

Present: Abbott, Armitage, Heldt, McLain - Birmingham
Borgon, Heyman, Woodard, Verdi-Hus – Beverly Hills
Ettenson – Bingham Farms
Goldberg - Franklin

Absent: Decker – Birmingham

Also Present: Hagaman - Executive Director
Currier - Attorney for Cable Board
Rota - Bloomfield Community Television representative
Martinico - Director of Technology, Birmingham Schools
Valentine - Birmingham staff liaison
Pfeifer – Beverly Hills Council liaison
Carmen Johnson and John Peterson – AT&T representatives

Chairperson Borgon called the meeting to order at 7:45 a.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road. He welcomed David Goldberg, new Cable Board member representing the Village of Franklin.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Woodard, second by Armitage, that the minutes of a Birmingham Area Cable Board meeting held on April 16, 2008 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The draft Cable Board budget for fiscal year 2008/09 has been transmitted to each municipality for review and comment. Hagaman recommended that the Board consider adoption of the budget at its June meeting. Amendments to the 2007/08 budget is an agenda item for today's meeting.

Hagaman reported that Comcast has requested that the Federal court place the PEG Channel relocation issue back on its docket in June.

Six new complaints were submitted to Comcast since the last Board meeting. Three have been answered and three are in process. Issues include rates and billing disputes. In addition, subscribers continue to request senior discounts.

AT&T representatives will present an update on their U-verse product and PEG solution later in the meeting. John Peterson will discuss what the communities will need in terms of equipment and transport products to carry its PEG channels on the U-verse system.

Hagaman related that the production truck build is on schedule, and Roscor has been submitting invoices for equipment received to date.

The Annual NATOA (National Association of Telecommunications Officers/Advisors) Conference will be held in Atlanta from September 17-21, 2008. The Executive Director has attended in past years with two Board members. It has been the policy for a Board member to attend two consecutive conferences. Mel Ettenson attended his first conference last year and Elaine McLain attended for the second time. Registration Forms for the NATOA conference were included in members' packets.

Borgon asked that members who are interested in attending the NATOA conference in September contact him as soon as possible.

The Cable Board has signed a contract with The Birmingham Principal Shopping District for leasing a booth at the Farmers Market. This will be a topic of the Cable Action Committee report.

In response to an inquiry, Hagaman stated that she has not yet received any comments from the municipalities on the draft Cable Board budget.

Attorney Currier stated that a Birmingham City Commissioner commented on the large fund balance designated in the 2008/09 Cable Board budget. Currier pointed out to the Commission that there was a line item for a production van. He explained that the Cable Board puts money aside annually in anticipation of replacing certain capital equipment. Board funds are derived from both franchise fees and PEG fees. PEG fees are usually earmarked for long-term savings to acquire or replace capital equipment. PEG fees have also been used to fund grant requests from the municipalities or the Birmingham School District (for schools within the political boundaries of the Cable consortium area).

Currier proposed that it may be helpful in terms of understanding large fund balance amounts if the Cable Board added a budget line item to designate the portion of the fund balance earmarked for capital acquisitions. He suggested asking the auditing firm what amount it would recommend setting aside every year for replacement of major equipment based on amortization or depreciation of that item.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS FY 2007/2008

Hagaman outlined proposed amendments to the 2007/08 budget reflecting reductions and increases in line items. Members are in receipt of a memo dated May 14, 2008 that indicates budgeted amounts, amendments, and variance from the original budget. Questions on the budget amendments were addressed by Hagaman.

It was noted that, due to the remittance of franchise and PEG fees 45 days after the close of the providers quarter, a substantial delay has occurred in the appropriate revenues being submitted to the Board's fiduciary agent, Beverly Hills.

Ettenson commented that he will be requesting a grant in the near future to televise Bingham Farms Village Council meetings.

Motion by Ettenson, second by McLain, to approve budget amendments for fiscal year 2007/08 to reflect adjustments noted in the May 14, 2008 memo, subject to eliminating the adjustment for the Comcast line item.

