



CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COUNCIL OF
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT
MEETING MINUTES

March 12, 2009, Regular Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
Groton Public Library, 52 Newtown Road, Route 117,
Groton, CT 06340

IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Kelley, Shawn Greeley, Jerry Tobias, Bill Hakkinen, Steve Garmon, Roger Roy, Jim Loughlin, Marie Crompton, COMCAST REPRESENTATIVES: Sharon Codeanne, Frank Facchini
THAMES VALLEY COMMUNICATION REPRESENTATIVE: Carl Andersen, Russell Dipallina

I. Recognition of members of the public for public comments – Phil Butta & Dan Weaver (SE CT TV)

II. Reports

A. Secretary's Report:

Hakkinen moved to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2009, CATV Advisory Council of SECT meeting, Crompton seconded the motion – approved unanimously.

B. Treasurer's Report:

This statement reflects the activity on Council's checking account during Jan & Feb 2009.

Previous reported balance \$31,015.56

CREDITS

Combined interest earned Jan & Feb 09: \$5.64

TVC Advisory Council Support 09 \$2,500.00

TOTAL \$33,521.20

EXPENSES

Art Barton – Food \$31.62

Val Koschmieder – steno services January Meeting \$100.00

Current checking account balance \$33,389.58

C. Comcast Progress Report - Sharon Codeanne handed out a list of marketing items including leased access. Kelley passed on a customer complaint regarding a billing error. Codeanne will pass the complaint onto the billing department.

Tobias reported on an ad that he felt was confusing and seemed to give the false impressions of free HD. Codeanne explained that all ads go through their corporate legal department prior. Tobias also noted that a channel line up was printed on the back of his last bill, dated one month ago, that still had channel 91 on it. Codeanne asked him to send her a copy so she could look into it.

Loughlin asked if a customer can own their own DRV and just use a cable card to receive Comcast service. Codeanne answered that you must rent their DVR.

Codeanne reported that Dan Glenville will attend the May meeting to cover digital service.

Frank Facchini reported that 18 public access programs were recently produced and/or in production at the studio. He also stated that he has added an announcement on their bulletin board for vacancies on the Cable Advisory Council.

D. TVC Progress Report - Carl Andersen reported TVC's monthly stats, the Holiday Literacy Campaign, local broadcaster retransmission consents agreements are complete, March Madness is available through On-Demand, new community web portal has been added to TVC's website and online account accessibility.

Russell Dipallina was introduced as the new General Manager of Thames Valley Communications.

Loughlin asked if AT&T will be at future meetings and about the effectiveness of the advisory council board. Kelley responded that AT&T is not required to attend the meetings but that they do hold state-wide meetings that each advisory council in the state sends a representative. Greeley explained the recent changes in cable laws have reduced the advisory council's role in regards to rates and programming. However, the advisory council's opinion can have great influence at the DPUC level. He also explained that the council still has a large role in community access service.

III. Old Business

- A. Status of the third party public access provider - Facchini, introduced Weaver and Butta as members of the board for Southeastern CT Television (SECTV). Dan Weaver, Director of Communications at Foxwoods, has 25 years experience as a producer and is a strong advocate of public access TV. Phil Butta is the Business Manager for SECTV.

Facchini reported that SECTV will be trying to open a docket at the DPUC to grant them permission to become the franchise area's Third Party Community Access Provider. Facchini, Weaver & Butta requested the support of the CATV Advisory Council in opening the DPUC docket.

Weaver spoke about Facchini's knowledge and experience. Weaver stated that their goal is to become self-sufficient organization through grants and fundraising efforts. He also reported that SECTV is interested in a studio setting with high visibility.

Butta, gave his background as a public access producer with sporting events for Groton Fitch High School. He also stated that he is working on the business plan for SECTV board and would like to secure outside funding as well as keeping current funding in place.

Kelley asked if docket has been filed yet. Facchini responded that it has not but will very soon. Greeley likes SECTV's enthusiasm but prior to the getting the Advisory Council's support, he would like to see SECTV provide a solid business plan, address community access issues such as giving all towns in the franchise area education and government access (if they desire it) without diminishing Groton's education and government access services and a guarantee that SECTV would continue to allow each town and school district within the franchise to fully control programming, content, and scheduling of their channels.

Kelley expressed his concerns about financing of this endeavor. He asked SECTV to keep the advisory council posted with their progress. The council is looking for a quality plan and proposal.

Crompton would like to see a generous donation by Comcast and Thames Valley Communications to show their support. Anderson and Codeane said they would look into this possibility.

Tobias asked if SECTV would receive the current public access equipment if they were granted the third party provider status. In the past, Comcast had agreed to donate the public access equipment to the third party and he was hoping that still would be the case. Codeane said that Comcast would look into it.

- 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.

IV. New Business

- A. Reconstituting the Council: Kelley has not gotten together with Barton yet.
- B. Nominations for next year's officers: Barton was nominated as Chairman of the Nominating Committee. Elections will be held at next months meeting.
- C. Revisit letter to be written to political representatives: Still on to do list.
- D. Statewide AT&T Council meeting January 30 was cancelled. The next scheduled AT&T meeting is March 25. Kelley will attend the meeting and report back.

V. Survey of councilors – nothing to report

VI. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shawn Greeley