

Belmont Cable Access Committee (BAC)
Minutes 1/25/05
7:30 p.m., BCTV Studio

Present

CAC: John Verrilli (Chair), Jeffrey Bairstow, Pam Curtis, Edward Yee
Comcast: Abiodun Shobowale, Mark Ventola

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by CAC chair, John Verrilli at 7:40 p.m.

Review of Minutes of 12/21/04

The minutes were accepted as written.

Issues from the Community/Complaints/Concerns/Coverage

John Verrilli distributed a handout containing a list of technical, programming and station management issues and the responses that he received from Comcast Area Access Supervisor, Dina O'Brien. The committee reviewed the list and discussed each issue. John plans to keep an on-going issues list, so that the committee can track problems and see whether they get resolved. Mark provided additional information on how Comcast was responding to the problems currently on the list. He reported that the Alphagen Bulletin Board was still not working. It had been sent out for repair, but the problem had not been solved. A technician is supposed to come in to look at it. Two questions arose in the course of discussion about the Alphagen:

1. Does the Alphagen allow for offline editing of the bulletin board?
2. When there are technical difficulties with a broadcast, can the system default to a notice stating that the station is experiencing technical difficulties?

Other issues and concerns discussed include:

1. The tape of the Martin Luther King Breakfast at BHS was cut off during the broadcast before it was finished.
2. The broadcast program schedule often contains information that is out of date. Is there a way to do a "rolling schedule" that will eliminate the day that has just passed and add the next day?
3. The issue of revising programming in order to have more repeats and fill more air time was put off for discussion at a later meeting.
4. A new Channel 8 volunteer list was distributed
5. There was a proposal to hold a graduation ceremony for new Channel 8 producers. The committee agreed that this should be done. Abiodun will coordinate this.
6. The organization of the studio needs attention. Abiodun reported that the tapes had been reorganized and shelved recently.
7. Mark reported that the studio had received inquiries about taping and/or broadcasting live the 7:30 a.m. Board of Selectman meetings. He noted that the studio is already covering the Saturday meetings. The studio may not have the resources to cover these meetings. Time spent covering the early morning meetings would be taken away from the staff's regular time in the studio.

Studio Operations

Abiodun reported that a new producer was working on a series on computers. An edited tape of the Martin Luther King Breakfast is also in the works.

Review of Budget

Committee members were given copies of the 2004 estimated budget. John noted that according to Comcast, a 10,000.00 check for the capital budget had been sent to the town by Frank Foss. John was going to check on this. Notable on the budget is the 6,673.29 phone expense. John discussed this with Dina who responded that this was very high, but was probably attributable to the high studio usage associated with the dial-up modem connecting to long distance numbers. The studio now has a cable modem, which should result in lower phone costs.

John noted that under the new license, even though Comcast will not operate the studio, it will still be required, by law, to provide a payment for the operating budget, based on the revenue that it receives from its Belmont subscribers.

Updated Volunteer List

The updated studio volunteer list was reviewed and discussed. It was proposed that the list distinguish between volunteers who were certified producers and those who were not. It was also suggested that the committee make an effort to purge inactive volunteers from the list, so that a new list would be more useful to producers. John agreed to call people who may not still be active at Channel 8 to see whether they wanted to remain on the volunteer list. The goal is to have an up-to-date, accurate volunteer list for producers to use.

Review of Annual Report

The committee reviewed the CAC annual report, which is due Friday, January 28, 2005. The committee approved the draft, noting the need to get the 2004 statistics and updated information for the section on volunteers, programs and awards. John will get the information needed from Mark of Abiodun

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Curtis