Motion passed unanimously.

APPOINT PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Borgon asked for volunteers to serve on a personnel committee to select an Executive Director for the Birmingham Area Cable Board. He announced that he will not be involved in the selection process because he intends to apply for that position.

John Decker, Mel Ettenson, Carol Woodard and Dorothy Pfeifer offered to serve on the selection committee. Borgon asked Vice-chairperson Ettenson to head the committee. Board members have received a copy of the previous advertisement issued for the part-time Executive Director position.

Motion by Ettenson, second by Heldt, that the Cable Board authorize the Executive Director Search Committee to spend an amount not to exceed \$750 for costs related advertising the position.

Ettenson recalled that there were several qualified members of the Michigan NATOA organization that could be approached to establish their interest in the position. Currier stated that the position can be posted online or advertised in a newspaper or publications; invitations to apply can be sent to known perspective candidates.

Motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

McLain mentioned that she authored an article for the Birmingham Quarterly about the Cable Board entitled, "Birmingham Conundrum...We are your voice". Last month, Birmingham's newsletter included an article about the digital transition written by Joe Valentine.

McLain updated the Board on the digital transition relative to the TV Converter Box Coupon Program. She visited participating retailers in the consortium communities and found varying levels of staff preparation for the coupon program. Most of the boxes are priced as \$59.99; the coupon value is \$40. A special adapter may be needed for certain televisions at a cost of about \$6.99. McLain noted that not all digital boxes have remotes. There is a 90-day expiration date on the coupons.

The AT&T video hub tour is scheduled for Monday, June 2 at 10 a.m. The facility is a small space that will only accommodate up to six people. Another date can be scheduled to give all Board members an opportunity to attend.

John Heiney, executive director of the Birmingham Principal Shopping District, attended the last Cable Action Committee meeting to discuss the Birmingham Farmers Market opportunity. The Cable Board had authorized an expenditure of \$2,000 to lease space for up to eight weeks of manned tables. The Cable Action Committee reviewed the rules and regulations, booth times, advertising, truck placement, and local channel coverage before it authorized moving forward with a contract.

McLain mentioned that there was concern expressed about setting a precedent in terms of the Cable Board paying for this exposure. It was clarified that the timing of this opportunity coincides with the charge of the Cable Board to increase awareness of cable competition, provide digital transition information, and promote awareness and involvement in the PEG channels.

In addition to the booth space, the Farmers Market will perform the following functions:

- The BACB name will be included in advertising
- The BACB name will be on signage at the Market
- The BACB name will appear in the weekly program on the dates when the Board has booth space
- The BACB will have the opportunity to display literature at the sponsor information table for all 22 weeks of the 2008 Farmers Market season.

The initial advertising flyers as well as a banner identifying the cable channels have been approved. McLain related cost estimates for items that must be provided by the BACB: six foot table (\$50); 18" X 24" vendor sign (\$40), banner (\$100), canopy (\$50), printed literature and other information. Additional Cable Board brochures will be needed.

Motion by McLain, second by Heyman, to approve up to \$1,000 for equipment and supplies associated with the Birmingham Area Cable Board's presence at the Birmingham Farmer's Market in the 2008 season.

Motion passed unanimously.

A Farmer's Market Volunteer Schedule was distributed to Board members so they may sign up to staff the booth for a split shift or whole shift. The market hours are from 9 am – 2 pm. The dates that Board members need to cover are as follows: June 8, June 29, July 20, August 3, August 24, September 21 and October 21.

Pfeifer offered the opportunity for members of the Cable Board to be present at the Village of Beverly Hills 50th Anniversary Celebration in Beverly Park on Saturday, June 14. There will be a pancake breakfast taking place in the park between 9 a.m. and noon. Service organizations will be able to set up tables in the park to communicate with the public. This would be an excellent opportunity for the Cable Board to distribute brochures and talk to residents about cable issues. A donation would be accepted by the Village to defray the cost of their celebration. Pfeifer will give the Board the name of the individual who is coordinating the event.

