

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

Absent: Lurie – Birmingham  
Eads – Franklin

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

#### **APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD MAY 18, 2011**

The correction was made on page 8 under “WOW Related Topics” to amend the second paragraph to read: “Ettenson noted that the May issue of Consumer Reports rated WOW first in customer service satisfaction for the categories of cable, Internet and phone.”

Motion by Heldt, second by Ettenson, that the minutes of a regular Cable Board meeting held on May 18, 2011 be approved as amended.

Motion passed unanimously.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

#### **ADOPT 2011/2012 CABLE BOARD BUDGET**

The proposed Cable Board budget for 2011/2012 has been received and reviewed by the member communities.

Motion by Heldt, second by Pfeifer, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board adopt the Cable Board Budget for fiscal year 2011/2012.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion passed unanimously.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **Cable Action Committee**

McFadden reported that the Cable Action Committee will be involved with reprinting the cable brochure. The Committee is working on a couple of issues in terms of outreach to the community. New signage on the truck is in progress.

McFadden related that the FCC has completed a 465-page report on the information needs of communities and news content. He quoted from the report as follows: “More broadly, the report finds a generally vibrant media landscape with a troubling gap in providing community news about schools and local government that has yet to be filled by the disruptive explosion of web news content.” McFadden stated that this corresponds with the Cable Board’s mission and focus to enhance PEG (public, educational, and government) programming.

McFadden also noted that recent Nielsen research was released indicating that wired cable penetration is at a 21-year low due to alternative delivery systems. With this degradation in wired cable, it will be a challenge for the Board and communities to make sure its constituents receive news and associated issues in a manner that continues to provide an excellent experience. These are two things that are impacting the Board – a gap in news services and the erosion of wired cable penetration. They will be key issues that will affect planning over the coming years.

### **PEG Committee**

Heldt reviewed that the Board approved a renewal of the Bloomfield Community Television contract for three years with a fourth year option. An open issue is to draft a restatement of the BCTV contract to incorporate three amendments to the original contract. It is anticipated that a revised contract document will be available for approval at the July meeting.

There is no resolution to date on the request for financial support to produce new Agebusters exercise television shows. It is a topic that will be discussed further at an upcoming PEG Committee meeting.

Dr. Hoffman thanked the Board on behalf of Birmingham Public Schools for its support over the past school year. He referred to the live broadcast of high school sporting events and Board approval of a grant request for the schools.

### **Personnel Committee**

Ettenson reported that the Personnel Committee met on May 25 to discuss two Birmingham openings on the Cable Board, the performance report outline used by the City of Birmingham, and to set guidelines for evaluating the Executive Director. The Personnel Committee will meet again tomorrow, June 16 at 4 p.m. at the Village of Beverly Hills municipal office to conduct an evaluation of the Board’s Executive Director.

Joe Valentine encouraged Birmingham residents who are interested in serving on the Cable Board to contact the City Clerk’s office and obtain an application for the position.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Borgon summarized the three official complaints received this month, one from each provider. Following action by the Board at last month’s meeting, the account with First Place Bank was closed and a new account opened with the Birmingham Bloomfield Credit Union. Borgon relayed this month’s check disbursements.

In lieu of printing new Birmingham Area Cable Board stationary, the Board decided to design an electronic template for use by authorized individuals.

The annual Plante & Moran audit of the Cable Board is scheduled for July 27-29 at the Beverly Hills office. Treasurer McFadden has been invited to attend.

Two grant requests from the Village of Beverly Hills will be considered at the July Cable Board meeting. Borgon noted that the election of officers will be held in July.

### **COMCAST RELATED TOPICS**

Leslie Brogan representing Comcast introduced a new program that Comcast is rolling out nationwide called “Internet Essentials”. The goal is to increase broadband adoption to families throughout the Comcast footprint. The target audience is low-income households that have at least one child enrolled in a national school lunch program. The criteria for eligibility include having a child in that program, living in the Comcast footprint, not having been a Comcast Internet customer for the previous 90 days, and being in good standing in terms of no unpaid bills or overdue equipment. A household that meets this criteria can apply for the Internet Essentials program, which will allow them to receive broadband service for \$9.95 per month. It will also give them access to a computer of not more than \$150 and digital training.

