

BIRMINGHAM AREA CABLE BOARD MEETING MINUTES – MAY 17, 2017

Present: Abraham (alternate), Bozell, Eick, Heldt (arrived at 7:47 AM), McAlear,
 McLain – Birmingham
 Gugni, Maly, Verdi-Hus– Village of Beverly Hills
 Ettenson – Village of Bingham Farms
 Stakhiv - Franklin

Absent: Weller – Birmingham
 Borgon, Delaney (alternate, non-voting) – Village of Beverly Hills

Also Present: White – Executive Director
 Currier – Attorney for Cable Board
 Masurek – Comcast Representative
 Rota – Bloomfield Community Television

McLain called the meeting to order at 7:45 AM in the Village of Beverly Hills Municipal Building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVE MINUTES OF CABLE BOARD MEETING HELD April 19, 2017

Motion by Eick, seconded by Bozell to approve the minutes of the Regular Cable Board Meeting on April 19, 2017, as presented.

Stakhiv requested that on page 4, the second sentence of the last paragraph should read, "...is always available and *will take it directly to the Cable Board to get it resolved.*"

(Heldt arrived at 7:47 AM)

Motion by Eick, seconded by Bozell to approve the minutes of the Regular Cable Board Meeting on April 19, 2017, as amended.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

PEG GRANT REQUEST FROM BINGHAM FARMS

Kathy Hagaman, Clerk/Administrator of the Village of Bingham Farms, was unable to attend the meeting. Referring to her letter dated April 20, 2017, Mel Ettenson, Bingham Farms BACB representative, presented the request to purchase an Epson video projector to be used for presentations during Council, Planning Commission and Design Review Board meetings.

Motion by Heldt, seconded by Stakhiv to approve the grant request from the Village of Bingham Farms in the amount not to exceed \$506.58 to cover the purchase of an Epson video projector to be used for presentations during Council, Planning Commission and Design Review Board meetings and a Link Depot HDMI Cable.

Stakhiv questioned if the requested amount for a HDMI cable was enough. Rota confirmed it.

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For the public's benefit, McLain read the second paragraph of Hagaman's letter which documents the Village working in conjunction with BCTV to determine the adequacy of the proposed equipment for the Village meeting room setup.

Motion passed (11-0)

PROPOSED FY 2017- 2018 BACB BUDGET

The Board was in receipt of the proposed 2017/2018 Cable Board Budget as prepared by Executive Director White. She explained its format (current amounts and the Annual Proposed Budget FY 2017-18 amounts) and included some additional figures.

PEG Revenues: All have been reduced to anticipated decrease of revenues from all the providers. They will be going down to 2.25% this upcoming budget year and 2% the following year.

Because the deficit equals the revenue, it is a balanced budget. Next month the Board will vote on the budget.

Responding to Ettenson's inquiry about the percentage White used for the reductions, she stated that she did not use a flat percentage as it was so nebulous but instead made estimates based on this year's numbers. She pointed out that she tried to be conservative with the revenues.

Heldt confirmed that the total reduction was approximately 10.5%. Bozell requested that the 2016 Revenue be compared with the 2017 Revenue. White noted the figures on the Revenue & Expense Budget Performance page under Franchise Fee Income reflect the July 2016-April 2017 figures, the YTD Budget figures, and the Annual Budget. McLain stated that BACB is in contact with other communities in Michigan to see what trends they see. She added that most of the communities are seeing what BACB is seeing, which is not a dramatic impact.

Mazurek, Comcast representative, mentioned that their video subscribers were increasing which impact the franchise fees.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cable Action Committee

Verdi-Hus, Chairman, reported there was no meeting last month due to the fact there was nothing on the agenda. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 1 at 5:30 PM in the Baldwin Public Library in Birmingham.

PEG Committee

McAlear, Chairman, did not have anything to report but noted there would be a brief meeting immediately following this one.

Personnel Committee

Stakhiv, Chairman, stated that the Personnel Committee would be setting up a meeting in the next few weeks to discuss some concerns and issues which the Executive Director had brought up during the performance appraisal. She will post the meeting date online and will email every

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Board Member with the time and place. She would welcome the attendance of any and all members.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

White referred to her monthly report dated May 6, 2017. There has been one (1) complaint since the last meeting which had to do with an elderly couple in Beverly Hills and dealt with their Comcast phone service. Three (3) different technicians had come out to their house to fix the problem and the third one was successful. The couple was charged \$60.00 for the unsuccessful visits and wanted Comcast to issue them a credit on their bill. Comcast resolved the issue the same day by issuing the credit. The complaint is closed.

She wanted the Board to be aware that other complaints have been recently received and would be included in her June report. One involves a Franklin resident who has been having difficulty with Channel 15. Comcast is looking into that for him. The second complaint was from a gentleman who was having difficulties with his Comcast emails. That has now been resolved. The third is from a Beverly Hills family who has some WOW wires on their garage as the result of the wind storm from two (2) months ago. WOW will be addressing that matter. The fourth is from a gentleman in Franklin who was troubled by the fact that when he used the Comcast Channel Guide there were explicit descriptions of what would be appearing on the Adult Channel. He felt they were not appropriate for younger children to see. He was aware of the Parental Block feature that would allow subscribers to block the content but apparently not the descriptions on the Channel Guide. Mazurek was in contact with the gentleman and explained how to engage the Parental Control which would then correct the problem.

