

BIRMINGHAM AREA CABLE BOARD MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 17, 2021

Present: Abraham (Birmingham), Fenberg (Mexico), McLain (Birmingham), Shand (Birmingham), Cleary (Colorado) – Birmingham
Tootell (Beverly Hills), Gugni (Beverly Hills), Henry (Beverly Hills) – Beverly Hills
Blackburn (Bingham Farms) – Bingham Farms
Mydloski (Franklin) - Franklin

Absent: Eick, Burry

Also Present: White - BACB Executive Director (Livonia)
Currier – Attorney for Cable Board
Chas Kipp – Multi-Bank Securities
Kyle Mazurek - Comcast
Rota – Bloomfield Community Television
Brunk – IT Manager, City of Birmingham

McLain, called the meeting to order at 7:45 AM via Remote Zoom.us with closed captioning.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD January 20, 2021

Motion by Mydloski, seconded by Fenberg to approve the minutes of the Cable Board meeting on January 20, 2021, as presented.

On page 3, after the last sentence of the third (3rd) paragraph, McLain added, “There was a discussion about the restrictions for funding due to the interlocal agreement and the return of excess funds to the communities.” She explained this last sentence needed to be added as it was a critical clarification going forward of how and why BACB does what it does.

On page 4, under **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**, at the end of the first sentence, McLain corrected the spelling of a member’s name. It should be “**Dr.** Diane Burke”.

Motion by Mydloski, seconded by Fenberg to approve the minutes of the Cable Board meeting on January 20, 2021, as amended.

Roll Call Vote

Fenberg	Aye
Gugni	Aye
Abraham	Aye
Mydloski	Aye
Henry	Aye
Shand	Aye
Tootell	Aye
Cleary	Aye
Blackburn	Aye
McLain	Aye

Motion Passed. (10-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments at this time.

MBS PRESENTATION

Chas Kipp, Senior Vice President, Multi-Bank Securities, gave an overview of how this year would be approached, in terms of spending and disbursements and the current challenge of how to foresee when and if the changes in the interest rates might happen. The goals were to keep the monies available for expenditures and at the same time try to earn as much interest as possible while keeping the money safe. This was a month-to-month situation. As the next maturity date comes closer in April, he will be looking at the Cable Board's potential inflows and outflows and then find the best options and the best additions to the investments.

Kipp gave an overview of MBS for the new members, stressing that this was a fixed income institutional firm, completely in the Bond market (CD's, US Treasuries, government agencies, and more). The investments must be within the guidelines of BACB's investment policy statement and Michigan Public Act 20. McLain noted that BACB's Investment Policy was in the New Member Manual.

Henry inquired whether the BACB's nest egg would be protected in these uncertain times. Kipp answered by giving a comprehensive, hypothetical answer to the hypothetical question. Fenberg added that typically the BACB holds its investments to maturity and therefore it is not affected by market fluctuations. McLain also added that when a maturity is close there is a discussion about possible projects in the future and the revenue stream.

Kipp invited members to call or email questions to him. McLain, Fenberg and White have all his information.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

Abraham reported that the CAC had a meeting on February 4. White, McLain, Henry, Tootell, Cleary and Abraham were present. This was a new member orientation meeting and White went over the new member manual. Tootell inquired about the role of Board members and Henry replied that the financial responsibility of the Cable Board was its most important role. The website was discussed. The next meeting will be March 4, 2021.

McLain added that there was a discussion of putting the new member manual online when the website is changed. White's work with Muniweb is progressing. There have been some changes with more to come and some elements need to be updated. White encouraged members to let her know if they see anything that needs attention.

PEG Committee

Mydloski stated the committee had a meeting January 20 immediately following the BACB meeting.

In attendance were Mydloski, Rota, McLain, Tootell, White, Fenberg, Abraham and Cleary. The topic centered around WOW proposing to offer an HD channel. If BACB were to stream it on the PEG channel, BACB would need some equipment to do so. The cost specifics were discussed with Rota who will speak to this later. One concern was that the equipment might not be compatible with AT&T and Comcast.

There will be a PEG meeting following this meeting.

Rota had talked with Laura from WOW who told him about the rollout of the HD Channel for the PEG channel. BCTV has the equipment to send out the HD signal; however, more equipment would be needed. WOW advised him that Advanced Lighting and Sound had the equipment and the cost would be \$5,081 for equipment and installation. Rota clarified that as of yet WOW did not have its infrastructure in place and was not ready for the HD channel; however, Rota wanted to plan ahead. McLain explained that not every provider sends out an HD signal for the PEG channel; however, Comcast and AT&T do.

Mydloski asked Rota to comment on obtaining other quotes. Rota responded that, as always, he will go out for competitive bids from the vendors; however, Advanced Lighting and Sound usually has the better offer since it usually has a lower installation cost.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

White referred to her monthly report dated February 11, 2021. There was only one (1) complaint since her last report, and it came from a Birmingham resident who stated that she was paying for a faster internet speed from Comcast than what she was receiving. Even though BACB doesn't normally deal with the internet, her complaint was submitted to the Comcast escalation team as a courtesy. In addition, the resident requested an adjustment to her bill. A Comcast technician found the problem and replaced a defective inside wiring cable and defective modem. A large credit would be applied to her next bill as would the cost of an in-home visit. The complaint is closed.

