted to all the communities for their review.

PROVIDER RELATED TOPICS

a. Comcast

There was no representative present. Mazurek emailed White a document titled Comcast Customer Experience, which at his request she copied for the Board Members. This was in response to the topic of Customer Service which was discussed at the last meeting. The first page deals with what Comcast is doing to improve customer service. White and McLain highlighted those and other pertinent points. If Mazurek gives the BACB permission, White will post it on

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the website or ask that he forward something to White which can be put on the website. McLain suggested that the same be requested from the other providers.

Stakhiv shared her personal experience using the phone app and having a successful “Live Chat” with a customer representative who was very technical and very responsive vs. the following day when she called Customer Service about the same problem but with a second TV. She spoke with a Representative who was not as “technically inclined” or as helpful and it took 2 hours to resolve the problem. McLain highly recommended the “Live Chat” and pointed out that after the conversation it can be printed. If subscribers would send those reports, good or bad, to the Cable Board website it would be very helpful to BACB and the providers. That type of feedback is very important.

Maly reaffirmed the importance that a customer receive some type of written confirmation of the agreed upon cable package.

b. AT&T/Uverse/Direct TV

There was no representative present nor was there any communication from Robert Jones, AT&T representative.

c. WOW

There was no representative present. However, Ken Parson responded that he planned on attending next month’s meeting.

BAPA/BAMA REPORT

Steve Rota, who personally has AT&T, related his experience with Channel 99 when the community list never came up last night nor this morning. If residents are having the same problem, he advised them to notify AT&T.

Steve Rota referred to his memo to BACB, dated February 8, 2017, and pointed out the six (6) completed **BAMA** Programs which were regularly scheduled municipal meetings, Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, the BACB meeting, Multi Modal Board meeting, Advisory Board meeting, and a Special Birmingham Commission meeting.

For the **BAPA** Programs, from the BACB area individual producers and organizations, thirty (30) programs were taped. He listed all the programs.

Regarding the **PRODUCER WORKSHOP**, Rota reminded the Board that one-on-one sessions are offered for those who are interested in producing their own show and to those who want to learn how to run the equipment. Residents can contact BCTV at 248-433-7790 to schedule a one-on-one appointment date and time. There is no fee for those living in one of the four BACB communities.

He noted that the DAC board that BACB approved at last month’s meeting has been installed in the truck and is working. With today’s approval of the additional monies the spare board will arrive soon.

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The next BACB coverage will be Boys Hockey on February 25. This would be the last of the Winter sports coverage. He will come before the Board with a list of the Spring events.

Hopefully, by the March meeting this meeting room will be up and fully functioning. Some items are still on back order and are anticipated on coming in the end of this month.

Greg Black related that BCTV is looking to expand its social media platform. It currently has a Facebook page but wants to expand its public programming, as well as its exposure and accessibility to the public. He invited any and all questions and suggestions from the Board and the public.

OLD BUSINESS

To expand upon Delaney's comments on Consumer Protection, Currier addressed the consumer protection law in MI with regards to Cable and how it has changed. His main emphasis was the importance of consumer documentation and written confirmation from the cable provider of any and all interactions he or she had with the cable company. McLain added that some providers record most conversations with subscribers which makes documentation easier but make sure subscribers request written confirmation sent by both email and through the U.S. mail.

Delaney queried if it would be possible to get the providers to agree to or be required to send a confirmation such as done with other establishments. If the Cable Board is frequently seeing this problem, maybe it should be brought to the Attorney General's attention. He added that regulation of provider services is not the same as it is with Detroit Edison or with Consumers Power. To him, fair treatment of consumers is paramount. An article on this subject in local newspapers on this might be advisable and advantageous. Currier also added that consumers should check/review their monthly bills as there is another version of "slamming" that the providers are going through such as adding services or products to bills that were not authorized. McLain remarked that this is critical if the customer has a combination bill for phone, TV, and/or internet, etc. The quicker the mistake is found, the easier it is to get the money back. Maly commented on the frustration he personally had when he changed services.

McLain warned the public about the independent contractors for all the providers coming door-to-door offering deals. In all four (4) communities, a form of identification is required. To protect yourself: 1) Do not agree to anything unless it's in writing, 2) With a phone conversation, the first thing the resident should say is, "I want to know if this is being recorded", 3) Make sure you make notes on the case, and 4) Request an email copy and a written copy. According to Currier, be advised that an email or written copy of an agreement is not required but as a consumer you are permitted to ask for one. If you get a "no" for any of those, ask for a supervisor. This may mean a delay or not available, etc. but all three (3) providers have told BACB and the subscribers they still have that they are going to do a better job, be more responsive, and solve the problem the first time. BACB also needs to hold them to it.

Currier pointed out the importance of the Cable Board. It and the ICCA, two of the larger consortiums in the area, have been acting as "Watchdogs" for the communities, preventing any abuses by these companies, and recovering monies for them. He also explained the billing

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process of the cable companies and the importance of the Cable Board's function of watching the calculations of the franchise fees and PEG fees. Educating the public by reminding them to review the bills is most important.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMENTS

None

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 AM.