Borgon proposed that the Board be represented at the Village's Anniversary Celebration, and he offered to attend. The Cable Board will have a table, canopy, and brochures available for the event.

PEG Committee

Heldt stated that there will be a short PEG Committee meeting following today's Board meeting to continue discussion on renewal of the BCTV contract. Steve Rota from BCTV will update the Board on the status of the new production truck.

COMCAST RELATED TOPICS

Subscriber Complaints

Hagaman summarized her conversation with Comcast representative John Gardner regarding a subscriber complaint. Gardner informed her that Comcast monitors phone calls, and he was able to listen to the conversation between the Comcast customer service representative and the subscriber. He found that the intent of the CSR was not taken in context. Hagaman will continue to supply Comcast with a record of statements made by subscribers who call with a complaint. If there is a disagreement as to the facts, Comcast can go back and evaluate the recording to determine what exactly was said.

Board members discussed some of the complaints received in the last month. Borgon was displeased with the report that a Comcast representative told a subscriber that there is no record of the Cable Board requesting senior discounts.

Hagaman referred to an incident where a complaint was made by a subscriber, but that individual did not contact Comcast after receiving follow-up voice mails about the issue. Hagaman related that the procedure is for the Cable Board to take complaints and escalate them to the Comcast government liaison. She encouraged customers to return phone calls from Comcast, because those contact people have the authority to resolve the issue.

McLain added that it would help if the customer could write down the date, time, and person they spoke with at Comcast because their calls are recorded.

Ettenson referred to a complaint about missed appointments. The subscriber eventually received a \$20 credit, which Ettenson did not think was adequate. McLain stated that \$20 is the standard customer reimbursement for a missed appointment. It was noted that this is in line with the costs imposed by the Michigan Public Service Commission. McLain thought that the amount of a credit is negotiable with Comcast.

Hildreth Buterbaugh of Beverly Hills related his experience with a Comcast outage. He thought that a recorded message he received from Comcast that was specific to his location was helpful. He also stated that Comcast representatives who call a subscriber and leave a message should give their personal extension number so the call can be returned.

AT&T RELATED TOPICS

Carmen Johnson, Director of External Affairs for AT&T in Oakland County, commented on the long-standing relationship that AT&T has had with the Birmingham area and business

community for the last 125 years. AT&T has spent almost a year providing television service to the Birmingham area and building the U-verse presence in the community. A letter was received by AT&T from the Birmingham Area Cable Board chairman asking for information that will be presented today.

Johnson played a DVD that explained the AT&T U-verse digital television and entertainment services product provided through Internet protocol, or IP based technology. The DVD showed how easy it was to access PEG programming on the AT&T U-verse product. AT&T U-verse TV is in its initial stages, and the company is looking at options to educate subscribers and enhance how it delivers PEG programs.

It was noted that two Michigan communities, Clinton Township and Portage in Western Michigan, are now using AT&T's PEG system. AT&T has introduced five upgrades to the PEG product in the last year. They have upgraded the interface, added a cookies feature, improved picture quality, given customers a new way to access PEG, and updated the help section. Both the U-verse and PEG platform is an evolving product. The next platform enhancement will be to reduce the time that it takes for the PEG application to load.

John Peterson, AT&T's expert on the U-verse and PEG products, addressed the technical requirements of providing PEG on the U-verse platform. He stated that the entire U-verse delivery of television services is a fundamentally different technology from what cable companies have historically used. From a technical standpoint, all AT&T applications including voice, Internet data services, video, or wireless services are migrated to a common Internet protocol (IP) platform.

In terms of the PEG application, it is Internet-source PEG. Peterson provided technical specifications as to how the communities will ultimately connect and provide content to AT&T using an Internet solution. Peterson referred to a handout entitled "PEG Equipment & Transport Information", which is a spec sheet for the two elements that the BACB communities will need to consider in order to put content on the AT&T system.

