

BIRMINGHAM AREA CABLE BOARD MEETING MINUTES – March 15, 2023

Gugni called the meeting of the Birmingham Area Cable Board to order at 7:45 AM. in the Village of Beverly Hills Municipal Building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

Present: Eick, Shand, Abraham– Birmingham
Gugni, Kamoo, Dobies, Henry– Beverly Hills
David – Franklin

Also Present: Gojcaj – Attorney for the Cable Board
Black – Bloomfield Community Television
White - BACB Executive Director

Absent: Fenberg, Whittington, Hagaman, Cleary

Gugni announced that Fenberg and Whittington have resigned from the Board. All will be missed. Deana Brown will be representing Birmingham starting April 1, 2023.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD January 18, 2023

Motion by Eick, seconded by Shand and Kamoo to approve the minutes of the Cable Board meeting on January 18, 2023.

Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

PEG GRANT REQUEST – BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM

Leslie Pielack, Executive Director of the Birmingham Museum, requested funds to launch a podcast project and funds to purchase equipment. This would be a new effort to communicate content and educate a broader public.

Pielack responded to the discrepancies in the “Project expense summary is as follows...” attachment on page two (2) of her report. Gugni highlighted that the total Subscription costs of “Distribution/Hosting Platform (Buzzsprout), \$12/mo” was an error and should be changed from \$1,200.00 to \$144. David also questioned the final figure for “Project writing and production staff”. Gugni pointed out that at the last PEG meeting there had been an extensive discussion that staff funding was not part of PEG grant requests. BACB only funded requests for capital investments. This item should be struck from the proposal. White supported this explanation.

David clarified that access to the studio would be available to other City of Birmingham departments. The studio would be at the Museum. With these revisions the total project costs would be \$4,974.13.

Pielack confirmed that the Subscription Service would have an option to provide written or basic transcripts of the podcasts. She would investigate it as its accessibility is very important.

Motion by David, seconded by Kamoo to approve a PEG Grant request in the amount not to exceed \$4,974.13 to Birmingham Museum for the total cost of a Podcast Project and Equipment.

Roll Call Vote

Eick Aye
Henry Aye
Gugni Aye
David Aye
Kamoo Aye
Shand Aye
Dobies Aye
Abraham Aye

Motion Passed. (8-0).

APPROVAL OF BCTV REQUEST TO ALLOW PART-TIME STAFF TO DRIVE THE PRODUCTION TRUCK

Greg Black, General Manager, BCTV, re-capped January’s PEG meeting discussion regarding this issue. Currently, he and Rota are the only full-time production members allowed to drive the truck and this has occasionally created some issues. A select 2 to 3 part-time staff members would be fully trained in the operation of the truck. It was confirmed that any staff member, full-time or part-time, would be fully insured. White will speak with BCTV’s insurance company concerning the requirement of a chauffeur’s license.

Henry suggested that a program or process be written down which, when followed, would give a staff member (full-time and part-time) permission to drive the BCTV production vehicle. Black supported having such guidelines.

Motion by Henry, seconded by Kamoo to approve up to five (5) drivers of the BCTV production truck. BCTV will create a written policy regarding the official certification process which all staff members must complete in order to be able to drive the truck. The BCTV document will be submitted to the BACB by the May 2023 meeting.

Roll Call Vote

Henry Aye
Gugni Aye
David Aye
Kamoo Aye
Shand Aye
Dobies Aye
Abraham Aye
Eick Aye

Motion Passed. (8-0).

White will provide David with the pertinent certificate indicating BCTV's ownership and insurance liability policy.

BOARD ELECTION FOR TREASURER

Gugni told the Board that after 7 years as Treasurer, Fenberg has stepped down from the Board. Rick David, another CPA on the Board, has agreed to assume the responsibility of Treasurer of BACB until the next election.

Motion by Henry, seconded by Kamoo to appoint Rick David the Treasurer of the Birmingham Area Cable Board until the next election.

Motion passed unanimously. (8-0)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

Abraham stated there had not been a meeting last month nor would there be one today.

PEG Committee

Kamoo stated there would not be a PEG meeting today. However, Birmingham Schools might have a proposal to present to the PEG Committee at the May meeting.

