

Present: Armitage, Heldt, McLain - Birmingham
Heyman, McFadden, Verdi-Hus, Woodard – Beverly Hills

Absent: Abbott, Decker – Birmingham
Eads - Franklin
Ettenson – Bingham Farms

Also Present: Borgon - Executive Director
Currier - Attorney for Cable Board
Rota - Bloomfield Community Television representative
Gardner – Comcast representative
Glenn - Birmingham staff liaison
Briggs - Beverly Hills Council liaison

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.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING OF FEBRUARY 18, 2009

A correction was made on page 7, last paragraph, to remove the zeros from the \$350 million figure.

Motion by Woodard, second by Heldt, that the minutes of a Cable Board meeting held on February 18, 2009 be approved as amended.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

Bob Borgon reported that five new complaints were received this month from Comcast customers. Complaints focused on the areas of bundled service issues and billing/payment problems. Borgon commented that a recent study indicated that AT&T PEG channels are seen on about 7% of AT&T cable systems in Michigan.

The new Cable Board web site was launched last week. Borgon thanked the Muniweb staff, Elaine McLain, Lew Eads, and Ken McFadden for their contributions to the new look.

Board members are in receipt of a budget versus actual financial report for October through December 2008 as well as a Cable Board balance sheet as of December 31, 2008.

There has been a flurry of legislative activity since January. A Senate vote is coming up on the dispute resolution system proposed by the Michigan Public Services Commission. Michigan NATOA banded together to protest through the Michigan Municipal League web site. If the proposed complaint procedure is passed, there is concern that no one will come forward with a formal dispute fearing that the outcome may result in paying legal fees.

Borgon reported that there have been no inquiries about the sale of the old production truck as a result of the advertisements posted. He received an inquiry about purchasing the video switchers and camera. A decision should be made on how to proceed with the sale of the truck and equipment.

McLain proposed that the old truck be moved from the paid storage location to the DPW parking lot at the Beverly Hills municipal site if possible. There was agreement from the Board. Borgon will pursue this with Beverly Hills. McLain mentioned that Bob Borgon should receive credit for assisting with the development and upkeep of the new web site.

GRANT REQUEST – BINGHAM FARMS/FRANKLIN

The Cable Board is in receipt of a grant request from Franklin Police Chief Patrick Browne for Internet access for the Franklin-Bingham Farms Police Department. Grants for Internet access have been approved for the Birmingham Police Department, Beverly Hills Public Safety Department, and the Franklin-Bingham Fire Department.

Motion by Heldt, second by Woodard, to approve a grant request from the Franklin-Bingham Police Department not to exceed \$60 per month to cover the cost of Internet connectivity for the fiscal year to end June 30, 2009.

Heldt suggested postponing the request from the Franklin-Bingham Fire Department to renew their grant request for Internet access for the 2009-2010 fiscal year until the Board enters into budget deliberations. There was agreement that requests for renewal of an Internet access grant could be made in a letter to the Board.

McFadden questioned if it was appropriate that the request from the Franklin-Bingham Farms Police Department included funding for cable television in addition to Internet access. Borgon responded that grants approved for other police and fire departments did not include cable television service.

Hildreth Buterbaugh, Beverly Hills resident, thought that public buildings were receiving free cable television from Comcast. He was informed that this was no longer the case.

John Gardner clarified that Comcast has made a commitment to public safety by offering each community that it serves free video service for one police command and one fire command facility. Borgon will contact the Franklin Police Department to determine whether they have submitted a request to Comcast for a complimentary cable connection. The motion will state that the grant is approved in an amount not to exceed \$60 per month.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion passed (7 – 0).

GRANT REQUEST – BIRMINGHAM SCHOOLS

A grant request has been received from Lisa Martinico, Executive Director of Technology, on behalf of Birmingham Public Schools. The request is for a grant in the amount of \$5,759.00 to be used for the purchase of equipment to allow the Birmingham Public Schools to send its PEG Channel to AT&T U-verse product.

The grant funds would be used for the following:

1 Windows Media Ethernet Single Video Encoder	
Silver maintenance service (for encoder support)/1 year with software warranty	\$5230.94
1 year subscription to AT&T U-verse Basic Service @\$44/mo. at Quarton Elementary School (nearest location to BPS head end where service is available in order to monitor signal)	\$528.00
	TOTAL \$5759.00

Heldt explained that this is the first step in receiving the consortium's PEG channels on the AT&T U-verse system. BPS has an educational channel apart from Channels 15 and 18. He views this as a test run before the Board pursues hooking up channels 15 and 18 to U-Verse.

Motion by Heldt, second by Woodard, to approve the grant proposal from Birmingham Public Schools in the amount of \$5,759 to be used for the purchase of equipment to allow BPS to send its PEG Channel to the AT&T U-verse system.

With regard to timing, McLain estimated that it would take 45 days depending on when the equipment was received. If everything goes well, it was anticipated that the public and government channels could be up on AT&T U-verse by July 1, 2009.

Heldt related that Martinico is proposing to use the video encoder to convert the signal to a video stream and stream it to AT&T via the school's Internet connection. Using this method to stream the video to AT&T will save the substantial annual cost of using a T-1 line to deliver the signal.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion passed (7 – 0).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

Armitage related that the Committee discussed ongoing projects at its last meeting including the new web site. There were no new action items to report.

