



Meeting Minutes for January 22, 2004
North Branford Town Hall

Present:

Branford	Marvin Zimmerman, Billye Bradley, John Elliott
East Haven	
Guilford	Pete Garafolo, Jeff Lincoln
Madison	Steve Fuest, Abigail White
North Haven	Pat Schiller , Iris David
North Branford	Nancy Lappie
Wallingford	Susan Huizenga, Russ Styles
Library	Ken Donadio
COMCAST	Kristen Roberts

Regrets:

Guests: Tess Guyer, Kurt Guyer, Art Donkin, Wanda Vine, Patricia McGlashan, William Bergers, Scott Hanley, David Dufourny, Curt Huizenga. Marie Saddig

I. Call to order. After roll call, Chairman Huizenga called the meeting to order at 7:12 and immediately asked that for a motion to amend the agenda to accommodate a brief ceremony to honor and recognize the significant service of two individuals: **Don Guyer** of North Branford (posthumously) and **Art Donkin** of Guilford. The motion, moved by P. Garafolo and seconded by Abigail White, passed unanimously.

Chairperson Huizenga explained that CACSCC had decided to create awards to honor those involved in either producing programming or creating the infrastructure that makes possible this programming. Awards are to recognize Overall Excellence or one of four key areas: content, promotion, delivery or audience. The first award was presented to Mr. Donkin, former finance member, for his “advocacy of the seven-town model and for his years of dedication to the pursuit of an adequately funded infrastructure.” The second award, for Overall Excellence, was given to honor Mr. Guyer’s “years of dedication and gentle persuasion that insured that our smallest town would be part of the big picture,” insuring “public access for the people, by the people.” These presentations were commemorated by photos of and speeches by Mr. Donkin and Mrs. Tess Guyer whom accepted the award on behalf of her husband. She acknowledged Mr. Guyer’s years of services and she was proud to have shared him with us.

II. Minutes Action: Chairman Huizenga asked that the Minutes of the December Meeting and revised Minutes of the August meeting be reviewed for acceptance and called for a motion to accept. The motion was moved and seconded and carried. Abstaining on the November minutes were advisors Styles, White and Garafolo, who had been unable to attend November’s Meeting.

III. Public Comments: None at this time.

IV. Town Reports.

Branford. (R 1) M. Zimmerman

Customer issues: None

PEG activities: They have arranged with the town to get town space, a nice space, and are just negotiating final details and waiting for the space to open up, expecting about a three- month period to completion. 40 Kirkham St. is the new address. For the upgrading of their servers, all the equipment is being delivered within the next week, and committees have been working out a plan for moving the station ahead, being much more activist in programming , in getting volunteers and in putting on live programming.

BOE Updates: Billye Bradley was welcomed and asked for official papers for her appointment,. to which she agreed to provide more specific official appointment for the next meeting. She was told that she could vote when these papers were in order.

East Haven. (R4) Guest Marie Saddig of ETV reporting.

Customer issues: None?

PEG activities: Officers were elected at their annual meeting. The full-time job that had been vacated is now filled, training sessions are being held and a new producer coming in.

BOE Updates: Ed Channel location and management issues are still being discussed with no consensus on possible resolution at this time. Relocation of Ed Cannel to ETV location is among the options being discussed. The Ed Coordinator's views of his responsibilities differ from PEG Board and programming from sources outside the H.S. are not being supported. There have been several successive paid interns, and the channel remains basically just a high school bulletin board whereas it is supposed to be town wide. There is no original programming , for example, student talk shows; it's just what happens at the high school or at board of ed meetings.

Discussion ensued based on this ETV report and it was the consensus among advisors the purpose of ED access is often misunderstood. It was suggested that the superintendent be contacted, upon which others commented that superintendents often misunderstand the role of ETV, believing that it is just for schools, but "educational tv" is much broader. Someone suggested more public service announcements (PSAs) about the actual role of ETV. The chair reminded advisors that no action on Education Channel uses had been taken in part due to the side-agreement status with COMCAST. The Side-agreement included the potential installation of a router and a satellite and link to NASA (or like resource) for educational tv cablecasting. If progress is made on the side-agreement, perhaps that can influence this situation. . **K. Roberts to review side-agreement and report back next month on the status of the implementation plan from COMCAST.**

Abigail mentioned that Madison is having a campaign of PSA's about what public access is, with fliers at the public library, and access is described as for the residents and public education is described as how-to's or lectures or anything that helps advance knowledge. **Finally, it was suggested that this matter be referred to the education committee for means of clarifying the role of ETV.**

Guilford.(R 5) J.Lincoln/ P. Garafolo reporting.

Customer issues: none

PEG ACTIVITIES: As reported last time, there was a complaint about profanity in one of the Sponsored programs, which resulted in a revised agreement to air such programs only after 9:00. It was recommended that CAC do more sharing of policies to be proactive about such situations. The revised Guilford policy would be available in the annual report. Bylaws changes require an Annual Meeting so policies linked to 'other town' use of facilities will not be addressed until then.

