

BIRMINGHAM AREA CABLE BOARD MEETING MINUTES – December 18, 2019

Present: Abraham, Eick, McLain - Birmingham
 Borgon, Burry, Delaney, Gugni – Beverly Hills
 Mydloski – Franklin

Absent Fenberg, Shand– Birmingham

Also Present: White - BACB Executive Director
 Currier – Attorney for Cable Board
 Rota – Bloomfield Community Television

McLain called the meeting to order at 7:45AM in the Village of Beverly Hills Municipal Building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD November 20, 2019.

Motion by Gugni, seconded by Burry to approve the minutes of the Regular Cable Board Meeting on November 20, 2019, as presented.

Motion Passed (8-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

Abraham reported that on December 5, 2019 the Cable Action Committee had a meeting with Fenberg and McLain in attendance. The report of the independent auditors was discussed for the fund and activities for FY2019/20. They found a minor issue with the controls of certain transactions. All checks that are issued required two signatures (Treasurer and Ex. Director); however, certain electronic transactions only require one person to initiate them. The auditors recommended procedures similar to the way BACB does the check writing. McLain noted that this issue with the wire transfers had been discussed last year with the credit union; however, it had been resistant to change. This year it is less resistance and Fenberg and White will be dealing with this matter and setting up a system. Another subject discussed at the meeting was McLain's discussions with other cable boards concerning the possible loss of PEG funding. (McLain will address this later in the meeting.) The next Cable Action Committee meeting would be Thursday, January 2, at 4:30 PM at the Baldwin Public Library in Birmingham. If necessary White will send an email with any changes to the meeting date and/or time.

PEG Committee

Borgon noted there had been a PEG meeting following November's BACB meeting. Mydloski, Gugni, Abraham, McLain, White and himself were in attendance.

1. PEG Grant Request from the Village of Franklin

Because of the success in Bingham Farms, the Franklin Administrator wanted to upgrade the equipment in the Village Council chamber to have the same equipment. Rota has already done his due diligence and the cost of the upgrades would be \$23,091.00. Borgon confirmed with White that there was money in the budget for such a request.

Motion by Borgon, seconded by Mydloski to approve a PEG Grant request in the amount not to exceed \$23,100.00 to the Village of Franklin for the purchase of upgraded equipment to film the Village meetings.

Rota explained that the set-up would be similar to Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Birmingham and Baldwin Library with free robotic cameras. Franklin's cameras would be hanging in the rafters plus a mini-TriCaster.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion Passed (8-0).

2. Approve purchase of truck equipment

Borgon stated that the truck needed equipment, all of which Rota detailed at November's meeting: Focus and Zoom Controllers for the cameras and Video Monitors for the parade announcers. The cost would be \$7,000.00.

Motion by Borgon, seconded by Burry to approve payment to Advanced Lighting & Sound for the purchase of four (4) Focus and Zoom Controllers and video monitors for the cameras in the truck in the amount not to exceed \$7,000.00.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion Passed (8-0).

3. Approve purchase of ENG Equipment (Electronic News Gathering)

At the November meeting Rota detailed the equipment needed for location shooting: cables, camera tripods, ENG cameras and accessories and microphones. The cost would be \$19,882.00.

Motion by Borgon, seconded by Gugni to approve payment to Advanced Lighting & Sound for the purchase of cable, camera tripods, ENG cameras and accessories and microphones in the amount not to exceed \$20,000.00.

McLain clarified with Rota that the new equipment was professional mid-level to replace a couple of ENG cameras which had been bought seven (7) years ago and deteriorating. Delaney asked Rota to explain the purpose of the equipment. Rota explained that the ENG equipment, which can be handled by several people, could be taken and set up in a room for a lecture or anywhere in the community. This equipment is used very frequently.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion Passed (8-0).

Personnel Committee

Gugni, stated that due to retirements, the Committee has been depleted. Mydloski and Eick have agreed to join the committee. A meeting would be scheduled very soon in the New Year.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

White referred to her monthly report dated December 12, 2019. There were four (4) complaints since the date of her last report. The first (1st) complaint was from a Birmingham resident regarding his WOW bill. To avoid paying \$4.00 per month to receive a paper bill he had signed up for paperless billing but the website repeatedly went down and he could not view his bill. Wow has resolved this issue. This complaint is closed. The second (2nd) complaint was from a Beverly Hills resident and involved service issues with her Comcast cable and WI-FI connections. A technician came out to her house and resolved the service issues. This complaint is closed. The third (3rd) complaint came from a Franklin resident who was concerned that he was the victim of a “bait and switch” tactic by Comcast, as the new package which he signed up for was different from what he was actually receiving in terms of channels and pricing. Comcast resolved this. This complaint is closed. The fourth (4th) complaint was received from a Birmingham resident, who, with the help of BACB, was able to get Comcast and WOW to remove some wires from an old pole on his property. He was now waiting for AT&T to do the same so DTE can remove the old pole. AT&T sent a technician out but this complaint is pending.

