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Bill Hakkinen, Secretary

## CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COUNCIL OF SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT MEETING MINUTES

March 31, 2005, Special Meeting, 5:31 p.m.  
Groton Public Library, 52 Newtown Road, Route 117, Groton, CT 06340

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Jim Kelley, Anne Ingraham, Jim Griffith, Jerry Tobias, Allen Palmer, Shawn Greeley, Bill Hakkinen, Patricia Ostrout, (left meeting at 6:30 p.m.) and Art Barton (left meeting approx. 7:15 p.m.)

**ABSENT:** Tim Chokas

**COMCAST REPRESENTATIVES:** Kristen Roberts

**THAMES VALLEY COMMUNICATION:** Russell Dipallina, David Lee

**SOUND VIEW COMMUNITY MEDIA:** Thomas Castelot

**SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT TELEVISION:** Frank Facchini

**I.Reports – Comcast Representative, Kristen Roberts** spoke to questions asked about narrow casting; 90% of each town's residents would be able to see their own town's Public, Education, and Government (PEG) access channels. Narrow casting is not in the budget for this year, will be in the budget for 2006. Roberts will not sure how long it would take to provide narrow casting. Greeley asked if each Town specific government and education channel would default to Groton's government and education channels if Towns choose not to use them at anytime. Roberts replied yes.

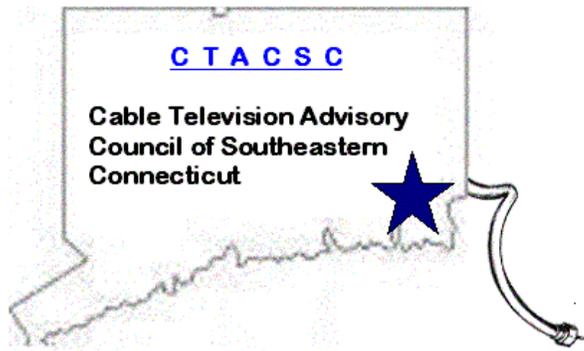
Greeley stated each party's responsibilities should be in 3<sup>rd</sup> party agreement. There was a request by consensus of the council for TVC and Comcast to include the proposal of narrowcasting (or town specific) government and education channels in their request to open a docket (regarding the third party community access provider) with the DPUC.

**II. Recognition of members of the public - C. G. Varnow, 46 Trumbull Ave., Stonington, Phil Butta, 282 Noank Ledyard Rd., Mystic, Louis Sousa, 451 Pequot Trail, Pawcatuck, Linnea Lindstrom, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce, 1437 Pequot Trail, Stonington, David Conway, 336 Vauxhall St, New London, and Frank Fulchiero 104 Rachel Place Noank: All spoke in praise and support of 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Provider Candidate, Frank Facchini.**

(here are the brief descriptions of topics that each member of the public addressed).

1. C.G. Varno, 46 Trumbull Ave., Stonington (Comcast subscriber): stated he was a public access user and he supported Frank Facchini's efforts in becoming the community access provider.
2. Phil Butta, 282 Noank Ledyard Rd., Mystic (Comcast subscriber): supports Frank Facchini as a community access provider. He added that Facchini has assisted him with his hockey programs and that Facchini has demonstrated his ability to navigate local politics.
3. Linnea Lindstrom, Executive Director of the Mystic Chamber of Commerce, 1437 Pequot Trail Stonington: Stated that the the Chamber of Commerce voted on October 5, 2004 to endorse Facchini's efforts to become the community access provider. She also had concerns for any proposal (such as Soundviews) that runs the Mystic areas' community access service from two hours away.
4. David Conaway, 336 Vauxhall St. New London: as a representative of Groton Regional Theater, he supported Facchini's communitiy access provider proposal.
5. Frank Fulchhiero, 104 Rachel Place Noank: worked with Facchini over ten years ago and he supports Fachhini as a community access provider. He agreed with previous speakers that Facchini knows the local politics.

**III. New Business**



**Presentations by interested 3<sup>rd</sup> party candidates:**

**Tom Castlelot, President of Sound View Community Media, Inc. (SVCM) presented several points such as:**

- operates in the black
- first to in their area to go digital
- full time staff of 5
- strong board of directors
- already established with the State of Connecticut

Castlelot spoke to the question of narrowing casting stating that SVCM does not support town specific broadcasting. Castlelot stated that he did not support narrowcasting of education and government channels because Towns and Boards of Education should not decide what local viewers should see.

Crompton was concerned with how SVCM would interface with the schools, especially Groton Public Schools, which uses the education channel extensively. Castlelot replied provisions allow that if the local group fills up the channel 80% for 4 consecutive months, they may request another education channel.

Greeley was equally concerned as the Town of Groton does 15 hours of broadcasting a day. The answer was to petition for another government channel. Greeley asked why Soundview airs 22 hours of CTN and only two hours of local programming per day on their government channel and only satellite programming (NASA, Williamsburg TV, and Arts TV) on the Education channel instead of local programming. Castlelot stated that viewers do not want to see local messages running or the same programs repeated on the education and government channels. Greeley asked about the use of I-net, a system that does not go out to subscribers, it is just institution to institution. Castlelot said I-net is the responsibility of the cable company and they do not use it. Greeley also asked about PEG funding. Castlelot responded the funding goes to Comcast as of now, but would go to SVCM if chosen as the 3<sup>rd</sup> party.

