

Present: Bello, Greenslade, Hirsch, Hollinshead, Camp, Wilson – Birmingham
Borgon, Delaney, Lacroix, Woodard – Beverly Hills
Ettenson – Bingham Farms
Anderson – Franklin

Absent: Laidlaw – Birmingham

Also Present: Hagaman - Executive Director
Currier – Attorney for Cable Board
Helwig – Bloomfield Community Television representative
DiMaria and Williams - Comcast representatives
Martinico – Director of Technology, Birmingham Schools
Pfeifer – Beverly Hills Council Liaison

Borgon called the meeting to order at 7:49 p.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Wilson, seconded by Delaney, that the minutes of a regular Birmingham Area Cable Board meeting held on Wednesday, October 16, 2002 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Logo Committee

Two companies were contacted to provide the Board with logo concepts for both Channels 15 and 18, Dempster Studios in Bloomfield Hills and Studio Blue in Ferndale. Members of the logo committee met with representatives of both companies and reviewed their proposals. Studio Blue was selected, and one of its designs was approved.

Copies of the proposed logo and how it would appear on the mobile production van were included in the Board's material. In addition to a quote for logo development, the vendor has included a proposal for a sign company to work on the van. The estimated cost of the project is \$3,675, which includes the cost of designing the logo, a computer disk for using the logo on the cable channels, the materials and application of the sign on the van, and the removal of the existing logos on the truck.

Hirsch thinks that Studio Blue has done a good job of presenting ideas that the Board can use for many applications and particularly for use on the van. It is a distinct, clear image that will speak well for both channels 15 and 18 and will serve well in other applications such as on news releases, letterhead, business cards, etc.

Board members expressed their views on the proposed logo. It was suggested that the descriptions "municipal-oriented programming" and "public-produced programming" should be large enough on the production van to be read from a distance. Another suggestion was to

highlight the communities being serviced by revising the wording ‘community television for’ to ‘serving’ Birmingham, Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms and Franklin.

Motion by Hollinshead, seconded by Delaney, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board accept the proposed logo and graphics design as presented by Studio Blue for application to Channel 15 and Channel 18 and approve the expenditure of \$3,675 for the cost of designing the logo, a computer disk for using the logo on the cable channels, the materials and application of the sign on the van, and the removal of the existing logos on the truck.

Motion passed unanimously.

Peg Committee – Electronic Bulletin Board

Hollinshead reported that members of the PEG Committee met to review a proposal from TargetVision, a company that produces software for electronic bulletin boards. The software would be used on our channels to provide continually updated programming information and scheduling.

Borgon commented that the Board’s current electronic bulletin board equipment provided by the Board’s former cable provider is an outdated system that is in need of repair and updating. He and Hagaman looked at TargetVision’s product at the recent NATOA conference. Steve Rota from Bloomfield Community Television is present tonight to assist in this presentation.

Hagaman stated that the TargetVision software will provide more options to the electronic bulletin board and make it easier to operate and edit. She elaborated on the exceptional system and features provided by TargetVision. Hagaman recommends purchasing the basic package and consider the enhancements at a later time. The software package cost is \$3,000 and the hardware cost is \$3,895, which would include a PC, setup, and peripherals. The Board will need one computer, a software package, CorioScan connect, and software maintenance. Training and installation service is recommended.

It was clarified that only one computer and software purchase is required at this time. Bloomfield Township public access channel 15 is duplicated by BCTV for our consortium on channel 18. Messages on channel 18 are community-wide messages applying to both the Birmingham and Bloomfield communities. BCTV will continue supplying the channel 18 bulletin board until it changes its system. Helwig remarked that, when funding permits, it may be efficient for BCTV to change from what it is using now to the system the cable board is considering.

Rota explained that a CorioScan Connect listed in the proposal for \$300 converts the computer image to television image. The proposal also includes software maintenance at \$1,020 per year and a training and installation service at a cost of \$2,100.00. Hagaman outlined the enhancement options and costs included in the proposal.

In answer to an inquiry, Hagaman stated that she has not solicited bids on a bulletin board package. It is not required from a legal standpoint to seek proposals if the cost of the purchase

is under \$20,000. There is \$25,000 available in a budgeted line item for special projects under MLTV.

