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Bill Hakkinen, Secretary

CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COUNCIL OF SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT MEETING MINUTES

November 4, 2004, Regular Meeting, 5:32 p.m.
Groton Public Library, 52 Newtown Road, Route 117, Groton, CT 06340

IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Kelley, Jim Griffith, Marie Crompton, Anne Ingraham, Jerry Tobias, Art Barton, Patricia Ostrout, Allan Palmer, Shawn Greeley Bill Hakkinen

COMCAST REPRESENTATIVES: Brian Ferney, Frank Faccini

THAMES VALLEY COMMUNICATION: Russell Dipallina, Carl Andersen

I. Recognition of members of the public - none present

II. Reports

A. Minutes – from September 9th meeting accepted as presented.

B. Treasurer's Report – As of October 25, 2004 the Advisory Council's checking account balance is \$16,164.60

Expenses \$53.49 – Jim Kelley, Administrative
88.79 – Jim Griffith, Refreshments
50.00 – Moreene Nahornick, Steno Services
64.00 – Debit payment, Research for Lost Statements.
Income \$ 2.80 – Interest for September & October

C. Comcast Report – Brian Ferney, New Haven Marketing, reported that Comcast will sponsor A Festival of Light at the Sub Base November 27th. On Demand content is now available into people's houses; it is server based; 70% is free, for example, local broadcasts of both national conventions, and Channel 30. Good feed back from customers re: local news. In the future; will have digital video recorder equipment available. This will enable customers to pause live television and record any programs desired.

Tobias commented that he expects a lot of complaints from customers re: the planned loss of free HBO. Tobias mentioned 30 day notice period required, and asked for a longer notice.

Ferney reported that at this time there are no plans to remove HBO. He also mentioned extended free preview that will be ongoing on a rotating basis for the different pay channels.

Palmer asked about upcoming January rate changes; the response from Ferney was that the increase will be about 3%.

D. Thames Valley Communication Report – Andersen reported that as of the period end of September, 23 miles of 108 fiber count has been completed.

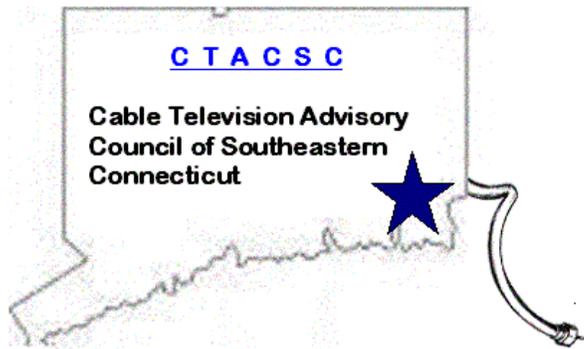
Kelley asked how much penetration? Andersen's response was 90% of the City of Groton will be completed by the end of the year. They are starting to serve Groton Town. As for the rate of basic cable the amount of \$36.95 is guaranteed through 2006. They will be adding new channels in January.

Palmer asked how many customers does TVC have? Andersen stated that they do not publicize the number of customers and they are trying to keep up with the back log. They currently have a week backlog, and their goal is to get to customers within two days.

III. Old Business

A. Status of a third party access provider – Andersen stated they have an interested party that he was not at liberty to name. Nothing is firm though.

B. Status of TV Guide accuracy and Emergency Warning System interrupts – Tobias stated both have been fixed.



C. Review of Committee Goals

1. Advocate cost containment – Kelley stated he has a major concern with Comcast’s planned rate increase.
2. Work closely with TVC – nothing further
3. Advocate for the needs of franchise members – nothing further
4. Advocate for customer requests - It was reported that New Haven has 2 CBS outlets, so why is it that our area can only have one? Ferney explained the problem is with the channel band width; the Groton area system is a narrower bandwidth than New Haven, which can hold more channels. Comcast is looking at increasing bandwidth in the Groton franchise area.
5. Raise the public awareness of the advisory council, inform the community of the advisory council’s role and solicit public opinions and needs - Soliciting Voluntown volunteers; Kelley was not able to make contact with anyone, will try again now that the elections are over. Palmer suggested the possibility of a Voluntown resident who works at Pfizer or EB, etc., which would minimize his/her travel time.

Barton announced from his research that with the costs of advertising, the best approach is The Day Pilot, which goes to subscribers and non-subscribers. Recommended ½ page ad costing \$1,733.00. The Day will not guarantee where in the paper they will put the ad. Suggested a cartoon to catch the eye, not a lot of text.

