

Present: Abbott, Armitage, Decker, Heldt, McLain - Birmingham
McFadden, Verdi-Hus, Woodard – Beverly Hills
Ettenson – Bingham Farms
Eads - Franklin

Absent: Heyman - Beverly Hills

Also Present: Borgon - Executive Director
Currier - Attorney for Cable Board
Rota - Bloomfield Community Television representative
Martinico - Director of Technology, Birmingham Schools
Valentine and Glenn - Birmingham staff liaisons
John Gardner - Comcast representative
Lori Doughty – AT&T representative

Chairperson McLain called the meeting to order at 7:45 a.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVE MINUTES

Review and approval of the December 17, 2008 Cable Board meeting minutes was postponed to the February meeting due to a printing error.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Zimmerman of Camelot Court in Beverly Hills asked how he can find out whether AT&T U-verse service is available in a particular area of the Village. AT&T representative Lori Doughty answered that specific availability of the service can be determined by calling in or entering your address on the AT&T website.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Borgon reported that there were 12 new complaints registered last month with resolution received on every complaint. A number of people were confused by price changes on monthly services. Borgon related that one subscriber had her monthly bill lowered after taking Elaine McLain's advice about calling Comcast to request a price reduction.

Borgon has been working with staff at Muniweb to add content to the BACB website. Municipal Web Services of Birmingham is working on a complete update of the website including new graphics, improved navigation, and additional content.

A contract has been signed with the Baldwin Library to provide a venue for Cable Action Committee meetings in 2009. The CAC meets monthly on the Thursdays following Wednesday Cable Board meeting. It was noted that the Cable Board does not pay a fee for use of the room.

Michigan NATOA will be coordinating a unified cablecast of the State of the County address at 8 pm on February 13. Extra Space storage company has been paid to house the old production truck until 3/16/09. Borgon updated the Board on efforts to show the truck to interested parties.

GRANT REQUEST – BEVERLY HILLS PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

The Beverly Hills Public Safety Department submitted a request to the Cable Board at last month's meeting for grant money to cover the cost of its monthly Internet fee for the department building. Cable Board consideration of this request was postponed pending receipt of a written opinion from its legal counsel on whether the Board can award this grant through its unrestricted general funds or through its PEG fee funds. Director of Public Safety Karl Woodard was present on behalf of this grant request.

Attorney Tim Currier informed the Board that PEG fees are restricted by Federal law to be used for capital acquisitions. The Board is not precluded from awarding a grant requested by the Department under the Board's unrestricted funds received from its consortium communities. Currier thought that this request from the public safety department to use unrestricted funds to receive Internet service for health, safety, and welfare purposes would be acceptable. This will be a decision of the Cable Board.

Currier provided an account of the funding received by the Cable Board from the four member communities and how those funds can be used. Treasurer Decker updated the Board on the amount of money available in the Cable Board's General Fund account. Heldt stated that the Cable Board adopts a budget allocating General Fund money to meet expenditures throughout the year.

Birmingham staff liaison Joe Valentine related that he spoke with the Birmingham Police Chief following the last Cable Board meeting and learned that the Birmingham Police Department incurs similar costs for Internet service. Valentine requested comparable grant funding to offset the cost of Internet service on behalf of the Birmingham Police Department.

Motion by Heldt, second by Eads, to approve grant requests from the Village of Beverly Hills Public Safety Department and the City of Birmingham Police Department for Internet access at a cost not to exceed \$100 per month for the fiscal year to end June 30, 2009.

Decker commented on the current financial status of the Cable Board budget, noting that there are adequate funds to cover the cost of Internet services at this time. To the extent that circumstances change in the future, the Board will reconsider approval of this grant request on an annual basis.

Board member Carol Woodard recused herself from the discussion and vote on this agenda item for the reason that she is married to Karl Woodard.

Roll Call Vote:

Abbott	- yes
Armitage	- yes
Decker	- yes
Heldt	- yes
McLain	- yes
McFadden	- no

Verdi-Hus - yes
Eads - yes
Ettenson - yes

Motion passed (8 – 1).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

Armitage reported that the Cable Action Committee discussed Lou Eads work on the web site at its last meeting. The Committee talked about its participation in Michigan NATOA's public awareness campaign.

McLain commented that the new administration is proposing legislation to move the digital transition scheduled for February 17, 2009 to June 12, 2009. People can check the readiness of their televisions each Tuesday; all stations have instituted times and dates when viewers can test their televisions to determine whether they are properly connected and will be operational after the digital transition. Government coupons have run out; however, funds from expired and unused coupons are returned into service.