The Leightronix Pro 16, which had been reported as finally working (See Nov. Mins) is not working again, and a lot of work has gone into the unsuccessful attempt to restore it. \$20,000 was spent on equipment, including a piece of portable editing equipment so that people can sign out the equipment and do their work around their own schedules rather than only at the studio during studio hours. There have also been a lot of calls to borrow cameras. In order to qualify for borrowing, a person must live or work in Guilford. (Bylaw amendments pending) Also, In Guilford, the town has a policy of paying someone to tape all public meetings: board of ed, P& Z, town council, etc., and this works well. It relieves the need to constantly get volunteers to do this work.
BOE Updates: None

Madison.(R 2) S. Fuest / A. White reporting.

Customer issues: They have received a number of compliments about the audio being much better under Comcast except for channel 12, the Style Network. There is a consistent need to raise the volume to hear it. Also there have been many consumer questions about the Customer Service telephone number. Also a number of inquiries have come in from senior citizens about getting a special rate for Expanded Basic. Kristen explained that someone 55 or older who participates in ConnPACE can get 10% off, but that is only on the Basic. **It was suggested that it be made more clear in COMCAST materials how an eligible person is able to get that discount. Also a disabled senior is eligible, whether or not that person qualifies for or participates in ConnPACE. K. Roberts to review eligibility presentation and report back next month.**

PEG activities: Steve and Abigail did a live Santa call-in show, with a “Santa” from Madison. Their broadcasting system would be replaced Tuesday with a new electronic system, and HP was very cooperative, including “eating” the expense for a part missing upon installation but included in the original contract. The new system is now supportable, more commercial and more useable. They have acquired six new volunteer camera people for the new government channel, for the one big development issue in town, converting the airport to a adult living center. They have spread out and are now covering other issues besides this one planning and zoning issue.

BOE Updates: Channel 19, the educational channel, is being moved so all three channels will be broadcast from one location.

North Branford.(R 7) N. Lappie reporting.

Customer issues: A complaint was made about why there was no Pay-for-View on HD. Kristen replied that there is, on In Demand 1 and In Demand 2. Also the audio is not first class, but when Pay-for-View goes off analogue and goes digital, this will be corrected.

PEG activities: A new person has been hired, and everyone has been very impressed. Don Guyer has been anxious to hire Cliff.Huizenga but had not been successful in doing so prior to his illness. Planning has been done to tape the opening day of the Little League and Junior Football. Nancy is taking over the Historical Society coverage formerly done by Don.

BOE Updates: Dr. Ward, the superintendent, was contacted about a new Board of Ed rep.

Chairman Huizenga stated for the record that Cliff is her step-son and that his interest in being a producer volunteer and part-time staff person preceded her appointment to CACSCC from Wallingford. She looked to Mr. Styles concurrence that she volunteered to make the process work better for those with interests similar to his and that as a consequence of her appointment Cliff did not have the opportunity he had anticipated – working for WPAA. However, he continued to actively volunteered as trainer, computer installer and crew at WPAA or over 2 years. This was shared to dispel any inference of nepotism.

North Haven.(R 6) Iris David reporting.

Customer issues: None

PEG activities: None (Fruit Fundraiser appeared to be successful per comments from Chair Huizenga & K. Roberts.)

BOE Updates: None

Wallingford.(R 3) R. Styles/S. Huizenga reporting.

Customer issues: Guest Scott Hanley from GTV reported that Wednesday Night Live, one of the more popular shows is going out of production. Also, since the introduction of the HDTV circa channel 21, there has been a lot of degradation on channel 20, intermittent pulsing of the picture. He asked if other towns were experiencing a similar degradation and whether it was necessary for channel 21 to be used for HD, since it is causing problems in Wallingford. No other representatives from other towns had experienced a similar degradation. Abigail White reported that Madison had had snow problems, but theirs had been because of a faulty transmitter, which was subsequently replaced. Kristen promised to have Wallingford's problem looked into, even though Scott concluded by mentioning that he had been given promises by COMCAST technicians since October that the problem would be looked into further.

PEG activities: None

BOE Updates: None

Library. K. Donadio reporting : Nothing to report.

V. Officers' Reports.

Chairman: See attached Nov/December Chair Report. **A January Mailing to PEGs of select materials was identified during reporting.**

Action taken on the Alliance for Community Research Membership was as follows. As originally laid out in the minutes of "Chairman's Report: November/December" (3): a motion was made by S. Fuest to have the CACSCC invest in an organizational membership at \$500, providing benefits formerly purchased by a number of individual towns at \$185/ town. The motion, seconded by John Elliot, carried unanimously. Notification to PEG about membership to be included in the mailing .