FINANCIAL

The account balances for MBS, BBCU and Beverly Hills accounts as of November 30, 2019 were emailed to all Board members and she also provided hard copies for the Board at the meeting, as well as budget to actual figures.

Since the last Board meeting White has written three (3) checks on behalf of the BACB. The first was to the Charter Township of Bloomfield for the correction payment of several quarterly contract underpayments. The auditors brought this to her and the Township's attention. The other major check was to Advanced Light & Sound for equipment. Responding to McLain's inquiry about the underpayment, White stated that now there was a double-check system to catch such oversights.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

All Comcast customers will be notified of the increases for certain services and fees beginning January 1, 2020. These notifications would be included in the bills, the largest of which would be in the Broadcast TV fee. Internet prices and internet/voice equipment rentals would also increase.

An article in the Broadcasting & Cable Magazine (December 9, 2019) reported that streaming video services were not driving cord cutting. It pointed out that password sharing and TV Everywhere were having a greater impact.

McLain, Mydloski and White attended the Birmingham Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce event held on December 11, 2019. They felt the event was successful in spreading the word about the BACB in that many people did not know about the Cable Board and what it does. Mydloski related her experience with one of the attendees who had a neighbor who needed someone to resolve a cable issue on her behalf.

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Delaney was confused as to the reason why Comcast was increasing its pricing, as it did not make a lot of sense to him. McLain stated that specifics from the provider representative were needed to answer his questions. White can follow up with Mazurek (Comcast) and the other providers. By law the providers must provide some sort of notice. This is usually found on the bill. McLain reminded residents that now was an opportune time to revisit all the charges on the bill. As a reminder, when calling a provider, write down pertinent information: what was said in the conversation, a reference number and a confirmation number.

PROVIDER RELATED TOPICS

a. Comcast

There was no representative present.

b. AT&T/Uverse/Direct TV

There was no representative present.

c. WOW

There was no representative present.

McLain stated there were new streaming services; however, there was no official communication from AT&T and WOW. She knew there was some communication from Comcast and advised residents to go to their provider websites online or call the provider directly and find out about the streaming services.

BAPA/BAMA REPORT

Rota referred to his memo to BACB dated December 11, 2019. He listed the completed **BAMA** Programs which were seven (7) regularly scheduled municipal meetings, the BACB meeting, the Parks and Recreation meeting, the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, Village of Bingham Farms Council meeting, Baldwin Library Board and Trustee meeting.,

For the **BAPA** Programs, from the BACB area individual producers and organizations, twenty-six (26) programs were taped, all of which he listed. He also added that most of the organizations which were covered use the ENG cameras.

PRODUCER and/or VOLUNTEER WORKSHOP - BCTV is offering a one-on-one session for those who are interested in producing their own show and for those who want to volunteer and experience “behind the scenes”, as well as do some programming. Please call 248-433-7790 and BCTV will schedule a date and time for you.

In the last six (6) months the issue of the Beverly Hills livestream interruptions during meetings has been discussed. After some troubleshooting, he and Greg Black determined it was the “Smartboard” which was the problem. He will still do some more research.

In response to Borgon’s inquiry, Rota listed the original seven (7) regular meetings: 2 Birmingham Commission meetings, 2 Birmingham Planning Board meetings, 2 Village of Beverly Hills Council meetings, and Village of Franklin Council meeting.

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Delaney will inform the Beverly Hills Manager about the possible situation with using the Smartboard and the alternative back-up plans.

OLD BUSINESS

McLain will be going to the Michigan NATOA meeting tomorrow for the retirement of the Communications Director and the President of Michigan NATOA.

Currier commented on the FCC concerns. The courts in Minnesota have cleared the way for an appeal of the FCC rulings which would reduce the PEG fees for capital expenditures and other services provided by the cable providers.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMENTS

McLain commented that the Cable Board has received positive feedback from the Bingham Farms community which is very happy with the new delivery system of information; i.e. broadcast.

McLain was supposed to be a guest on Chuck Moss's show this Monday but Moss needed to re-schedule.

She invited residents to watch the different programs on their local PEG channels and to visit BACB's brightly colored website. Please send cable questions and comments to the link on it. If a problem needs to be escalated, the cable phone is 248-336-9445.

Gugni related a very positive experience with a Comcast repair person. He will forward White his comments who will send them to the provider.

White complimented Robert Jones, the escalation representative from AT&T, on his assistance with the last complaint involving the removal of the AT&T wire off the pole. Once all wires are removed from the old pole, the resident can have the pole removed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 AM.