Hagaman asked the board to consider purchase of the software, hardware, and service portion of the proposal from TargetVision. Questions and comments from Board members were addressed by Hagaman and Rota. After considerable discussion, it was suggested that the item be tabled to allow Hagaman to further investigate the proposed system in terms of the Cable Board's needs and the costs involved.

Motion by Ettenson, seconded by Delaney, to table discussion on purchase of an electronic bulletin board system until the next meeting to allow for further investigation as to what is needed and the costs.

Motion passed unanimously.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASES

Production Van

Hagaman stated that ProVideo Systems, Inc. worked with the Board on the renovation of the mobile production van. During budget preparations, ProVideo was asked to prepare a quote for equipment in the production van that would need to be replaced in the future. A quote was received listing four items that the Board might want to consider replacing. Jim Gillis from BCTV has reviewed the proposal and recommends that the Board consider the purchase of three TBC/Frame Synchronizers and the ENG Viewfinder. The cost of these items would total approximately \$4,000. Hagaman does not know if the costs have increased since the quote was received.

At the Board's inquiry, Steve Rota explained that the frame synchronizer works with the Hitachi viewfinder and would allow for a hand held camera person at events such as concerts. TBC's are time based correctors for each camera.

Questions and comments from the Board were addressed. Hagaman remarked that it is difficult to go out for bids on production level equipment. ProVideo acts as the middleman for our van equipment purchases. Hagaman was directed to update the quote from ProVideo for consideration by the Board at next month's meeting.

Beverly Hills request

The Board is in receipt of a request from the Village of Beverly Hills to provide a video data projector and associated equipment for the Beverly Hills cable television facility. The Beverly Hills Council chamber was equipped with stationary cameras and audio equipment about a year ago with funding from the Cable Board. The funds were available through a one-time grant provided to the Board by Comcast as part of the franchise renewal agreement, which required the Board to deliver its own PEG access service for the consortium communities.

Assistant to the Village Manager Stan Pasioka explained that a video data projector would make it possible to conduct power point presentations in the Council chambers and allow the

cable television audience the ability to view these visual presentations. Data projector technology is becoming necessary to insure effective mass communication presentations.

A proposal from Roscor has been distributed to Board members that includes a quote for a video/data projector and accessories. The total is \$4,249.00. Roscor is the company that provided the equipment for the cable studio in the Beverly Hills council chambers. Pasieka stated that Beverly Hills will cover the freight and insurance costs.

The Board discussed the proposal. Questions and comments were addressed by Hagaman and Borgon. It was asked if the proposal from Roscor is the only quote on this equipment. Pasieka stated that Bob Ziechner is the consultant from Roscor who assisted Beverly Hills in equipping its studio. Pasieka feels confident that this is a responsible proposal.

In answer to an inquiry, Borgon commented that the other consortium communities could submit requests to the Board for cable television related equipment. Board members asked if the equipment could be shared with other municipalities. It was noted that the City of Birmingham has this equipment. It was indicated that the proposed equipment is not permanently installed, and it could be shared. Hagaman remarked that sharing equipment of this type could be cumbersome and increase the chance of damage. Pasieka stated that Beverly Hills would allow the use of the equipment by Franklin or Bingham Farms if it was not being used by the Village.

Delaney requested an update on Cable Board grant funds expended and what is available for grants to the municipalities from the original grant and from PEG fees received on a quarterly basis. Hagaman informed the Board on money spent on items for the Board, the municipalities, and the Birmingham School District. She noted that there is money available for this purchase. Hagaman will provide a written report to the Board members on the status of available grant money in the PEG account.

Motion by Lacroix, seconded by Anderson, to accept the proposal for video data projector and accessories from Roscor in the amount of \$4,249.00, with the understanding that Beverly Hills will pay the cost of freight and insurance.

Ayes - Anderson, Borgon, Delaney, Ettenson, Greenslade, Hirsch, Hollinshead,
Lacroix, Wilson, Woodard
Nays - Bello and Camp

Motion passed (10- 2).

COMCAST RELATED TOPICS

Comcast Performance

DiMaria stated that Comcast will move ESPN back to Channel 3 on December 1 to eliminate interference on this popular channel.

Survey Results

DiMaria provided the Board with updated survey results as of October 29. He explained the statistical data relative to averages for each community and the ratings and noted issues that Comcast needs to address.

Currier commented that people who responded to the survey were to get a call from a customer service representative and possibly a service call. DiMaria responded that new data encompassing return phone calls and truck rolls is now available and will be provided to the Board for next month's meeting.

