

BIRMINGHAM AREA CABLE BOARD MEETING MINUTES – August 17, 2016

Present: Heldt, McLain, Eick – Birmingham
 Borgon (alternate), Maly, Gugni, Verdi-Hus – Village of Beverly Hills
 Ettenson – Village of Bingham Farms
 Stakhiv – Village of Franklin

Absent: McAlear, Bozell - Birmingham

Also Present: White – Executive Director
 Currier – Attorney for Cable Board
 Marshall – Assistant Manager/Clerk, Village of Beverly Hills
 Rota and Black – Bloomfield Community Television

McLain called the meeting to order at 7:47 AM in the Birmingham Public Schools' Education & Administration Center, Evergreen Room, 31301 Evergreen Road, Beverly Hills, MI.

McLain welcomed the newest member of the Cable Board from Beverly Hills, Gil Gugni.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD July 20, 2016

Motion by Heldt, seconded by Stakhiv to approve the minutes of the Regular Cable Board Meeting on July 20, 2016, as presented.

Motion passed.

MUNICIPAL SUPPORT SERVICES GRANT REQUESTS (3) – BEVERLY HILLS

Postponed until later in the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

Verdi-Hus reported that there was no meeting in July since there was no carry-over from the previous Board Meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 1, at 5:30 PM upstairs in the Baldwin Library. The meeting is open to the public.

PEG Committee

McAlear, Chairman, was not present and White did not have anything to report. McLain said that there would be a brief PEG meeting following the BACB meeting this morning. Rota stated that he had some information about equipment. Rota referred to an email he had sent to McAlear, McLain, and White regarding coverage of the fall sporting events by BCTV. There will be six (6) fall events: volleyball, football, soccer, water polo, swim and dive, and tennis. In the past the cost has been \$2,500 per event.

Motion by Heldt, seconded by Eick to approve payment to BCTV in an amount not to exceed \$15,000.00 for the filming of six (6) fall sporting events.

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For Gugni’s benefit, the newest member of the BACB, McLain explained that BCTV, our contractor, records, edits, and rebroadcasts sporting events of the two (2) high schools. It is part of the Public Educational Governmental programming. Rota further explained that BCTV only covers those games (boys and girls) between Groves and Seaholm, depending on the season.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion passed (9-0)

MUNICIPAL SUPPORT SERVICES GRANT REQUESTS (3) – BEVERLY HILLS

Ellen Marshall, Assistant Manager/Clerk, Village of Beverly Hills, referring to her Memo, dated August 4, 2016, presented the Village’s annual requests for three (3) different grants: Internet service with WOW! for the Village Offices at the cost of \$93.75 per month totaling \$1,125.00 for FY2016/2017; Web streaming and hosting of the bi-monthly Beverly Hills Village Council meetings and monthly Birmingham Area Cable Board meetings at the cost \$205.42 per month totaling \$2,465.00 for FY2016/2017; Internet service with Comcast for the Beverly Hills Department of Public Safety at the cost of \$82.90 per month totaling \$994.80 for FY2016/2017.

McLain clarified with White that these monies come out of the Municipal Support Services Grant budget line item. White confirmed that the account has \$70,000 budgeted for such grants for FY2016/2017 and is available to other communities.

Noting that Beverly Hills contracts with both WOW! and Comcast, Ettenson wondered if it could “bundle” its services. Marshall explained that the Village Office has a “bundled” rate for everything. Regarding the Public Safety Department, in the past there had been a monetary penalty if a contract was broken before its expiration, but she would again contact the Public Safety Department to see if it would consider switching over to WOW!

McLain referred Marshall to the Comcast’s representative to the BACB, Kyle Mazurek.

Motion by Stakhiv, seconded by Maly to approve three (3) Municipal Support Services Grants in the total amount not to exceed \$ 4,584.80 for Internet services for the Village of Beverly Hills offices; Web streaming and hosting to the Village of Beverly Hills; and, Internet services for the Public Safety Department for FY2016/2017.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion Passed (9-0)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

White referred to her report dated August 11, 2016. Since her last report she has received six (6) complaints. One was submitted by a Board member who had a problem with the placement of a DirecTV (AT&T) satellite dish on his roof and the servicing of it. The complaint is now closed. The second complaint came from the president of a condominium association in Birmingham and dealt with the burial of cables within a condominium property. Within this past year WOW! and Comcast have removed their cables on the building but AT&T had not, and DirecTV has installed some dishes without prior approval. This complaint is pending.

For the public's and Gugni's review, McLain gave a brief history of the Cable Board, its main purpose being to deal with cable complaints. Now with the merger of AT&T and DirecTV, a different product is being delivered through a satellite which does not run through the rights of way and is not governed by the Cable Board. The Cable Board does not receive franchise fees or PEG fees from those bills, and in fact, the BACB has no authority over what they do, cannot regulate, and cannot guide. However, out of courtesy, the BACB refer the complaints to the Board representatives. If this does not work and involves DirecTV, the customer might wish to go directly to the FCC for a resolution. McLain hopes the BACB can partner with AT&T to escalate

these issues as they are starting to expand in the market. At the moment it is not BACB's primary responsibility. If the public needs information about contacting the FCC, the BACB's Executive Director White can be of assistance.

