

Present: Heldt, McAlear, McLain - Birmingham
Borgon, Heyman, Schneider, Verdi-Hus – Beverly Hills
Stakhiv – Franklin

Absent: Kelly – Birmingham
Ettenson – Bingham Farms

Also Present: White - Executive Director
Currier - Attorney for Cable Board
Rota - Bloomfield Community Television
Thomas – Birmingham staff representative
Ken Parsons – WOW representative

McLain called the meeting to order at 7:45 a.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD JANUARY 21, 2015

Motion by Heldt, second by Heyman, that the minutes of a regular Cable Board meeting held on January 21, 2015 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

GRANT REQUEST – FRANKLIN-BINGHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Franklin-Bingham Farms Police Department currently obtains Internet access through a contractual agreement with Comcast for fire station Internet access and Verizon Wireless for scene-based EMS incident reporting access. It was indicated in a letter dated February 2, 2015 from Fire Chief Tony Averbuch that these services were selected based upon coverage, speed, cost and the ability to receive a static IP address in order to host the public website as well as communicate with personnel via secure web connection.

Chief Averbuch is requesting a grant to the Department to cover internet connectivity at a cost of \$107.85 per month for Comcast fire-station Internet service and \$40.01 per month for Verizon Wireless Internet access. This would total \$1,774.32 for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2015. The Board's support would help the Department in providing services to the public by allowing it to maintain a level of service commensurate with its obligations.

Motion by Stakhiv, second by Heyman, to approve a municipal support services grant request from the Franklin-Bingham Fire Department to cover the cost of \$107.85 per month for Comcast fire-station Internet service and \$40.01 per month for Verizon Wireless Internet access for a total amount of \$1,774.32 for fiscal year 2015/16.

Heldt reminded the Board that, according to protocol, the Cable Board does not approve grants for the upcoming fiscal year. This grant is ultimately acceptable, but the Board should postpone consideration of the grant until July.

Motion by Heldt, second by McAlear, to table consideration of a grant request from the Franklin-Bingham Fire Department for FY 2015/2016.

Motion passed (8 – 0).

BUDGET AMENDMENT – LEGAL SERVICES

White stated that the Cable Board is approaching the \$25,000 budgeted amount for legal services in FY2014/15. It has been an extraordinary year in terms of the work that has been done relative to the Comcast merger. White requested Board authorization to add \$5,000 to the amount budgeted for legal services.

Currier said that he did not anticipate that there would be major expenditures for legal services required from now until the end of June. The current issue is discussion and negotiations regarding the Comcast franchise agreement. Considering that Comcast has extended the franchise agreements in the Bloomfield and West Bloomfield communities, Currier did not think this would be an issue.

Motion by Heldt, second by Heyman, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board authorize the Executive Director to increase the 2014/15 budget allocation for legal fees by \$5,000.

Motion passed (8 – 0).

ADMINISTRATIVE GRANT POLICY AMENDMENT

Heldt stated that administrative grants as of June 30, 2014 were authorized for issuance to the four consortium communities at the January 2015 Cable Board meeting. It was pointed out that the current policy provides that the Board would retain an additional amount each year as working capital reserve. The flaw in this thinking was that, over time, the reserve increases. The proposal is to modify the grant policy to express the working capital reserve as 25% of last year's franchise fees; it will grow or decrease by the amount of last year's franchise fees.

Motion by Heldt, second by McAlear, that the Board hereby establish the following policy regarding Administrative Grants: The Birmingham Area Cable Board shall administratively grant back to the communities any year end "excess" between operating (franchise) income and expense, after preserving "working capital" for operations at 25% of last year's franchise fees.

Borgon referred to a financial report listing the Board's franchise fee and PEG fund balance year-to-date as of February 22, 2015. It shows a franchise fee amount of \$800,000 in the fund balance. He questioned whether the Board should distribute the unused franchise fees to the four communities in accordance with Cable Board policy.

Heldt responded that the recent administrative grant was based on June 30, 2014 numbers. He addressed inquiries from the Board relative to the fund balance, the recent separation of accounting for franchise fees and PEG fees, and the underfunding of PEG reserve funds. The fund balance will enter into the calculations when the Board determines next year's administrative grant.

There were members who suggested that there should be a more thorough discussion of Board finances, accounting, and the amount of the fund balance before taking a vote on an amendment to the administrative grant policy. Heldt said that there was no urgency to amend the grant policy at this time if there was a consensus to table action on this matter.

Motion by Schneider, second by Borgon, to table consideration of Administrative Grant Policy Amendment to the March Birmingham Area Cable Board meeting.