David Williams, Director of the Plymouth Call Center, introduced himself to the Board. He is in charge of the cable television customer service representatives (CSR) and call routing. Williams has made follow up phone calls to some of the people whose complaints will be reviewed today. He will address questions from the Board relative to policy issues associated with the problems outlined in these customer complaints and discuss what he is doing to address these items.

Customer Log

DiMaria has provided a copy of the Birmingham Area Customer Log for the 2nd and 3rd quarters of 2002. He went through the report with Hagaman to reconcile the customer complaints received by the Board.

Subscriber Complaints

Complaint #109: A complaint from Betty Britton of Birmingham referred to poor reception on ESPN. Another issue was that a service call was not available for eight days, and a supervisor did not return her call. DiMaria reported that a supervisor did return the call and a service call was scheduled and completed satisfactorily.

Williams stated that Comcast's quota allocation is monitored several times a day in this area. There are a number of technicians available to work in different communities. Technicians are assigned based on customer demand. One area's quota may be completely used at times, and additional technician hours must be manually added to make more appointment hours available. If a person calls and there is no technician available, there is an escalation process whereby a call goes out to the field office where the quota is managed. Quota can be added within 15-20 minutes. Sometimes this requires calling the customer back to schedule the appointment.

Complaint #110: Fritz Heuser of Beverly Hills did not receive the correct information from a CSR relative to his pay-per-view coupon. Hagaman spoke with the subscriber and informed him how to take advantage of the offer.

Borgon stated that Comcast representatives should know what offers exist. DiMaria responded that Comcast has an intranet set up in its call center whereby all information related to package changes or special offers are updated to make the CSR aware of them. The CSR should have been aware of this pay-per-view offer.

Complaint #111: Steve Meiselak of Beverly Hills had a downed cable line since mid-August. It was not buried after repeated calls to Comcast. DiMaria reported that the field manager

replaced the line on 10/29. Williams added that the drop should have been buried within a matter of a couple weeks. The customer was issued a credit.

Ettenson commented that he is concerned with how well Comcast is being managed when he sees complaints like a line down for a couple of months. He thinks the lack of response to customer complaints is reflective of management and is very disturbing.

Bello questioned where the breakdown in communication lies. This customer called a number of times about a downed cable line before it was replaced. He questioned who took the call, what they did with it, and why no one went out to repair the line.

DiMaria stated that the system can track calls for training purposes if the customer calls from home. Because the call from this customer was not logged, there is no record of a call on this complaint. This should have been put in the computer system. DiMaria stated that this does not happen often. He can only tell the Board what Comcast staff does internally to make sure these things do not happen.

Williams stated that one of the things put in place in terms of process and management is that, in order to be promoted or recognized for achievement in customer service, an employee must be able to document certain achievements like call quality. Any time a complaint is received wherein a CSR has not followed up properly, it is considered customer affecting behavior, which can prevent promotion or lead to termination. Often it is a matter of documenting and being able to coach properly. Williams stated that these issues are taken seriously.

Complaint #112: Complaints from Katherine Hayes of Birmingham include a rude CSR, a technician who would not provide the caller with a name or tech number, inability to schedule an appointment for five days, and cancellation of an appointment if the customer does not answer the phone to confirm the appointment.

DiMaria stated that Comcast representatives have talked to Ms. Hayes a couple of times with regard to this complaint, and staff is continuing to look into the matter. He cannot excuse the CSR's unprofessional comment. Comcast technicians went out to the customer's home and addressed the problem as well as other picture quality issues. She was issued a \$20 credit and a follow-up phone call was made.

In response to the Board's concern, DiMaria agreed to offer a one-month service credit to this customer and provide a letter of apology for the rude response of the CSR. He will provide a report back next month on this complaint.

DiMaria commented that there have been complaints received this month that Comcast has not experienced in a long time and does not want to see again. These issues have been escalated internally to people such as David Williams in an attempt to get to the root cause. He assured the Board that management is committed to addressing these issues.

The Board made an official request that Comcast adopt the policy whereby customer service representatives identify themselves when they answer the phone at the Call Center. DiMaria was asked to provide the Board with an answer to this request at next month's meeting.

DiMaria commented that a small percentage of calls to the Call Center go into a system that automatically records the calls. If a person calls from their home, the call may be tracked to determine who handled the call.

