

Belmont Cable Access Committee (CAC)
Minutes 9/24/2002
7:30PM, BCTV Channel 8 Studio

Present

Committee: John Verrilli, Todd Bloniarz, Maryann Scali, Paulette Trout
AT&T Broadband: Mark Ventola

Call to Order: The meeting was officially called to order at 7:43 by John Verrilli.

Review of 6/18/02 Minutes

The on-camera TV skills workshop suggested by Larry Kutner and Cheryl Olson is still being considered by Ch. 8. The section on political guidelines was to be rewritten by simply saying that this topic will be put on the agenda for the fall in preparation for the 2003 spring elections. Maryann said she would look into the guidelines for CAC members' involvement in Political Action Committees and Ch. 8 political-based programming.

New Committee Member Appointed

The Belmont town selectmen officially approved Larry Kutner as the newest member of the CAC. Unfortunately Larry was called out of town and could not attend the meeting, but he had spoken to John on the phone earlier in the month. Larry has many ideas and visions for Ch. 8 based on his experiences of running a non-profit organization.

Issues from the Community

John Verrilli discussed an e-mail that was previously forwarded to all CAC members (and Mark Ventola) from John DeMerritt who had submitted a list of several meetings of various town committees that should be broadcast on Ch. 8. Mark said the number of meetings that can be covered depends on how far in advance the station is notified and what nights the meetings are scheduled (due to existing commitments for coverage of Selectmen and School Committee meetings). John said he would contact Mr. DeMerritt to find out which meetings most warrant television coverage and suggest Mr. DeMerritt should contact the Ch. 8 staff directly in the future with regards to this issue. The question was also posed whether the CAC should be involved in deciding which meetings should be televised on Ch. 8. John said he would start printing out the schedules of all the various committees' meetings from the Belmont town web page and review these as part of our monthly meeting agenda.

Report on Studio Operations

A new studio fax machine was recently installed. Mark called the summer video camp a success with about a dozen children in attendance; this has spawned off the creation of a kids video club started in September by Abiodun targeting middle school-aged students. A topic falling under both community issues and studio operations was broached by Maryann, who noted some station power outage issues during the summer months.

Cable Advisory Committee Survey

Results of the survey were discussed, specifically the feedback regarding Ch. 8. Over two thousand people responded that they watch Ch. 8 programming and at least two-thirds of them said the overall coverage of meetings, school activities and election night coverage was adequate. The biggest complaint came from over eleven hundred respondents concerning the poor audio quality during coverage of Selectmen and School Committee meetings. The CAC agreed this issue should be made a top priority, suggesting that Mark and Abiodun closely monitor the situation over the next few weeks and look at alternatives to improve overall sound quality. Mark pointed out that recent adjustments have been made at Selectmen meetings to improve the audio levels of the Selectmen but there are still problems hearing guest speakers who talk from the back of the meeting room at Town Hall. Recommendations made by the CAC included having the Selectmen wear clip-on microphones and moving the flat mics to other parts of the room.

Finances and Capital Equipment

This topic was put off until Cori can attend the next meeting and submit a list of proposed budget expenses for Ch. 8.

Political Guidelines

The CAC agreed that this will be addressed as the spring election season approaches. In general, political guidelines are not sent out to prospective candidates until the Town Clerk certifies and confirms that the person in question is a viable candidate. Once the candidate is confirmed, the CAC said the guidelines should be sent to them approximately February 1st in preparation for the April town elections. Following discussion of this topic, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35pm.

Next Meeting

Tuesday October 15, 2002, 7:30pm at the studio.

Respectfully submitted,
Todd Bloniarz