Motion passed (8 – 0).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

Verdi-Hus reported that there were two members present at the February 5 Cable Action Committee meeting. Executive Director White indicated that she will compile tracking information on BACB website activity through Google Analytics on a regular basis. The next meeting of the Cable Action Committee will be Thursday, March 5 at 5:30 pm at the Baldwin Public Library.

PEG Committee

Heldt reported that there is one remaining winter sporting event that will be taped and broadcast. The Spring high school sports schedule will be discussed at the March meeting. There will be a PEG meeting following the regular Cable Board meeting.

Personnel Committee

Stakhiv stated that the Personnel Committee will meet on Saturday, February 28 at 2 pm at the Kreger House in Franklin to conduct the Executive Director's performance appraisal in a closed session.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director White outlined three complaints that have been resolved in the last month. Financial information has been provided to Board members by email and is also included in the packet.

White requested authorization from the Board to pay an invoice from the Birmingham Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$175.00 for membership dues for the period from March 1, 2015 through February 29, 2016.

Motion by Borgon, second by Stakhiv, to authorize the Executive Director to pay an invoice in the amount of \$175.00 for Birmingham Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce membership dues for a period from March 1, 2015 to February 29, 2016.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion passed (8 – 0).

White requested authorization to pay the Board's Michigan NATOA annual dues in the amount of \$125.00. This entails a full membership for the Board chairperson and an associate membership for the Executive Director.

Motion by Borgon, second by Stakhiv, that the Cable Board authorizes the expenditure of \$125 to pay Michigan NATOA annual dues consisting of one full membership and one associate membership.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion passed (8 – 0).

White reported that notification was received from WOW that, beginning on or after April 14, 2015, their Limited Basic Cable Line-up will transition to an all-digital format. Residential WOW cable customers are eligible for one Digital Adapter at no cost per account. A Digital Adapter (\$2.00 per month) will need to be connected to any TV in a subscriber's home that does not already have WOW digital equipment. TVs with built-in digital tuners do not need Digital Adapters. Customers will be notified of this transition beginning in mid-March.

Board members are in receipt of an article from multichannel.com entitled "How Cable Neglects Its Red-Headed Stepsister." The article was written by the executive director of American Community Television, based in Columbia, Md. and describes how the cable industry has tried to diminish public, educational and government access television. It describes how the National Cable and Telecommunications Association is pressing Congress to relieve its members of PEG obligations.

The Media Central Conference this year will be held March 11-13, 2015 in Lansing. White will email the agenda to interested Board members who would like to review topics that will be addressed at the conference. There is money in the budget for this conference if any Cable Board members are interested in attending.

PROVIDER RELATED TOPICS

Comcast

There was no representative present.

AT&T

There was no representative present.

WOW

Ken Parsons representing WOW was present.

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 month (information included in BCTV monthly report for January 22, 2015 through February 25, 2015).

Rota mentioned that the spring high school sporting event schedule is developing. Events and dates will be forthcoming at the March meeting.

The next camera workshop has been scheduled for Tuesday, April 22, 2015 from 10:00 am to noon or 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Call 248-433-7790 to sign up.

The Program Development Committee met last week to discuss two show ideas. The first program will be a two minute documentary featuring the new identity for the BASCC Senior Center. The second program will be an ongoing legal show.

Rota talked about BCTV's procedure relative to times when BAPA and BAMA are off the air. People can call 248-433-7790 during business hours or after business hours when these programs are off the air; staff will try their best to resume programming in a timely manner.

Rota informed the Board that one of the cameras in the production truck was in need of repair; he provided details on trouble shooting efforts. Authorization was received by McLain and Heldt for BCTV to proceed with the purchase of a new circuit board for the camera at a cost of \$781.40. Rota requested that the Cable Board reimburse BCTV for this expense. Questions from members were addressed by Rota.

Motion by Heldt, second by Borgon, that the Birmingham Area Cable Board reimburse BCTV in the amount of \$781.40 for the cost of a new circuit board for a production truck camera.

Schneider suggested creating a maintenance fund line item in the budget and criteria for use of this fund by BCTV. McLain responded that the Board votes on all expenditures at regular meetings for the sake of transparency.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion passed (8 – 0).

Rota stated that it was brought to his attention that Monday night's Birmingham Commission meeting was not broadcast live to AT&T subscribers. He reset the encoder for AT&T the next morning. Rota mentioned that he would appreciate any feedback from Board members on BCTV production standards. Based on their experiences, McLain and Heyman provided positive feedback on the first rate production quality and expertise of the BCTV staff and management.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMENTS

None

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