Championing

McLain encouraged people to take a look at the new interactive web site. It includes information about the complaint process and links to the public information campaign. There are live videos linked to the site including a virtual tour of the production truck and a video promoting the value of PEG channels. There are snippets of three programs produced by BCTV: Birmingham Farmers' Market, moving the Kreger farm house, and the Dog Show. Check out the web site at www.birminghamareacableboard.org.

PEG Committee Report

There will not be a PEG Committee meeting following the Cable Board meeting. Any matters that need to be addressed will be discussed at the next Cable Action Committee meeting.

Heldt reported that he attended the Michigan NATOA meeting yesterday. He distributed copies of a pamphlet entitled, “The Ten Disappointments of Cable Deregulation in Michigan”. It explains to the Legislature and the public what is wrong with Public Act 480 and why it has not worked as well as proponents insisted it would. The piece is a product of the public education information prepared by Michigan NATOA members.

There was discussion at the meeting on various options and strategies for continuing the public education effort. MI NATOA is launching a membership drive to encourage more cable boards and community government stations to be actively involved in support of the organization. There is a membership meeting scheduled for April 29 at 2 p.m.

Personnel Committee

Woodard reported that the Personnel Committee met on Tuesday, March 3 in the conference room of the Beverly Hills municipal building for the purpose of conducting a six-month performance review of the Executive Director. Attorney Currier interjected that the Open Meetings Act allows the person who is receiving a personnel review or evaluation to request a closed session. Borgon waived the closed session.

Woodard related that Committee members concurred that Bob Borgon had met all of the requirements of the Executive Director’s employment contract. Members pointed out ways in which Borgon exceeded his contract obligations, which included a smooth transition into the position, his contributions to the web site development, initiation of a new bookkeeping system, and his legislative oversight. Personnel committee members were pleased with the way that customer complaints are being handled and the fact that the phone is answered by Borgon a majority of the time. Woodard concluded that Bob Borgon passed his six-month performance evaluation with flying colors.

Board members voiced comments in support of Borgon’s performance and the exceptional service he has been providing the Cable Board as Executive Director.

McLain mentioned that Alan Heyman and John Decker have volunteered to serve on the Program Development Committee. The next meeting is scheduled for April 22 at BCTV.

COMCAST RELATED TOPICS

John Gardner representing Comcast announced a price decrease in the fees for three High Definition triple play bundle packages. Effective April 1, the Major League Baseball (MLB) channel will be aired in High Definition on Channel 258. On April 15, Comcast will be adding WUDT-CA (Univision) to Limited Basic channel 98.

McLain reminded subscribers to call Comcast directly if they have questions about their bill or promotional prices.

McLain related that people who are changing their phone service have called with complaints about the coordination between Comcast and AT&T. Subscribers are confused about who they are supposed to notify, which leaves them without phone service for a period of time. McLain urged customers to write down who they talk to and the instructions they received. If they continue to experience problems, subscribers can contact the Cable Board.

Borgon thanked John Gardner and his team, particularly CSR Shani, for responding to complaints received through the Cable Board in a timely manner. McLain related that she has heard reports that Comcast has been fair about not charging for visits in instances where the problem is determined to be within the subscriber's home.

Briggs thanked Comcast for resolving the pixilation problems at his residence. He indicated that a conversation with a Comcast representative on the Internet chat line resulted in receiving the wrong information. When Comcast was called directly, a technician was sent out and the problem was resolved.

AT&T RELATED TOPICS

AT&T representative Lori Doughty was not present. She indicated in an email to the Board that AT&T has added a hockey channel (CBET) to their lineup.

MLTV15/ PA18 REPORT

Steve Rota 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 February 19, 2009 through March 18, 2009).

Upcoming shows scheduled for next month include Plane Ideas, Lecture at the First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham Historical Society Lecture, Senior Women's Club, Talk of the Town, and the Baldwin Library Board meeting.

The next BCTV volunteer workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, April 8. Interested individuals can sign up by calling 248/433-7790. The Program Development Committee will meet on Tuesday, April 22.

Rota reported that he and Lisa Martinico met with Linda Badomo from Clinton Township to discuss how they are hooked up to AT&T U-Verse. Zack Florance worked on creating the production truck virtual tour video. The Dog Show, Farmers' Market and Kreger Farmhouse programs were placed on a disc and sent to Muniweb to be viewed on the Cable Board web site. BAMA 15 now has traffic and news crawls during Bulletin Board times after programming is off the air.

McLain mentioned that there is a link on the Cable Board web site to a page entitled, "So you want to be on TV?". It informs people about the procedures to follow if they are interested in producing their own public access television program on local channel 18.

Borgon said that he has observed an improvement in the quality of the BCTV television productions. Rota responded that the improved quality is a result of filming with High Definition resolution equipment from the production truck. The film down converts to standard definition and results in better resolution.

OLD BUSINESS

Tom Maxwell on Lauderdale in Beverly Hills attended the last Cable Board meeting to talk about AT&T wiring problems in his neighborhood. McLain said that the Board will discuss this with an AT&T representative.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Hildreth Buterbaugh from Beverly Hills referred to grant requests discussed earlier in the meeting and asked if the Cable Board is tax exempt; he was informed that the Board and member communities are tax exempt.

Buterbaugh commented that T-1 lines are old technology. He related an issue in his home with not being able to receive On Demand on all televisions having Comcast digital television service.

BOARD COMMENTS

None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 a.m.