Complaint #113: Louis Trudell from Beverly Hills submitted a complaint regarding a problem with receiving channels and obtaining assistance from the call center. The subscriber received conflicting instructions from different CSR's. DiMaria indicated that Trudell received an apology and a credit of \$126.87.

Complaint #114: Audrey Rose of Bingham Farms registered a complaint about a change in the package content. She felt that she was being given no credit for reduced content.

Complaint #115: Katie Ester of Birmingham related her experience with Comcast in September with respect to new cable installation, unsatisfactory responses from CSR's, failure to be called back by a supervisor, problems with the installation, and a missed appointment after she took the day off from work. The technician who finally came out did a very good job.

DiMaria stated that this customer was given a total credit of \$86.90. He explained that the policy is to call three times before going to a subscriber's home and to leave a door tag if no one is there. The tag lists a direct number to get the technician back out to the home. That is the procedure that should be followed.

Complaint #116: A complaint from David Hines of Bingham Farms was about cable and Internet connection problems and no record of his previous calls when he contacted Comcast. A call to a supervisor was not returned. DiMaria stated that a credit of \$88.92 was issued to this subscriber. He explained the scheduling procedure and different skill sets of the technicians. DiMaria will look further into the situation with respect to calls not being recorded and report back to the Board.

Complaint #117: Victoria Borschek of Birmingham complained about difficulty getting through the call prompter and problems with reception on some channels. DiMaria reported that a technician went out to her home and repaired the problem.

Complaint #118: Hildreth Buterbaugh of Beverly Hills contacted the Board about trouble receiving the TV guide channel. DiMaria reported that the customer's house was rewired to repair his service and he received a one month credit.

Complaint #119: A complaint from Larry Aronoff of Birmingham indicates that he recently switched to Direct TV because he got tired of Comcast price increases.

Complaint #120: James Hinga of Franklin related a problem with his Comcast high speed Internet service. DiMaria reported that Comcast had its Macintosh technician work with this customer to resolve the issue with Netscape.

DiMaria announced that, as of December 14, virtual private network access is now functional on the residential service.

Complaint #121: Evelyn Wazniak of Birmingham complained about the price increases and lack of competition. She would like to be able to choose the channels she wants. Hagaman explained the rationale for the increase to the customer based on information provided by Comcast. She indicated that pricing is not regulated by the Board and that the subscriber could contact her representatives in Washington about the price increases and lack of competition.

DiMaria will follow up on complaints #111, #112 and #116 for next month.

Delaney referred to the complaint he registered at the last meeting about objectionable programming airing on an unidentified channel. DiMaria looked into this and could not find anything related to the content Delaney described during that specific time slot on the basic cable network.

Delaney recalled that it was indicated at last month's meeting that subscribers who are having difficulty receiving certain channels should call Comcast and ask for someone to come out to tighten the fittings or change the line at the home. His wife called Comcast with this request and was told that they are working on it internally.

DiMaria stated that Comcast is working on the hard line to check leaks. Additionally, there can be a customer issue where the subscriber should ask for service if there is an ingress issue.

Delaney has been complaining about poor reception on the Home Shopping Channel and was told it was due to interference with the local station. DiMaria confirmed that the interference is due to the location near the broadcast station and the frequencies they use. If there is any leakage in the line, that signal can interfere with the same signal on the cable system. That is a problem that is unavoidable due to the proximity to the broadcast station towers.

Borgon thanked David Williams for attending tonight's meeting. The Board is looking forward to seeing Anne Marie Patton on the same issue.

Ettenson commented that he understands that Mr. Brian Roberts, chief executive of Comcast, will be in this area in March to speak at the Detroit Economic Club. DiMaria stated that all Board member will be invited to the Detroit Economic Club for that event.

Motion by Ettenson, seconded by Bello, that Comcast chief executive Brian Roberts be invited to address the Birmingham Area Cable Board when he is in the area in March of 2003.

Motion passed unanimously.

Staff was directed to send a copy of the letter to local newspapers.

Birmingham Link

DiMaria reported that a permit for the Birmingham link to complete the underground fiber link to City Hall will be issued to Comcast upon receipt of a final timeline for completion of the project. Comcast engineers are preparing the timeline and will work with Birmingham engineers on a schedule that will give the Birmingham streetscape project priority.

Monthly Subscriber Statistics

There were no comments on the system statistics for October.