Brogan said that this was a voluntary program Comcast accepted as part of the NBCU deal with the FCC. This program was rolled out in response to a major obstacle to broadband adoption, which is income level. Another major issue is digital literacy. Internet Essentials will be ready by the start of school in 2011. Comcast will be contacting school superintendents to see how they can help Comcast in disseminating information. Brogan described the process of applying for this program.

Dr. Hoffman thought that the Comcast initiative was a good program and said that the Birmingham School District would do its best to circulate the information to the public. It will help bridge the divide between the students served by the District.

In response to an inquiry from Heyman, Attorney Tim Currier stated that information on the Comcast Internet Essentials program could be disseminated to the public at the Farmers Market booth staffed by Cable Board members.

In answer to an inquiry, Brogan said that she will provide more information on the Skype service for Comcast customers at a later date.

McLain summarized two recent Comcast complaints and their resolution. There was a concern about the length of time for a customer to receive a refund from Comcast. Brogan responded that the general parameter for quoting the time to receive a refund is 6-8 weeks; it may be quicker in some cases.

### **AT&T RELATED TOPICS**

McLain reported that she followed up on two outstanding complaints with AT&T contact Robert Jones, who was not present. One of the complaints has been referred to the Attorney General’s office. Another complaint regarding dropped services has been resolved.

### **WOW RELATED TOPICS**

Kathy Armstead reported that Phase 3 of the WOW digital transition will take place on June 28. If customers do not have a Digital Terminal Adapter (DTA) or WOW equipment hooked up to their televisions, they need to install a DTA before June 28 to continue to receive current programming. Armstead mentioned that their customers have been very receptive to the transition, and WOW is excited about adding new HD channels.

In answer to an inquiry, Armstead addressed the “Right of Entry” issue involving the need for WOW to receive permission to install cable in a private easement for a multi-dwelling unit.

Ettenson referred to a Consumers Report national survey and congratulated WOW for being number one in Internet service, television service, and number two in phone service.

### **BAMA/BAPA REPORT**

Steve Rota summarized 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 May 19, 2011 – June 15, 2011).

The next volunteer camera workshops are scheduled for Thursday, July 21 with one in the morning and one in the evening. In the Park Concerts in Shain Park start next week on Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. Tiger Cub Scout Pack 1 received a studio tour and hands on class last week to earn their communication badges.

Rota reported that both AT&T BAMA and BAPA channels were up and running, but problems were experienced with the encoder shutting off intermittently. BCTV staff has been working with AT&T staff and the manufacturer of the encoder to resolve the issue. It has been determined that BCTV may have to purchase a firewall to prevent the encoder from shutting down.

Rota commented on the “video on demand” link located on the bloomfieldtwp.org website where people can access every series that BCTV films in the studio or on location. There is also a “video on demand” link on the BACB website. Rota explained that each community posts its municipal meetings on their own community web site.

In answer to an inquiry, Rota stated that the Shain Park connections to the production truck are in good working order.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**BOARD COMMENTS**

McFadden announced that the next Cable Action Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, July 7 at 5:30 p.m. at Baldwin Public Library.

Ettenson referred to the Consumer Reports national survey that rated bundled telecom services. He noted that Verizon was number one, AT&T U-Verse was number two, and the third was Bright House Networks. He asked how long it has been since the Board contacted Bright House Networks to determine if the company had any interest in serving this area.

McLain responded that this topic was raised last month, and she followed up with phone calls to Bright House Networks representatives. The service is available in Farmington, Farmington Hills, Livonia and Novi. McLain was told that the company was not near enough to expand to the Birmingham area. Further, Bright House Networks people suggested that this consortium was lucky enough to have satellite plus three other providers in at least two of the Birmingham area communities. The cost of overbuilding during these economic times was also mentioned.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 a.m.