



Meeting Minutes for August 24, 2006

Meeting convened at Branford Community TV

Present:

Branford	[no confirmed advisors]
East Haven	Marie Saddig , Bill Golambiski
Guilford	Pete Garofalo, Jeff Lincoln
Madison	Stephen Fuest
North Haven	Carolyn Spetland
North Branford	Mary Bigelow, Joanne Wentworth
Wallingford	Susan Huizenga
Library	Ken Donadio
COMCAST	John Bairos
Regrets:	Marie Saddig, Jeff Lincoln, C. Spetland Bill did not get meeting notice (apologies)
Guests:	John Elliot – confirmation of appointment pending, Walter Mann (BCTV Station Manager), Michael Pollans (BCTV Operations Coordinator), Marvin Zimmerman

I. Call to order/roll call.

There was no quorum

4 Towns represented, 6 Members present

II. Public Comments none

III. Review of Agenda: No Quorum

Roll Call / Welcome fom BCTV Board President **Margot Hardenburgh**
Marvin Zimmerman Award for Outstanding Service-Sustaining Community Access
Promotion /photo ops
Review of Education Committee Agenda
Comcast Report
Budget Review
Deferred all Business
Facility Tour /photos

IV. Minutes Action: No official action can be taken without a quorum.

V. Discussion

- Chairman Huizenga reviewed the Executive Committee decisions regarding the schedule, reviewed at the last meeting:
 - The original intent of the site visits was to be available to board and staff members for questions, and to allow the Comcast representative to familiarize himself with the sites. The advisors have recommended site visits continue.
 - Specific Follow-up with Branford related to BCTV correspondence: BCTV reported that they believe all items related to by-laws and policy have been address. The individual related to one specific complaint recently visited and seemed satisfied with the current operations.
 - Advisors have also recommended that a 2007 schedule similar to the 2006 schedule be finalized. The one recommended change is to cancel the

February committee meetings, which have been unsuccessful, and advisors will instead attend their local PEG meetings.

- Advisors discussed the potential benefits of switching insurance plans. A new package offered by the California Company would cover equipment insurance, workers' compensation, etc., at a rate close to the current one. The plan would not include health benefits. Members agree they are interested in pursuing additional coverage. There is currently no Insurance Committee but this issue may be handled by the Treasurer or in conjunction with Shared Services.
 1. Additionally, there is confusion regarding how members should formally acknowledge their participation in an insurance plan. The present advisors agree that it is necessary to draft a form for this purpose.
 2. Advisors are also in agreement that a plan could be instituted to give a percentage discount on the insurance when it is paid regularly.
- Discussion regarding DPUC Reports: Reports from East Haven, Madison, and North Branford have been received. Reports from Branford and North Haven have not yet been received. (Branford turns in a copy of their DPUC report at this meeting.) The reports should include updates on by-laws and policies related to the 7Town Franchise.
 1. Based on discussion outcome it appears that only Guilford is currently the only town not in compliance with the policy of accepting both locally-sponsored programming and within franchise sources for cable-casting programs and bulletin-board display. An expectation of removal of TV21 was the franchise wide access to all stations.
- Chairman Huizenga advised the present members that the Cable Advisory Council has the opportunity to review and judge tapes for upcoming ACM North East VideoFestival. More information will be posted on the website regarding this issue. K.D. and M.P indicated interest in participating.

VI. Comcast Report (John Bairos)

Hard copies of the monthly report were distributed. The report includes a Press Release from the Lifetime network, an updated Customer Care Report, and a reminder regarding the Comcast Survey (which includes two questions from CACSCC), which will be conducted in September. Approximately 400 customers will be contacted by phone over a 4-day period.

VII. Treasurer's Report (Pete Garofalo)

- ⊗ Budget sheets were distributed to present advisors.
- ⊗ A \$20 charge for the 7TownTV.org domain name should be added to next year's projection.
- ⊗ Three \$350 grants for ACM should be added to the 2006-07 budget. Paperwork has been received from East Haven, Wallingford, and Guilford as proof that town representatives attended the ACM conference. No grants will be given to North Branford, North Haven, and Branford, and Madison is still unaccounted for.
- ⊗ The budget could not be approved because there was no quorum. Advisors present at the September meeting will vote to accept it. (A proxy will be given from Pete Garafolo)

VIII. Educational Programming (absent a Functioning Education Committee the attendees reviewed Ed Committee Items)

- A discussion took place regarding how to proceed with educational outreach about the use and opportunities for the education channels.

1. The U.S. Department of Education makes available tapes and CDs geared toward getting parents involved in education. All stations should register to receive this free Ed Channel Programming.
 2. Educational Programming is available as a free downlink to Educational Channels. Channels include Annenberg, Research Channel and Classic Arts. This is not to be considered non-local programming. It is rather an opportunity to provide teacher education, or supplemental course work using cable capacity which happens to be the primary purpose of the Educational Channel.
 3. The Annenberg program may only be played through a Satellite downlink/receiver (Receiver may require approx. \$500 investment).
 4. The Classic Arts program has been available thru the router to-date. It is more incidental cultural programming rather than specifically educational.
 5. If Programming is made available via the Router, it can only be pointed to one downlink. Educational programming can be chosen by each town to play during a several-hour block. Local programming can then be worked around the schedule.
- Part of this discussion focused roles and responsibilities for educational channels. (PEG groups vs. the Board of Education vs Comcast)
 1. Cablecasting of Ed Channel is in same location as Government & Public in Madison and East Haven due to recent changes.
 2. In North Branford schools have requested a portion of Comcast funding.
 3. No. Branford & Wallingford & No. Haven have Ed channel cablecasting from a school location.
 4. Wallingford has been discussing representation and resources with Superintendent in recent months.
 5. Madison will discuss this issue with the superintendent of schools.
 6. Branford guests reported that the Board of Education usually produces the educational programming, but works in conjunction with the PEG group. For example, PEG can subsidize equipment costs for the Board of Education.
 - Advisors suggest asking Comcast or the DPUC for clarification on who actually controls the Educational Channel. The Comcast Representative notes that the Board of Education does not file with the DPUC. That the town also is responsible for recognizing PEG group.
 - Consensus: PEG groups are expected to give support, advice, and equipment (loan or purchase) to the Board of Education, but not necessarily funds.
 - Advisors agree that it is a good idea for Comcast, should help 7Town TV to prepare an informational packet for the Board of Education by acknowledging what resources are available, and encouraging the use of these. This may include a description of the Annenberg program, notification of access to the downlink, and a description of the scheduling on a 3-month basis. This would require a formal inquiry from CACSCC with specific goals or needs.
 1. The packet, including recommendations from Comcast and CACSCC, could be given to the Board of Education by PEG groups
 - Madison representative Steve Fuest noted that one potential and MAJOR issue with using the router as the vehicle for the Available Educational Programming is that the designated programming cannot be overridden, even in the case of an emergency (such as early school closings due to power failures or snowstorms, or late school bus arrivals due to accidents). Comcast, not PEG groups, has control over the router.

Next Steps requested in this session:

1. Research on options for Ed programming.
2. Investigation of cost of more robust router functionality.

3. 13 week programming details.

A facility Tour Provided by Station Manager W. Mann and included sharing information about the Memorial Editing Suite.

Respectfully submitted:
Elizabeth Frager