Kelley wondered if SVCM would send a representative to cable advisory meetings? The answer was yes. Kelley also asked would SVCM segregate the PEG budget? The answer was yes.

Hakkinen asked how SVCM would set up if they came to Groton. Castlelot answered SVCM would look for a vacant space, hopefully a space a town owned and they would take possession of the equipment that Comcast is now using for PEG.

Kelley wants to know if SVCM would share their by-laws with the Cable Council? The answer was yes.

Hakkinen asked about the terms of SVCM board members. Castlelot said the SVCM's board limits members to no more than 2 consecutive 3-year terms and board members are chosen by existing board members recommended by the nominating committee. Castlelot described two possible ways Soundview would seek Southeastern Connecticut representation on Soundview's Board of Director; 1. Add a couple of seats to Soundview's current Board of Directors. 2. Set up a separate SECT Soundview Board of Directors that would include a seat or two from the Bridgeport area. Soundview's Bridgeport Board of Directors would have final say on all matters in SE CT.

Greeley asked why the Town of Milford is investigating the possibility of a lawsuit to gain access to a government access channel. Castlelot indicated that Soundview is the PEG access provider.

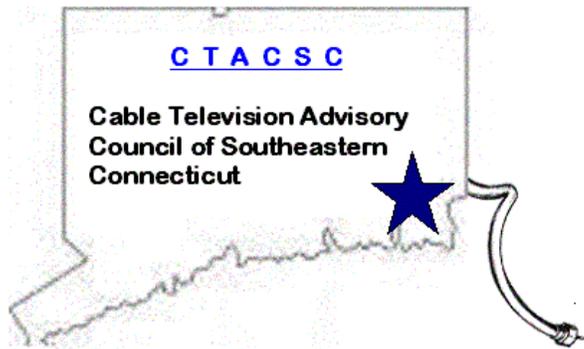
**Frank Facchini presented for Southeastern Connecticut Television (SECTV) listing several points as:**

- he has worked in Groton-Comcast for 14 years
- been involved in budget development, management and equipment selection
- led studio improvements/ set construction
- involved in many community productions
- guided digital upgrades
- trained public in cable access
- now runs public access

**Proposes:**

- community outreach
- equipment upgrade
- playback upgrade
- expand studio
- additional staff – 1 or 2
- expand programming

**Location:**



- exploring several local options
- site access top priority
- maintain autonomy

Facchini spoke in favor of narrow casting.

Tobias asked what channel would be used for Ledyard Town Council meetings? Answer channel 12.

Hakkinen stated that SVCM is quite an organization and there is a disparity – how would Facchini establish the site? Facchini answered that start up costs would come from TVC and Comcast.

Kelley asked if Facchini had a source of finance? Facchini said that SECTV would receive funds for PEG at \$6.07 per subscriber for a total of approximately \$180,000.00.

Greeley, in regard to PEG, asked how would SECTV interact with multiple town requests? Answer: SECTV is in favor of narrow casting.

Griffith stated that North Stonington is interested in narrow casting and asked what assistance would SECTV provide for new comers?

Facchini answered that training would be provided.

Kelley asked about financial and legal provisions. Facchini stated that he has a relationship with a banker and attorney. Facchini also stated SECTV would set up a board of directors from members of the community, teachers and community leaders.

Facchini also was asked if a town's programming ended with narrow cast would there be a black screen? The answer is no, Groton would be the default channel.

**IV. Discussion –** Tobias asked SVCM if they were to receive the vote whom would they hire locally? The answer, Frank Facchini.

Ingraham had concerns about PEG being run from the other side of the state.

Griffith stated concerns about SVCM because North Stonington was in favor of narrow casting.

Kelley has issues with SVCM's autonomy and narrow casting views.

Greeley stated that he agrees with narrow casting, has concerns with SVCM's board of directors and number of staff, Facchini is doing more with a staff of one and is dedicated to outreach.

Hakkinen moved to recommend to the DPUC that Frank Facchini, dba SouthEastern Connecticut Television (SECTV), be awarded the PEG provider rights for our local franchise. Griffith seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (Kelley, Ingraham, Hakkinen, Tobias, Greeley, Palmer, Griffith) in favor of SECTV.

There was a consensus of the Advisory Council for Kelley to draft a letter to the DPUC indicating the Council's support of SECTV's proposal to become the franchise areas community access provider.

Castelot thanked the Advisory Council for giving him the opportunity to make his presentation. He noted that originally (last fall) there were no local proposals for third party community access. However, with the recent emergence of SECTV's proposal as well as the council's support of narrowcasting and SECTV's proposal, SVCM will withdraw its proposal. SVCM will no longer seek to become the franchise area's community access provider.

**VI. Adjournment –** Griffith moved to adjourn the meeting, Tobias seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (Kelley, Ingraham, Hakkinen, Tobias, Greeley, Palmer, Griffith in favor). The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Hakkinen