McLain reported that a local business, Don Lors Electronics, has agreed to take all Michigan phone calls and answer questions on the digital transition. They will not try to sell their services. People can call 1-888-MI-DTV09. McLain informed the public that antenna troubleshooting information is available at www.antennaweb.org.

Eads reported on progress being made on redesigning the Cable Board web site. He distributed a copy of the proposed home page prepared by Muniweb, commenting on the graphics, layout and the potential for flow of information. Members of the Board provided feedback on the home page and website content. Eads asked that further comments and suggestions be provided to him via email. He particularly asked for Board input on what content they think is most important. Eads will contact the website designer within a week so that additional material can be incorporated for the next review. The goal is to be live by the end of February.

PEG Committee

Heldt stated that the production truck has been wrapped with the new logo and is available for viewing in the parking lot after the meeting. The PEG Committee will meet after today's Board meeting to continue discussion on linking up with AT&T's channel 99. New developments will be discussed in committee.

Personnel Committee

Ettenson reported that the Personnel Committee will provide a six-month review of the Executive Director by the April 15 Board meeting. Members of the Personnel Committee include Mel Ettenson as chair, Mark Armitage, John Decker and Carol Woodard.

COMCAST RELATED TOPICS

John Gardner referred to the upcoming digital transition of broadcast signals on February 17, 2009. Comcast and other video providers are running commercials saying that people are

covered if they are connected to cable or another video provider. If there are televisions in a household that are not hooked up to a video service, action is required if it is not a digital television.

Gardner encouraged Comcast customers to call in to discuss savings that may be available to them, particularly with bundling services. He mentioned that the Inauguration is available for viewing on Comcast's Video-On-Demand service for at least a week.

Channel lineup information has been distributed to Board members. Gardner indicated that Comcast notifies customers and local franchising authorities prior to channel changes. Customers are notified either on the bill message, bill insert, or notice in a local newspaper.

Borgon mentioned that the Cable Board office routinely receives calls from people wanting to reach their cable provider because the Cable Board phone number is listed first on the back of the Comcast bill. He asked if there was a way to switch the order of the phone numbers on the bill.

In answer to an inquiry, Gardner provided information on Comcast's Digital Economy service, which is an option for customers.

Tim Currier asked if Comcast or AT&T has statistical information on the number of inquiries received regarding the digital changeover. Lori Doughty from AT&T responded that their service is all digital so they do not have the same issues as other providers. John Gardner stated that Comcast will continue to provide analog service for at least three years beyond the broadcasters' transition. If a television is hooked up to cable service, it will be fine with or without a digital converter.

Decker commented that Comcast has picked up customers who originally received service from a preceding cable company and who are paying lower rates than current Comcast subscribers. One of these customers called Comcast for Internet service and was told by a consumer service representative that they slipped through the system. Decker questioned whether these individuals would lose channels or face a large increase in their bill. Gardner stated that those customers would receive grandfathered packages and levels of service.

AT&T RELATED TOPICS

Lori Doughty reported that the cities of Detroit and Mt. Clemens have recently put PEG programming up on the U-Verse system. She announced that AT&T recently rolled out its service in the Lansing area.

McLain commented that there has been a recent price increase for AT&T service. A new customer service feature provided by AT&T is that subscribers receive an email reminder after making a service appointment. McLain mentioned that a complaint received from an AT&T customer last month involved attempts to reach a service person after installation to correct a problem. The issue was resolved, but McLain questioned whether AT&T is over scheduling service calls now that the U-verse product is rolling out.

Ettenson asked about the system of registering an address online to request AT&T U-verse service availability information. Doughty responded that the individual is notified by email when service is available.

Armitage understood that PEG broadcasters are limited to using T-1 lines to send AT&T their signal. He asked if there was any effort to upgrade the connection method due to the poor signal. Doughty will look into this and get back with Armitage.

MLTV15/ PA18 REPORT

Steve Rota from Bloomfield Community Television reported on programming taped for Municipal Channel 15 (BAMA) and PA Channel 18 (BAPA) during the last month and noted upcoming programs of interest (information included in BCTV monthly report for December 18, 2008 through January 21, 2009).

The production truck has been wrapped with the new logos and is in the parking lot if members want to take a look at the truck after the meeting. There were five people in attendance at the BCTV volunteer workshops scheduled yesterday. BCTV staff has been working on programming and updating the bulletin board. Questions from Board members were addressed by Rota.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Armitage, second by Ettenson, to enter into closed session to discuss attorney/client privileged communication.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion passed unanimously.

The Board went into closed session at 8:52 a.m. The meeting reconvened in open session at 9:47 a.m.

Motion by Decker, second by Ettenson, that the meeting be adjourned at 9:47 a.m.

Motion passed unanimously.