

Present: Heldt, McAlear, McLain - Birmingham  
Heyman, Schneider - Beverly Hills  
Stakhiv – Franklin  
Ettenson – Bingham Farms

Absent: Kelly – Birmingham  
Borgon, Verdi-Hus – Beverly Hills

Also Present: White - Executive Director  
Currier - Attorney for Cable Board  
Rota and Kowalski - Bloomfield Community Television  
Galbraith – Birmingham Schools representative

McLain called the meeting to order at 7:48 a.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

**APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD APRIL 15, 2015**

Motion by Heldt, second by Heyman, that the minutes of a regular Cable Board meeting held on April 15, 2015 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS PEG GRANT REQUEST**

Kevin J. Galbraith, Executive Director of Information and Technology for Birmingham Public Schools was present with a grant request on behalf of the School District. Birmingham Public Schools has been grateful for the support and commitment of the Birmingham Area Cable Board for many years. Our joint efforts have enabled students, staff, and our communities to directly benefit from quality cable services provided by the BACB.

In 2002, with the support of a Birmingham Area Cable Board grant, the District was able to install state-of-the-art equipment in the television studios at Groves and Seaholm high schools. While this equipment has served broadcast and production classes well for over 13 years, it is in need of replacement and updating. In recent years, the District has worked to maintain the equipment as curriculum and broadcast-related technologies have advanced. The equipment no longer supports students' workflow as they explore, develop, and master the skills necessary for success in this field.

The District completed a year-long design phase for this project that included teachers visiting production facilities in other districts, collaborating with peers while attending conferences and professional learning events, and reviewing designs with consultants. The District Video Specialist and Galbraith offer a solution that brings resources more in line with the District's needs and vision.

Birmingham Public Schools respectfully requests the support of the BACB in providing funding in an amount not to exceed \$72,000 to acquire the necessary video and audio equipment to properly outfit its two high school production studios. Board members are in receipt of a budgetary quote listing the equipment necessary to complete the project. Galbraith outlined some of this equipment and its use.

Birmingham Public Schools is prepared to bid this project in accordance with procurement laws/policies from the State of Michigan and the BPS Board of Education. BPS will provide any additional funding or resources that exceed this request to complete the project in a professional manner. Questions from Board members on the proposed grant request were addressed by Galbraith.

Board Treasurer Heldt suggested that this grant request be referred to the PEG Committee for review prior to action by the Cable Board. The grant expenditure has budgetary implications for this year's and next year's budgets. He noted that the Cable Board is behind on the receipt and review of its financial statements due to illness issues at the Village of Beverly Hills.

Motion by Heldt, second by Ettenson, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board refer the Birmingham Public Schools PEG grant request to the PEG Committee for review and to consider the grant request at the June BACB meeting.

Motion passed (7 – 0).

#### **BCTV CONTRACT RENEWAL**

Heldt stated that the current Bloomfield Community Television contract expires on June 30, 2015. Executive Director White prepared a memo advising Board members of the proposed changes to the contract going forward. The proposal is for an annual payment to BCTV in the amount of \$194,950 per year for 7-1-15 through 6-30-17. This represents a 4% increase over the current contract amount which was fixed in 2011.

For the period 7-1-17 through 6-30-18, an annual payment of \$200,800 is proposed (a 3% increase). The Board retains the option of extending the contract for an additional year (7-1-18 through 6-30-19) at the same price. This option is the same as that set forth in the current agreement. Other than the financial terms indicated, the proposed contract is virtually identical to the current contract. Tim Currier has reviewed the proposed contract and finds it in order.

Greg Kowalski and Steve Rota were present representing Bloomfield Community Television.

Motion by Heldt, second by McAlear, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board approve the proposed contract with Bloomfield Community Television through June 30, 2018 and authorize the Cable Board Chairperson to execute the contract.

Heldt mentioned that the contract with BCTV does not include athletic broadcasts, which have been funded on an individual basis throughout the athletic seasons. The contract does not change that process.

Heldt added that, within the last month, Joe Valentine has advised the Cable Board that the City of Birmingham is requesting that three additional meetings be broadcast on a regular basis: Board of Zoning Appeals, Advisory Parking Committee, and Multi-Modal Transportation Board. Those broadcasts are not presently within this contract and will require a modification to the proposed contract. Heldt hopes to have the pricing determined and to bring this before the Cable Board for consideration in June.

Questions from Board members were addressed by Steve Rota and Jeffrey Heldt.

Roll Call Vote:  
Motion passed (7 – 0).

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Cable Action Committee**

White reported on the last Cable Action Committee meeting at which time she and Board member Heldt discussed possible changes to the PEG revenue numbers based on the new contract between Comcast and the four communities. White will be bringing a budget amendment to the Board for consideration based on that discussion.

