

Present: Linsenman, Lurie, McLain - Birmingham
Borgon, Burry, Heyman, Verdi-Hus– Beverly Hills
Stakhiv – Franklin

Absent: Heldt, Kelly, McAlear – Birmingham
Schneider – Beverly Hills
Ettenson – Bingham Farms

Also Present: White - Executive Director
Currier - Attorney for Cable Board
Rota - Bloomfield Community Television representative
Fred Eaton – Comcast
Celeste Oberhausen – WOW

McLain called the meeting to order at 7:48 a.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD JANUARY 15, 2014

Motion by Lurie, second by Heyman, that the minutes of a regular Cable Board meeting held on January 15, 2014 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

Verdi-Hus reported on the Cable Action Committee meeting held on February 6, 2014. Chairperson McLain and Executive Director White will be attending council and commission meetings for each community to discuss the Cable Board Annual Report for 2012-2013 and the recent Cable Board audit. Another topic discussed at the CAC meeting was preparations for the upcoming budget. The next meeting will be held on March 6 at 5:30 pm at the Baldwin Library.

PEG Committee

Heldt was not present; there was no report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

White stated that two outstanding complaints from last month have been resolved. She highlighted six new complaints received since the last meeting. The Executive Director’s report included monthly financial reports and check disbursement information. Administrative grants were paid out to the member communities.

Board members were provided with copies of a Bloomberg article entitled “Cutting the Cord is a Cable Myth”. The article notes that instead of eliminating cable, many subscribers are simply switching to a different provider.

The Birmingham Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce will be hosting a Business After Hours event at the Maple Theater on March 19 from 5:30-7:00 pm. White asked that Board members notify her if they would like to attend.

The Michigan Public Service Commission has issued its seventh annual report regarding the status of competition for video services in Michigan. The report is available on the MPSC website. White provided the Board with highlights from that report.

The Cable Board has received its annual dues notice from Michigan NATOA (National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors). The cost is \$100.00 for an annual Chapter Membership and \$25.00 for an Associate Membership. White is requesting authorization to purchase a Membership for BACB (Elaine McLain as Chairman) and an Associate Membership for herself for a total of \$125.00. It was the decision of the Board not to make a voluntary contribution to the MI-NATOA Public Education Fund this year.

Motion by Borgon, second by Linsenman, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board authorize the expenditure of \$125 for a membership and an associate membership to MI-NATOA for one year.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion passed (8 – 0).

The Cable Board received a membership invoice from National NATOA in the amount of \$870 for the calendar year. White is requesting authorization from the Board to renew its membership for the upcoming year.

Motion by Heyman, second by Burry, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board authorize an expenditure of \$870 for the annual membership fee in National NATOA.

Roll Call Vote:
Lurie - yes
McLain - yes
Borgon - no
Heyman - yes
Verdi-Hus - yes
Burry - yes
Stakhiv - yes
Linsenman - yes

Motion passed (7 – 1).

White stated that the Board has received its annual dues notice for membership in the Birmingham Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$175.00. She addressed questions from the Board regarding this expenditure. White recommended that the Board renew its membership in this organization.

Motion by Heyman, second by Stakhiv, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board authorize \$175 for membership in the Birmingham Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce for one year.

Roll Call Vote:

McLain - yes
Borgon - no
Heyman - yes
Verdi-Hus - yes
Burry - yes
Stakhiv - yes
Linsenman - yes
Lurie - yes

Motion passed (7 – 1).

White stated that the U.S. Supreme Court will hear the ABC v Aero case on April 22, 2014, which involves the application of the Copyright Act to streaming of free broadcast TV programs via the Internet to paying customers. Aero retransmits broadcast signals to mobile devices via cloud-based storage at a cost of \$8 for 20 hours a month and \$12 for 60 hours. Broadcasters have sued because Aero does not seek to secure retransmission consent for the TV signals it offers to subscribers. Injunctions to shut down the service have been denied in the lower courts.

Comcast has announced that it is acquiring Time Warner Cable in an all-stock deal worth more than \$44 billion. It has been reported that the Justice Department and the FCC will determine whether to approve the merger based on anti-trust implications. Fred Eaton, Senior Manager of External Affairs for Comcast, is present to provide more information on this.

PROVIDER RELATED TOPICS

Comcast

Fred Eaton, Comcast Senior Manager of External Affairs, related that Comcast has announced a merger with Time Warner Cable. Eaton remarked that Satellite television is Comcast's most serious competitor as a company and as an industry. Executing this merger of Comcast and Time Warner makes Comcast more of a national company and better positioned to be able to compete against Satellite. Eaton emphasized that this is not a merger of companies that compete in the same space. Comcast and Time Warner do not do business in the same zip code any place in the country. This is an expansion of Comcast rather than absorption of a competitor. Eaton stated that this transition will create a leading technology and innovation company, differentiated by its ability to deliver ground breaking products on a superior network while leveraging a national platform to create operating efficiencies and economies of scale.

Eaton referred to the term 'convergence' and commented on the ability to watch the Olympics on NBC live via Comcast on one device or another.

Eaton addressed questions from Board members regarding the anticipated FCC review process relative to the merger, what it means to the cable consumer, the 2015 renewal of the BACB

franchise agreement with Comcast, and the Press Release statement that Comcast is prepared to divest systems serving approximately 3 million managed subscribers in order to reduce competitive concerns. Eaton related that this merger will not greatly impact Comcast's conduct of business in Michigan. In response to an inquiry, Eaton welcomed the opportunity to host Board members on a tour of the Plymouth facility or a tour of the Michigan Master head end in Taylor. A tour will be coordinated by the Executive Director.

McLain stated that the Cable Board is committed to Public, Educational, and Government (PEG) programming; that is one of its biggest responsibilities. Our communities feel strongly about governmental transparency and public voice. We look forward to being good partners with all three providers in that regard.

AT&T

Robert Jones representing AT&T was not available to attend this meeting.

WOW

Celeste Oberhausen representing WOW reported that the company is in the process of working with Comcast to install a fiber connection into their hub site that will supply all three PEG channels to Birmingham and Beverly Hills. Oberhausen referred to the company's recent rate increase and efforts made by WOW to address customer questions and concerns. She commented on programming changes, noting that informational letters went out to customers.

BAPA/BAMA REPORT

Steve Rota highlighted programming outlined in the written report from Bloomfield Community Television 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 January 15, 2014 – February 19, 2014). Six high school athletic events approved in December have been broadcast. Spring sporting events will be upcoming.

The next camera workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, April 8 from 10:00 am to noon or 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Interested individuals can call 248-433-7790 to sign up. There were seven residents in attendance at the camera workshops held on January 29. The date of the next Program Development Committee meeting has yet to be determined.

Two dates in March are scheduled for Tiger Cub Scout studio tours.

OLD BUSINESS

Stakhiv reviewed that the Cable Board approved a grant to the Krieger House in Franklin that involved installing cable lines in the community center. She was informed that Comcast has not been answering phone calls from Franklin officials relating to the timing for this installation. Fred Easton suggested that Stakhiv send him an email with the information, and he will address this issue.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMENTS

None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 a.m.