White commented that because the Fund balance was getting relatively large, she and the Treasurer would be moving some of the funds to MBS for longer term investments and a greater return on those monies. She also mentioned that she hopes to have the BACB's MBS representative meet with the new Board Members to explain the process and investment philosophy. He is planning on being at the next BACB meeting.

No checks were written since the date of the last meeting.

A new procedure has been initiated. The Auditor has asked that checks written over a certain amount be signed by both herself and the Treasurer.

Additional Notes

The battle over net neutrality is about to heat up again. The FCC is looking at possibly reversing the Open Internet rules which were passed two (2) years ago. Those rules prevented internet providers from blocking content online. The new FCC Chairman will be looking at those regulations because it is believed that they have reduced investment and network expansion and slowed consumer access to faster broadband connections. This is a hotly debated issue. McLain added that the new Chairman is a former Comcast employee. She also mentioned that some of the late night talk show hosts have talked about net neutrality and as a result there had been so many comments sent to the FCC that its site crashed. Subsequently, no comments will be accepted until after May 18 when a vote on reversing the rule is scheduled. Mazurek emphasized

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that Comcast does not block, does not throttle, and does not pay prioritization. The company agrees with transparency principles and it agrees with net neutrality.

Verizon is promising to increase bandwidth to lightning-fast speeds. They will be rolling out near-gigabit speeds to more than 8 million potential customers on the East Coast. The faster speeds will enable customers to download movies in seconds and share fast broadband among home internet-connected devices.

AT&T is planning on launching ultra-fast 1-gigabit internet service in parts of western Michigan, beginning with parts of Grand Rapids. With that service the customer will be able to download 25 songs in one (1) second or a 90-minute HD movie in less than thirty-four (34) seconds. The company is looking to add two (2) million locations in 2017 and at least 12.5 million locations by mid-2019. (White thanked Board Member Maly for sharing this information.)

The BACB received a Thank You note from the Franklin Historical Society for the grant for its internet service. It helps with their historic preservation programs.

PROVIDER RELATED TOPICS

a. Comcast

Kyle Mazurek, Comcast representative, noted that in late February Comcast announced it had formed a similar partnership with YouTube as it has with Netflix. This should come out later in the year. In early April they launched a new streaming service, “Internet Plus with Streams”. He explained the advantages of the new service. Their Xfinity Mobile product has been launched and will be competing with Verizon, AT&T, T Mobile and others.

White mentioned that at the last meeting there was a discussion concerning a letter from Comcast which had been sent to a limited number of subscribers asking that they consider upgrading their equipment to take advantage of new technology enhancements. Mazurek commented that Comcast is trying to get the old devices off the network as they are a drag on it and the company wants to launch new products. He explained the easy process of upgrading subscribers’ equipment.

b. AT&T/Uverse/Direct TV

There was no representative present.

c. WOW

White reported that WOW has sent a letter informing subscribers of rate increases as of June 1. Depending on the bundle package, the monthly increases for most subscribers would be between \$6.75 and \$10.20. There will also be a monthly increase for the broadcast TV fees of \$1.55. Business subscribers will also be getting letters informing them of increases.

McLain stated that if the public has questions about rates they should call the providers directly. The BACB does not set rates but can help the subscriber, if need be.

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Steve Rota referred to his memo to BACB, dated May 4, 2017 and stated that it was a busy month. He listed the completed **BAMA** Programs which were the six (6) regularly scheduled municipal meetings, Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, the BACB meeting, Multi Modal Board meeting, Advisory Board meeting, Parks and Rec Board meeting, Baldwin Public Library Board and Trust meeting and last night's Special Commission Meeting.

For the **BAPA** Programs, from the BACB area individual producers and organizations, thirty-two (32) programs were taped. He listed all the programs. The Spring Sports schedule will be completed Thursday night with a baseball doubleheader. Two sporting events were not covered due to rain and their next invoice would reflect that.

Rota pointed out that The Senior Men's 60th Anniversary Event will be held tonight at 5:30 PM at the San Marino Club. BCTV usually doesn't venture outside the viewing area but this is an exception. He met with Bob Borgon and the Chairman of the event and his staff to discuss the filming of this special program. This Friday there is also a special event at the Community House which BCTV will be covering.

Regarding the **VOLUNTEER PRODUCER and CAMERA WORKSHOPS**, Rota reminded the Board that one-on-one sessions are offered for those who are interested in a tour of the facility, producing their own show and/or learning how to run some of the technical equipment. Residents can contact BCTV at 248-433-7790 to schedule a one-on-one appointment date and time. There is no fee for those living in one of the four BACB communities.

Additionally, the upcoming Celebrate Birmingham Parade and the Beverly Hills Memorial Day Parade will be filmed.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD COMMENTS

Carrier brought to the Board's attention that Fiber Tec, in conjunction with Verizon, has been going to a number of communities with the intention of installing DAS antenna on top of telephone poles owned by DTE in the rights-of-way. These are metal extensions on top of the poles which help with the telecommunication coverage. On May 1, 2017, the Bloomfield Township Planning Commission addressed this issue and rejected the placement of the extensions. Various reasons were cited for the rejection. It is unknown what Verizon will do in the future.

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McLain brought to Mazurek's attention that with the rights-of-way upgrading and transferring of wires, etc., several residents have called to report that not every worker is wearing an ID, has a truck with an ID, or makes an attempt to approach a homeowner. Mazurek confirmed that Comcast has instructed all employees to display all IDs, regardless of whether they are a subcontractor or a direct Comcast employee.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 AM.