Tobias suggested ¼ page ad is more likely to catch the eye.

Crompton stated that the amount of money is outrageous; the money should be invested in equipment and scholarships. Use the free space of the newspaper on a regular basis.

Ingraham asked about a flyer in the newspaper.

Ferney suggested looking into a cable ad which would cost less.

Kelley asked about insert ads with the cable bill as well as free cable spots, and can the placement of the ads be requested.

Ferney stated yes, placement of ads may be requested, but paying customers come first.

Greeley stated he has had experience through other organizations working with Comcast and free ads they are good to work with, however there isn’t a guarantee when it will be on.

Kerney suggested getting an ad on soon before the holiday season.

Tobias questioned if inserts in bill could be done regionally targeted for Groton.

Ferney stated the bill inserts would be difficult, information regarding the Council is typed on the bill.

Kelley suggested Ferney ask Comcast about bill inserts and report back to the Council.

Kelley asked for concrete steps to be taken.

Hakkinen stated 1. Art to explore costs of a flyer insert in The Day 2. Get information on inserts in bills from Comcast. 3. Do a 30 second spot and put it on both cable systems.

TVC was asked about putting a free ad on their cable system. They responded that they do not have ad insertion equipment yet, but they will look into bill inserts.

Greeley suggested 30 sec ad be a voice over with nice graphics.

Tobias moves to authorize Greeley to produce a 30 second ad. Kelley seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

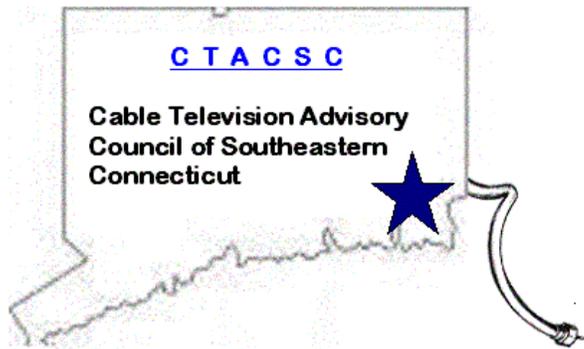
Kelley noted that on the Comcast bill, the CTACSC address is still wrong and is not resolved. Ferney was asked to follow up on it.

Tobias noted that at the bottom of the Comcast bill in tiny print there is a fee for insurance on inside wiring, this is not a mandatory charge and therefore it should not be on the bill unless requested.

IV. New Business

Recognition of service - Kelley prepared two letters, one to Shawn Greeley and one to Marie Crompton, commemorating their service. The letters were read and signed by the Council members.

Kelley will do a press release for The Day for the above-mentioned recognitions.



Tobias moved that the Secretary may be authorized to contract for notetaking at each meeting, not to exceed \$100.00 per meeting. Note taker should provide draft copy of minutes to Secretary together with invoice within 3 working days. The invoice will be approved by Secretary and forwarded to the Treasurer for payment.

Greeley suggested payment to notetaker should increase from \$50.00 to \$75.00.

Barton seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

Kelley asked for a survey of Council members' issues, comments, and concerns -

Greeley mentioned billing, 3rd party and basic rate increase

Palmer – Rate increase and why does it take two months for credit receipt to appear on Comcast bills.

Griffith – no comment

Ostrout – Commented on the wonderful things Wheeler High School students are doing with equipment provided by the council. Thank you.

Barton – No comment

Kelley – No comment

Tobias – Rate increase at the beginning of the new year; and he feels the 19% increase he saw was a steep increase all at once.

Ingraham – No comment

Crompton – No comment

Hakkinen – 1. Would like a copy of the Council's by-laws, Greeley will provide them. 2. Talked about getting the Council's name out. On the other hand, with \$16,000 in account why can't Council give grants. Get creative, back into the community to get name out.

Tobias asked if any legal fees are upcoming and a buffer should be maintained for legal fees.

Crompton suggested the question of a buffer for legal fee should be put on the agenda of the next meeting.

Hakkinen suggested Council meet more often for continuity. Most council members did not agree.

V. Communications

Kelley addressed a rate increase complaint he had received. He also stated that as of December 31, 2004 there will be a new set of reporting requirements, from CTACSC to the state of Connecticut. As of January 31, 2005 a financial report is also to be completed.

VI. Adjournment – Barton moved to adjourn the meeting, Crompton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Hakkinen