



CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COUNCIL OF
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT
MEETING MINUTES

November 4, 2010, Special Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
Groton Public Library, 52 Newtown Road, Route 117,
Groton, CT 06340

IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Kelley, Jerry Tobias, Shawn Greeley, Roger Roy, Jim Loughlin, Paul Kadri, Bill Hakkinen
COMCAST REPRESENTATIVES: Sharon Codeanne, Frank Facchini
THAMES VALLEY COMMUNICATION REPRESENTATIVE: Carl Andersen
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT TELEVISION: Chris Chrissos

I. Recognition of members of the public for public comments – None present.

II. Reports:

- A. **Secretary's Report:** Acceptance of May 13, & September 9, 2010 meeting minutes
Hakkinen made the motion to accept both minutes. Loughlin brought up a missing sentence at the bottom of page 1 of the May minutes, which were cleared up by reading the electronic copy. Tobias seconded the motion to accept both minutes and they were voted through unanimously.
- B. **Treasurer's Report:** Garmon was absent due to a work commitment - no treasurer's report.
- C. **Comcast Progress Report** – Sharon Codeanne handed out a list of marketing items and announced that Comcast received the 2010 Legacy & Partnership in Prevention Award.

Kelley asked about when Comcast will be a completely digital franchise. Codeanne said sometime in the first half of 2011. Customers will need a Digital box to receive all of the channels. Comcast plans to offer 3 free digital boxes to each customer and then charge for each additional.

Tobias stated that today's TVs are designed to pick up digital through their own tuner so he asked if they will still need a box to receive channels. Codeanne said yes they will need a box.

Hakkinen asked if Comcast looked into adding Fox Business Network. Codeanne has heard nothing yet.

Facchini handed out a list of 21 public access programs.

- D. **TVC Progress Report:** Carl Andersen reported TVC's statistics, TVC's sponsorship of the October 9, Groton Fall, and that Channel 21 reception issues have been resolved with a bandwidth upgrade. He also reviewed plans for 2011 which includes adding 11 new HD channels, a new SD channel and increasing Internet speeds. Recently, TVC has added SNY, NFL Network & Red Zone. Lastly, he reported that there rate changes will take place in January 2011, due to rate increases in programming costs.

Paul Kadri stated they had an initial meeting with TVC to discuss a technology partnership. Groton Public Schools has decided to take a few steps back to re-group and use some internal programs first before exploring deeper student technology initiatives. TVC has wired all schools together with lit fiber so they qualify for U8 reimbursement. Funds come from E-rate to improve schools technology. VOIP is not in Groton schools but TVC is exploring this future partnership as well.

Tobias asked if TVC is finished building their plant. Andersen says yes, for now but TBD in the future. He also asked Andersen about the possibility of adding WGBH 44 but Andersen said it would require too much bandwidth at this point.

Kelley brought up the pros and cons of ala'carte cable options. .

Loughlin would like TVC to consider adding MSNBC to their channel line-up.

III. Old Business

A. Status of the third party public access provider.

Update by SECTV/Town of Groton on their dockets to assume PEG responsibility for our franchise area.

Chris Chrissos from the board of SECTV addressed the council. SECTV has been meeting with Comcast, TVC, and the DPUC mediators regarding finalization of negotiations. A number of current public access users have spoken in support of SECTV and against the Town of Groton's pending application. SECTV is now a member of the North Stonington Business Association and, SECTV Chairman, Phil Butta was named this year's Public Service Award winner by the CT Recreation & Parks Assoc.

Greeley stated the Town of Groton is working on completing the Town's application. The council will be hearing more about the application in the future.

B. Review of Council goals:

- 1) Advocate cost containment
- 2) Work closely with TVC in the development of new franchise and the third party PEG cable access provider
- 3) Continue to advocate for the needs of franchise members
- 4) To continually review the cable channel lineup and advocate for customer requests
- 5) Raise the public awareness of the advisory council, inform the community of the advisory council's role and solicit public opinions and needs.

New Business - none

IV. Survey of councilors

Hakkinen – Spoke on behalf of Mary McGratten, from Ledyard, who was unable to attend the meeting with the request that the council donate \$5000.00 to purchase a new camera to tape their Town Council meetings. The new equipment would improve the town's taping and airing on the Public Access channel as they are not within fiber reach for direct access. He brought up the topic of possible grants from the council.

Greeley asked if Ledyard already applied for a DPUC PEGPETIA Grant for the equipment. Hakkinen was not sure if there is a grant pending but would check on it. However, he would still like to see the council consider a grant proposal so that it may expedite Ledyard receiving the equipment. The council had a brief discussion about the possibility of offering another Advisory Council grant for franchise towns.

Loughlin inquired about financial data from public access over the last 5 years. Kelley stated it is filed each year on the DPUC website and all data can be found there.

Tobias – Hasn't seen a new Comcast channel line-up card yet. Codeanne brought new cards to last meeting however, Tobias absent. She will email Tobias a card.

Next meeting is January 13, 2011

V. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