### **PEG Committee**

Heldt stated that there will be a PEG Committee meeting following today's Board meeting. Topics of discussion will be the Birmingham School grant request and additional meetings to be broadcast for the City of Birmingham.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

White reviewed two pending complaints as of the last meeting. WOW is still working on a complaint related to burying cables at the Williamsburg condominiums. A billing dispute has been resolved. White outlined four complaints received since the date of the last meeting. A complaint regarding an expired Comcast discount has been resolved. There were three complaints involving billing disputes; one is pending.

Mira Stakhiv conveyed a complaint with Comcast customer service regarding problems with her DVRs and the Internet. Ettenson questioned whether it is a continuing problem that Comcast customers reach service representatives off shore and sometimes have trouble communicating with individuals from different countries. White responded that complaints of this nature are not increasing, but they are continuing.

White related that Cable Board financial information has not been fully updated due to continuing staff issues at Beverly Hills. White reported on check disbursements in the last month.

The City of Birmingham is requesting the broadcasting of additional City board meetings on a regular basis. That issue is pending.

Livonia Television requested the participation of other Michigan PEG operations in its colleague survey. White participated in the survey on behalf of the BACB; members have been provided with the survey results.

In an article entitled “Public opposition doomed Comcast merger”, the Detroit Free Press reported on April 25, 2015 that more than 800,000 individuals submitted comments to the FCC about Comcast’s deal. According to then-Attorney General Eric Holder, the decision to abandon the deal “is the best outcome for American consumers.” Comcast dropped its bid to acquire competitor Time Warner Cable on April 24, 2015 when it became evident that federal regulators would not approve the deal.

It was reported that ESPN has sued Verizon over channel packaging. ESPN claims that Verizon is breaching its contract by unbundling the sports channel from the main programming lineup of Verizon’s FIOS TV. Verizon states that it is honoring its obligations while giving customers choices.

Digitaltrends.com reported on April 28, 2015 that despite Comcast’s failure, AT&T’s \$48.5 billion merger with DirecTV seems likely to win federal approval. While the absorption of Time Warner’s assets by Comcast would have involved the expansion of internet, cable TV and content covering ground across the country, and leaning towards a monopoly, FCC staff have observed that DirecTV offers no such potential for AT&T. Instead, this involves a merging of regional pay-TV with satellite, a proposition which the government finds much more palatable.

On May 6, 2015, the Detroit Free Press reported that Comcast has launched a voice controlled TV remote for some of its Xfinity customers. The new remote works only with Comcast’s X1 cable box. The article stated that existing customers can order one free on the Xfinity website or pick one up at an Xfinity store.

#### **PROVIDER RELATED TOPICS**

McLain stated that there are no provider representatives present at today’s meeting.

#### **BAPA/BAMA REPORT**

Steve Rota highlighted programming outlined in the written report from Bloomfield Community Television on programming taped for Municipal Channel 15 (BAMA), PA Channel 18 (BAPA), and programming from BACB area organizations during the last two months (information included in BCTV monthly report for March 19, 2015 through May 27, 2015).

The next BCTV camera workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to noon or 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Interested individuals should call 248-433-7790 to sign up for the workshop.

Rota informed the Board that BCTV is in the process of transitioning the studio from SD to HD. He commented on recent purchases for the studio and the truck related to the HD conversion.

Rota thanked the BACB for its approval of the new contract with BCTV. He is looking forward to working with everyone on the Board over the next three to four years.

Stakhiv asked BCTV to look into the poor sound quality of Franklin Council meetings.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Schneider asked that an item be placed on next month's agenda to discuss improving the attendance at Cable Action Committee meetings.

Cable Board Attorney Tim Currier reviewed that three of the four communities have approved the new franchise agreement with Comcast. The franchises expired sequentially, with Franklin being the last franchise to be renewed. Currier related that a number of items have been discussed and negotiated with Comcast including HD PEG transmissions, more courtesy drops, maintaining an I-NET line, and PEG fees.

Comcast has maintained that, under State Law, when the franchise expires, the 3% PEG fee would be reduced to not exceed 2 percent. A resolution was reached with Comcast to enter into a side agreement that would provide for PEG funding supplemental fees over the next three years in addition to the 2% as follows:

- 4/27/15 - 4/26/16 = an additional .75% PEG fee
- 4/27/16 - 4/26/17 = an additional .50% PEG fee
- 4/27/17 - 4/26/18 = an additional .25% PEG fee
- 4/27/18 - 4/26/25 = no additional .00% PEG fee

In addition, Comcast agreed to provide reimbursement of legal fees associated with the consents to transfer for the four Birmingham Area Cable Board communities for an aggregate total of \$10,000 which would be paid to the Cable Board. Birmingham, Beverly Hills and Bingham Farms have approved the Michigan Uniform Video Service Local Franchise Agreement with Comcast and approved the additional Letter of Agreement.

Currier talked about the Meridian Township Agreement with Comcast related to courtesy drops. He mentioned that the BACB community schools, police, and fire departments receive courtesy drops.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**BOARD COMMENTS**

None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.