Also Scott Hanley shared an update and made a clarification about the original denial of the Dean campaign's request for airing of a program, denied because of its obvious political content by Adepia /Aldelphia (?), Norwich. When the inquiry went to the DPUC, it was ruled that a political candidate was to be treated as an access member and therefore the program was cablecast. The "Seven-Day Rule was clarified : If the broadcast media provide time for a political candidate, another candidate can demand equal time. However, a PEG is not bound by such rules, and though it may use it as policy, it is obligated to provide only "equal access" not "equal time," as defined in a 1992 ruling. Such programming for a PEG, however, cannot contain solicitations for funds. As for the local policies, Scott recommended that each PEG be proactive in terms of establishing its policy regarding this. (Scott was providing a copy of the DPUC report; see this report in the mailing for details.)

Vice Chair: None

Treasurer: See Attached Financial Report. S. Fuest advised that Guilford Savings Bank was looking for signature card follow-up. P. Garafolo agreed to follow-up. Russ Styles signature was needed.

Secretary: None

VI. Committee Reports.

Insurance Committee: On track for February. Requested that List of items to be brought to Feb 26th Meeting be sent in writing to each PEG as a reminder.

Education Committee: A. White had follow-up questions from last month on 'Cable in the Classroom'. K.Roberts clarified that 'Cable in the Classroom' magazine was no longer available not that it was no longer being provided by COMCAST. She encouraged questions be directed to that program on what was available to teachers. (Discussed during COMCAST Report)

PEG Committee

Outreach Committee: Annual Meeting Notice Processed as well as Press Release about the January Meeting. Follow-up with Awards Pictures anticipated.

VII. COMCAST Report. Kristen Roberts gave a marketing report. About 900 customers in the franchise area will be affected by the migration of five premium channels on the analogue to the digital: 31(Showtime), 34(Cinemax), 32(Starz), 33 (Encore), and 30 (In Demand Pay -for -View). This will take effect on February 17. The reason is that they will be rolling out On-demand and adding more high definition t.v. channels and going off digital recorders and so need to make room for all these advanced services. Customers will be notified by a letter and by telemarketers.

Customers will have two choices: move to a digital package (\$5 off per month for six months) to the silver, gold and platinum packages or they can keep exactly what they have in the analogue, and the company would swap their box for a digital box. The latter will get some of the features of the digital but not the full digital package. Also they are having a promotion that additional outlets would be only \$3.99 per month for six months. This is being done to provide extra bandwidth to bring the new product, such as On Demand, which they hope will be available March 3, the tentative launch date. Channel 199 will have a selection of different programming that one can download and watch and have functions like a VCR.. Also one can download DIY (Do It Yourself) and one can download different topics, and if one has HBO or Showtime, one can watch back issues of the Sopranos or Sex in the City. The week of January 26th telemarketers and door-to-door solicitors will be targeting the 900 customers in the franchise area. (The channels being vacated will be blank). When questioned about Fox, Kristen said she thought the contract was out, but it was just a matter of getting it in the lineup. People with premium channels will not need to get new remotes, but new remotes will be available that are more customer-friendly, if customers want to go the office. There will be no additional charge if they stay where they are.

Education Committee Internet/Cable Installation Project Update: Kristen reported Clintonville is complete. North Haven is complete in the high school and middle schools, but three elementary schools were not completed yet for a variety of technical reasons. None of the other towns have made installation requests. (The education committee will do more follow-up to make sure the schools are aware of their options.)

PEG Technical Installation/Support: Madison is ready to move from the middle school and Branford is going to be installed at 40 Kirkland Street after a technical survey. Finally, in North Branford the building in which the meeting was held is being prepared also with the return line.

Kristen reported that Tim Burt is no longer with Comcast, but that another person will soon be joining Kristen at the meetings.

Abigail requested the mailing list used for the Cable-in-the Classroom Magazine discontinuance Kristen will follow-up.

Question posed to Kristen on whether the PEG channels were going to remain analogue or whether everything was going digital? Kristen indicated that PEG would likely be analogue for the life of the franchise (next 9 years). Eventually, it will happen, but no plans right now.

Chair Huizenga mentioned that at the October meeting, CAC had provided Comcast with a copy of a side agreement secured from prior chairman Walter Mann's files. Kristen had nothing to report. An update will be provided at next CAC ,meeting.

Kristen promised to have Wallingford's GTV problem looked into. Scott reminded Kristen that he had been given promises since October that the problem would be looked into (She had VIII. Correspondence:

IX. Old Business. Correspondence from October & November have not been reported as resolved. Chairman Huizenga to follow-up with Customer Care Committee on open cases.

X. New Business –Correspondence will be logged by Chairman since meeting time ran short.

XI. Adjournment. Abigail made a motion to adjourn this evenings meeting. The motion was seconded by Nancy and unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Michael Gannon