David questioned and expressed his concerns about the scheduling of the different committee meetings. Gugni gave a brief history of the timing and locations of those meetings; the lack of participation had been of some concern. Kamoo volunteered to have PEG Committee meetings at a different location and more frequently, if deemed necessary.

Personnel Committee

Eick stated it was time for White's evaluation. He would be sending out the evaluation forms to everyone. The Personnel Committee will then meet to review the forms and then meet and review them with White. Members of the committee are himself, Shand, Cleary and Kamoo. All Board members are invited to attend the meetings.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

White reported there were six (6) complaints this month since her last report. She has detailed all of them in her memorandum. All but one has been closed and that particular one dealt with a wire down; the provider had not been established (Comcast or AT&T). The others were service issues and line issues and have been resolved. Due to his personal involvement, Eick confirmed that the one pending complaint has now been closed.

FINANCIAL

White provided the financial account balances for the MBS, Michigan United Credit Union and Beverly Hills as of January 31, 2023. She was waiting for more information for the month of February. This information, as well as BACB financial reports for January 2023 will be emailed to the Board members. Hard copies were distributed to Board members at the meeting.

CHECK DISBURSEMENT

White wrote three (3) checks since the last meeting; of note, was for the BACB quarterly contract payment to the Charter Township of Bloomfield.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The Detroit Free Press noted that there had been a sharp decline in 2022 Michigan cable subscribers. The bottom line of BACB's franchise fees and PEG revenues will be affected. MPSC saw a significant increase (46%) in complaints between 2021 and 2022.

A Franklin resident contacted her about whether there was a way to prevent a Comcast service outage in the event of a power outage. She spoke with BACB's Comcast representative who stated that Comcast's headends lose power when DTE goes out. A residential house would need its own generator to make its modem work; thus, Comcast cable. In the future Comcast will be installing storm ready WIFI which will be backed by a wireless connection, unlimited data and a battery backup.

Referring to David's question at the last BACB meeting dealing with credits to those customers who lost power in August, White is still in conversation with Comcast and will report back to the Board with any information she receives. She will also request information concerning the recent ice storm.

Board members were given the Annual Report for 2021-2022. All four communities will also receive one.

PROVIDER RELATED TOPICS

a. Comcast

There was no representative present.

b. AT&T/Uverse/Direct TV

There was no representative present.

b. WOW

There was no representative present.

Gugni reminded the board members that BACB has a new Comcast representative, Eric Woody. White has extended an invitation to him to come and meet with her and Gugni first and then have him come to a BACB meeting. Gugni mentioned that in seven (7) years he has never met a representative from either AT&T or WOW.

BAPA/BAMA REPORT

Black referred to Rota's January 19, 2023 through March 15, 2023 memo to BACB, dated March 9, 2023. In his written report Rota listed all the regularly scheduled BAMA municipal meetings.

For the BAPA Programs, 32 individual producers and organizations programs were taped. A list was also included in Rota's memo.

PRODUCER AND VOLUNTEER WORKSHOP

These workshops continue on a one-on-one basis. Black encouraged residents to participate in a Producer and/or Volunteer Workshop and/or have a tour of the studio. If interested, please call the studio at 248-466-7790 to set up a date and time for a one-on-one workshop or send him an email: GBlack@BloomfieldTwp.org. If you have any show ideas, please submit a proposal and attend a workshop on producing your own show.

There have been new renovations going on in the studio, including a podcast room.

BACB Spring Sports for April and May will include Baseball, Softball, Girls Water Polo and Boys and Girls Lacrosse.

Rota noted in his report that Franklin will start live broadcasting its Council meetings on its Facebook page starting with the April meeting.

Kamoo asked if BCTV ever considered telecasting any tennis matches? In the last couple of years both boys and girls have won state championships. Black confirmed they had in the past, the last being pre-COVID. At that time the tennis matches and the water polo matches were scheduled for the same day. Since water polo matches showcase a greater number of students it was decided that they would be broadcast. BCTV will look into the tennis schedule and explore the possibility of broadcasting them.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

David re-emphasized the importance of the ever-declining cable subscriptions which impacts BACB's revenue and its future ability to fund programs. It's a long-term issue and the Board should be cognizant of it.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

BOARD COMMENTS

There were none.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 AM.