FINANCIAL

Financial information for MBS, BBCU and Beverly Hills accounts as of January 31, 2021 was sent to the Board Members. The balance at Beverly Hills was getting high so she would be transferring funds into the Credit Union account. The Administrative Grants were paid this month, and this did not reflect Birmingham's grant as its check had not been cashed at the time this report was compiled.

White wrote ten (10) checks since the last meeting; four (4) of which were for the Administrative Grants which had been approved. Also paid was a bill for the liability insurance which was the last installment for the year.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Her additional notes dealt with Comcast which Mazurek would address in his report.

PROVIDER RELATED TOPICS

a. Comcast

Kyle Mazurek from Comcast reported that a new Xfinity store had opened in Bloomfield Township at 1991 S. Telegraph Rd. He noted that the Comcast app has many features, including store locations closest to the customer and the ability to book an appointment at any store. Comcast has begun to launch “Lift Zones” in southeast Michigan. These are community-type spaces with robust WiFi hotspots which would provide connectivity and access points for those low-income students who are unable to connect to online learning classes from their homes. These spaces were also available to adults for adult education and more. Mazurek spoke about a new program, “Rise”, which focuses on low-income families in the city of Detroit and will provide low-cost internet service for \$9.95/month. This service will include several options through its 60-day free “Internet Essentials Program”. Also, Comcast will be awarding \$1Million in grants to small businesses. Information can be accessed at ComcastRise.com. The application period is March 1 – March 14.

Mydloski had questions concerning the low-cost internet service: “Internet Essentials Program”. Mazurek explained the difference between that program and the “Lift Zone” initiative. He also added that there was a partner program connected with school districts in disadvantaged areas. This was for those districts which want to underwrite the cost of the “Internet Essential Program” for its low-income households.

McLain complimented the work the providers have done to support the four (4) communities’ infrastructure and the residents’ needs during this COVID-19 period. Information about education, connectivity, health, safety and more are among other issues which all four (4) communities need to share on their websites. These items are not always obvious and these pieces of information are critical. The public should have access to all.

McLain inquired whether Mazurek had any information about Comcast’s plans to change PEG-SD to PEG-HD. Mazurek did not know and could only state that the policy in Michigan continues to be SD for the seeable future.

b. AT&T/Uverse/Direct TV

There was no representative present and no new information received.

c. WOW

There was no representative present and no new information received.

McLain encouraged residents to exchange or upgrade their equipment now and not wait until spring to do it when the demand might be more.

White complimented Mazurek and the Comcast escalation team for being so helpful to her and for making her job easier.

BAPA/BAMA REPORT

Rota referred to his February 11, 2021 report and listed all the completed **BAMA** regularly scheduled municipal meetings: Baldwin Public Library Board Meeting, Bingham Farms Council Meeting, all the Birmingham meetings, Franklin Council Meeting and the BACB Meeting.

For the **BAPA** Programs, 13 programs by producers and organizations (which he identified) were taped via Zoom.

PRODUCER WORKSHOP

As usual, for those interested in producing a program or want to experience behind the scenes, please call the office at 248-433-7790 to schedule a future appointment. When it is safe, the studio will reopen to do those shows.

STUDIO UPDATE

For the safety of all during this pandemic, BCTV continues using Zoom for all studio productions. Once the “all clear” notice is posted to reopen the studio to do shows, he will advise everyone. He thanked everyone for their patience and the producers for their flexibility doing their shows through Zoom.

Periodically (at least once a month), Rota has been attending to the truck to make sure the equipment was running smoothly. He added that if there were multiple meetings going on at the same time, he has one going on in the control room and one being recorded in the truck. Today he would be taking the truck over to Franklin to double check its equipment. He was aware that some communities might be doing meetings in person and via Zoom (a hybrid situation), so he will also be making his rounds to those sites to check on the different scenarios.

Tootell inquired whether other organizations in Beverly Hills could have recorded meetings in the municipal building, such as a garden club or water conservation. Rota explained the current process and suggested that when the Village resumed meetings, she should speak with the City Manager. He pointed out there were other meeting places in the Village which might be able to accommodate the number of people she wanted. He also suggested doing a Zoom meeting, such as this one and record it. Tootell had further questions for Rota concerning the types, formats and locations of events being recorded during the pandemic, as well as ideas for some future shows which might be of community-wide interest. She and Rota will talk about the possibilities.

OLD BUSINESS

McLain attended the Michigan NATOA (local chapter of National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors) chat. Currently there was no litigation; however, Currier will advise BACB if and when there was.

McLain also attended a Zoom NEXT Board meeting yesterday. She reminded residents to donate items which would benefit Seniors or anyone over the age of 50, i.e., clothing or equipment from care giving.

NEW BUSINESS.

McLain shared that there was an initiative in Birmingham where the Fire Chief and Mayor could get certified to administer COVID vaccine injections. As of now, they hadn't received clearance; however, this would be beneficial to the NEXT members as they could receive the shots at the NEXT building and not have to go through a traditional hospital system.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mydloski thanked McLain for sending out an article which she felt was truly relevant to BACB as it reflected what our PEG Channel does: inclusion and diversity. McLain stated that the theme of the article was local color, flavor, public programming. The spectrum is particularly important.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 AM.