Program content needs to be in an IP stream video format. An encoder box would be located at the distribution point. The encoder converts the broadcast into a Windows IP stream format that AT&T will put on its network and ultimately show to customers. There will be a data pipe to get the content to the Internet. Each channel on the system would be tagged with an IP address. AT&T pulls that IP address into their system and puts the content up on their platform.

The other element involves how the municipality transports the content from the encoder to AT&T. Typically, a T-1 line is used, which is a service that can be purchased from AT&T or another vendor that provides that service. Peterson noted that AT&T is looking at applications other than T-1 lines.

Questions from Board members on the PEG application as well as equipment and transport options were addressed by Peterson. He provided the Board with a ballpark cost for the encoder and transport, noting that there are a number of different encoder vendors and manufacturers.

Encoders vary from \$3,500 up, with a dual stream encoder costing \$5,500. T-1 line service from AT&T costs \$590/month.

Another topic of a discussion was when the cost of equipment and transport for the PEG product would become revenue neutral relative to PEG fees that municipalities collect from AT&T customers. Peterson predicted that the PEG revenue received by BACB communities will be in that neighborhood by the second or third quarter of this year. The Board discussed costs involved as well as the requirements and information needed from the municipalities to make this happen.

Martinico questioned AT&T's current and projected penetration rate for the consortium communities. John Peterson responded that this was proprietary information but he could have a conversation with the Board to translate numbers in terms of trends, Franchise, and PEG fees. Carmen Johnson has provided Hagaman with information on the status of their build in the four communities.

Currier asked if some of this information can be shared on a confidential basis with the communities so they can evaluate the current penetration projections and make policy decisions about cost and viewership. Peterson responded that he will talk to their legal department.

In response to an inquiry, Peterson stated that AT&T has two groups of support people. There are local account technical people in Michigan who help make the technical connection happen, and there is a team of community TV liaison people in San Antonio.

Peterson stated that, under the Video Reform Act, there is a process where an official PEG request must come from the franchising entity, which would be the municipality. The individual communities must send AT&T a letter stating that the Birmingham Area Cable Board is empowered to act on their behalf.

Pfeifer asked if it was the financial obligation of AT&T under the Franchise Agreement to provide PEG service to residents. Currier clarified that the Uniform Franchise Act says that the video provider must provide PEG programming without charge to a community over their system. However, the equipment to enable that broadcast is the responsibility of the community. It was noted that not all states have the same regulations.

Pfeifer thought that the conversation should include the Birmingham School channel, even though the Board is responsible for the municipal and public access channels. Currier added that it will make sense from a governmental point of view and in terms of economies of scale for the four communities to meet with the school district and work out the equipment and transport needs for the AT&T PEG product.

MLTV15/PA18 REPORT

Steve Rota from Bloomfield Community Television reported on programming taped for Municipal Channel 15 and PA Channel 18 during the last month and noted upcoming programs of interest (information included in BCTV monthly report for April 17, 2008 – May 21, 2008).

Rota reported that the chassis is being constructed for the production truck. Upon completion it will be delivered to Roscor's facility for installation of the equipment.

The new video card for the Bulletin Board system has arrived and should be installed and in working order by the end of the month.

The Village of Beverly Hills Memorial Day Parade and Carnival on Monday, May 26 will be taped for future airing. The event will be hosted by Andy Aubrey and Bob Borgon. The Village of Beverly Hills is having its 50th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday, June 14 at Beverly Park. Rota will be taping interviews with residents talking about their experience in the Village for 50 years, which will be incorporated into coverage of the celebration in the park.

Rota will be talking to Bingham Farms Board members next week about the equipment that will be necessary to tape their monthly Village Council meetings.

The next volunteer camera workshop is scheduled for July 29. Interested individuals can call 248.433.7790 to sign up. Borgon encouraged Board members to take the class.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMENTS

Borgon complimented Maryann Troy for her wonderful service in past years organizing the Beverly Hills Memorial Day Parade.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:34 a.m.