

Belmont Cable Access Committee
Minutes of October 21, 2003
Belmont High School
Channel 8 Studio
7:30 pm

Present:

Committee: Todd Bloniarz, Maryann Scali, Pam Curtis, Fred Skoler, and Deborah Danzig

Comcast: Mark Ventola, Access Coordinator

1. Call to Order: The Cable Access Committee Meeting was called to order at 7:42 pm by Todd Bloniarz at the Belmont High School, Channel 8 Studio.

2. Introduction of New Members: The following new members were introduced: Fred Skoler and Deborah Danzig.

3. Review of 9/23/03 Minutes

The review of September meeting minutes will be submitted for review and approval at the November meeting.

4. Community Complaints and Concerns

Media Center Task Force

- Comcast/Belmont Contract due to expire September 2004. Comcast is trying to get out of the business of running community access stations
- Goal of Belmont is to have an independent non-for profit run studio. The committee has been working closely with a media consultant to achieve this goal. A future initiative is to establish focus groups with the town to ascertain the concerns of the residents through an open forum. The focus group is planned for Tuesday, November 4, 2003 at the Town Hall in Belmont.
- In addition the committee's goal is to start-up a PEG (Public, Educational, and Government) access corporation while fulfilling the following objectives:

Providing data *directly from the community*, which would support negotiations to maximize the PEG Access resources in the new contract.

Educating the residents about the opportunities and potentials of effective local programming and access to technology resources for Belmont and its residents.

Identify the leadership in the community to further the development of a means to meet these needs and interest through the establishment of a Convener's Committee.

Chenery Middle School: Comcast to cover quality of cable coverage at the school committee meetings. Adjustments are being made at Town Hall to improve over all visual/audio quality.

Construction on the streets of certain Belmont neighborhoods: There has been an issue of coordination with Com Cast and Verizon and the town re: the "Belmont Pavement Management Program." Apparently the cable companies were notified in advance of all the streets that were to be part of this program. However, the cable lines were installed in such a way that interfered with the construction done on the streets. This has caused considerable delays in work completion, overtime of staff and requires additional work to be done by the cable companies to rectify these problems. Resolution still pending.

5. Report on Studio Operations
Studio/Product Equipment: awaiting approval process to upgrade equipment to digital especially the camera equipment.
6. Review of Finances and Capital Equipment: Budget report still outstanding. Mark Apostolon and Frank Foss from Comcast will report at the next meeting.
7. Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm. Next meeting: Tuesday, November 18th.