A Franklin resident submitted a complaint claiming that Comcast had left some branches in his trees after they were trimmed. The Comcast escalation team explained to the resident that Comcast does not cut, trim, or remove trees or branches from customers' properties. This complaint is closed because neither Comcast nor DTE took responsibility for the trimming. Another closed complaint was submitted by the City of Birmingham regarding low hanging WOW! wires over some city streets. WOW! resolved the problem. A complaint was received through the website from a Birmingham resident who had been waiting since July 31, 2016 for Comcast to contact him concerning the installation of a new cable line for the cable box in his complex to his unit. The escalation team has been notified of this issue. This complaint is pending. The last complaint from a Birmingham resident is closed and involved the removal of a Comcast cable line from the outside of her condominium unit.

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 FY2016/2017.

Since her last report, White has written four (4) checks on behalf of the BACB for the grants which were approved last month and one (1) for the MMRMA liability insurance. She explained that in past years MMRMA has rebated a large amount back to the BACB, noting the two (2) checks she recently received.

Additional Notes:

She spoke with Kyle Mazurek, Comcast representative, who informed her that Comcast customers can now pay their bills at over 7,700 7-Eleven stores nationwide. She gave the step-by-step directions, beginning with using the XFINITY My Account app on the customer's phone. She added there is a \$1.25 convenience fee per transaction. The payment would post within 48 business hours.

White updated the Board about the opening of five (5) new Comcast call centers nationwide, the addition of thousands of new employees, the redesign of 177 stores, and indicated that on-time arrivals for tech appointments was reaching 98.7 %. Borgon inquired about the locations of Comcast stores and providing what type of services. McLain suggested obtaining a list from Mazurek of the closest stores to our communities.

Comcast has announced plans to begin Xfinity Prepaid Services which is a “pay-as-you-go” program for TV or internet services for either seven (7) or thirty (30) days, with a one-time set – up fee for necessary equipment and a complimentary thirty (30) day trial period. There are no limitations as to how many times the service can be renewed. White elaborated on how it would work and who it would benefit. She questioned as to what would happen if it were not renewed in a timely manner and it lapsed. She would discuss this with Mazurek, as well as McLain’s concern for those residents who go on vacation for extended periods of time and Maly’s question about whether the rates were competitive, i.e., is the week rate 25% of the monthly rate?

Another item from Comcast: starting August 29, 2016, customer account numbers and monthly due dates will change because of a change in the billing vendors they use. These changes would have a minimal impact on the customers. Customer will need to update their Comcast account number if they make payments online or through their bank and would be receiving emails informing them of these changes. White had a sample of the communication which would be going to the customers. Ettenson requested that White report at the next BACB about how this is progressing.

White reported about an article in the press concerning WOW! planning to offer an ultra high-speed internet, up to 1 gigabit per second in Grosse Pointe Shores and four (4) other markets nationally. This coincides with what Mazurek (Comcast representative) informed us about at the last meeting of their offering ultra-speed internet. She listed the benefits of this faster broadband service. As for offering such a service to our communities, she received a response to her inquiry from Robert Dinardo, who stated that they are constantly evaluating communities to expand their network based on a number of factors, one being a demand from customers for such a service. She advised WOW! customers in the four (4) communities who are interested in such a service to write letters to WOW! and/or call WOW! encouraging them to expand. McLain even suggested the residents use the comment form on the BACB website and White would escalate it to WOW!

PROVIDER RELATED TOPICS

a. Comcast

There was no representative present.

Stakhiv has noticed that in the last two (2) weeks she and other residents were having some issues. She even had a problem with the Olympics and another program being superimposed on her DVR for 30 minutes. Her TV had been freezing up during the Olympics so she has had to reboot it at least four (4) times. This usually happens during the peak hours (8-11 PM). She has experienced a lot of pixelating. Residents have contacted her about their DVRs cutting off at the last minute at the end of a program. She figured out that the problem was not with the setting of the clock, as all were set correctly. She will write up these complaints and send to the Executive Director.

b. AT&T/Uverse/Direct TV

There was no representative present.

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Maly has noticed a slowing of his internet service over the last couple of weeks. He is a new DirecTV/AT&T internet customer and was told he would have faster internet service. At the moment his is half that of what he had before he switched. He was hoping this was short term. If not, he, too, would be contacting the Executive Director.

Currier related that the communities should be receiving a letter seeking a renewal of the local AT&T franchise agreement. If any of the Clerks in the other three communities receive such a letter, they should contact Currier so that a consistent approach is taken in each community.

c. WOW

There was no representative present.

Borgon was having the same problems as Stakhiv: pixelating and freezing screens during the Olympics.

BAPA/BAMA REPORT

Steve Rota referred to his memo to BACB, dated August 4, 2016, and pointed out the six (6) completed **BAMA** Programs which were regularly scheduled municipal meetings, Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, Birmingham Advisory Board Meeting, Multi Modal Transportation Board Meeting, the BACB meeting, and the Baldwin Public Library Board Trustee meeting.

For the **BAPA** Programs, from the BACB area individual producers and organizations, twenty-two (22) programs were taped. He listed all the programs, including a new series, *Managing the Problems of Daily Living*.

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. This change in format seems to be working out better. Residents can contact BCTV at 248-433-7790 to schedule an appointment date and time. There is no fee for those living in one of the four communities. He extended an invitation to Gugni, as a new member of the Board, to come to the studio and take a tour of the facility. He also gave more details about the workshop.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Currier had a Public Service Announcement from the City of Birmingham. West Maple Road will be open Friday, September 2, the Friday before Labor Day.

BOARD COMMENTS

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White stated that the Cable Board meetings will continue to be held in the Evergreen Room in the Birmingham Public Schools' Education & Administration Center at 31301 Evergreen Road until the end of the year. Renovation of the Village of Beverly Hills Offices is on-going.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 AM.