DiMaria referred to the press release and article distributed to the Board announcing Comcast's launch of High Definition Television (HDTV) service in Southeast Michigan. DiMaria provided a sheet explaining key HDTV terms and facts.

Board members are in receipt of a press release on the closing of the AT&T and Comcast merger. The corporate name will be Comcast. The operations that will be affected in Michigan are Lansing, Jackson, Grand Rapids and other cities in our division such as Chicago and Minneapolis. The merger may provide better benefits for Comcast employees in Southeast Michigan.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Both the franchise fee and operating audits are in the final stages. It is anticipated that a presentation will be made on the audit reports at the December meeting.

The Cable Board has received copies of the first quarter financial statement. Hagaman explained that revenues have not been posted because the municipalities will not receive the franchise fee and PEG revenues until the October/November time frame.

Hagaman stated that it appears that Comcast has been erroneously paying franchise and PEG payments based on gross revenues that included advertising and home shopping network revenue. The new franchise agreement removed those two revenue sources from the definition of gross revenue. This will result in the four communities receiving no revenue for the fourth quarter.

DiMaria stated that Comcast will only recoup the money due this year. He will check on whether the amount will be deducted from the PEG payments over a couple of quarters.

Board members requested copies of the audit reports as soon as they are available.

MLTV/PA18 REPORT

Helwig reported on MLTV15 and Channel 18 meetings and programs produced during the last month. BCTV staff reviewed a demonstration by TargetVision on a bulletin board package. Staff members also attended a workshop that demonstrated the new capability of cameras and a demonstration on software applications for editing.

In response to a request for new municipal programming, BCTV staff proposes to initiate a program to be aired on MLTV featuring life in the four Birmingham area communities. Staff worked on the proposal with assistance from Lisa Martinico. Helwig suggests a magazine format program that would be produced six times in the year 2003. The first segment would feature community life. Segment 2 would focus on city and village services. The program would conclude with a community calendar. Helwig elaborated on what type of features could be included in each segment.

Helwig is submitting this proposal for special programming to the Board for consideration. The cost to the Cable Board for producing seven 30-minute programs would be \$8,000 to cover planning, production, coordination and technical services.

Borgon asked Helwig to work with the PEG access committee and bring the proposal back to the Board for consideration at the December 18 meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Hollinshead referred to a resolution passed at the last meeting in which the Board unanimously expressed its opposition to the rate increases in cable service undertaken by Comcast. The Board was to contact neighboring communities and inform them of its action.

A letter expressing the Board's concerns was drafted and will be mailed to other Comcast communities after it is signed by the Board chairperson this evening. Currier indicated that the Intergovernmental Cable Communications Association (ICCA) making up 11 communities east of this consortium was informed of this Board's resolution. Western Oakland County's 11 community consortium was also notified of the action taken by the BACB.

NEW BUSINESS

Anderson questioned the need for the recorded message on the Executive Director's private phone line. Hagaman explained that the reason for the recording is to take messages when she is out of the office. The message allows subscribers with complaints to leave a message so she can return the calls as soon as possible.

BOARD COMMENTS

Delaney stated that he received a Comcast solicitation regarding digital television. He thinks it would be helpful if Comcast would put out information on prices for the various services. The bottom line pricing is confusing. DiMaria will check on whether a la carte prices could be included in the monthly cable bill.

Pfeifer thanked the Board for making an effort to hold an evening meeting. Tonight's meeting was not well attended by subscribers. Borgon affirmed that the Board held an evening meeting hoping to get more public involvement on cable television issues.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

W. A. Zimmerman of 22191 Camelot Court in Beverly Hills stated that he noticed a degradation in the speed of Internet service since the Roadrunner product was discontinued. He understands that the channel guide was moved to channel 95, which his television does not

receive. Comcast was called, and the CSR said that the cable guide is not offered to people with basic service.

DiMaria stated that Mr. Zimmerman should call Comcast if there has been a degradation of high speed Internet service due to multiple issues that could be involved. There should be no issue with speed.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Bello, seconded by Ettenson, to meet in closed session pursuant to Section 8H of the Open Meetings Act to receive attorney-client privileged communication.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion passed unanimously.

The Board recessed for five minutes before meeting in closed session at 10:12 p.m. The meeting returned to open session at 10:19 p.m.

Motion by Bello, seconded by Ettenson, to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously.