

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

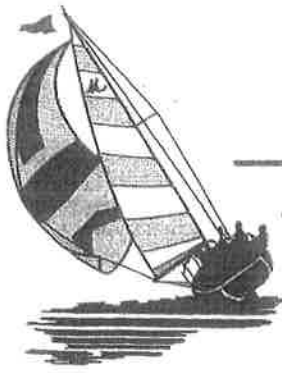
AGENDA ITEM III



Subject: Lakes Region Public Access Television

Members of the Board of the Lakes Region Public Access Television will address the Mayor and Council concerning new structure; cost for services, time slots and audio quality.

Attached is correspondence from LRPA.



Lakes Region Public Access Television

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(603) 528-3070 • fax (603) 527-2041 • email: access@lrpa.org

November 5, 2014

City Council
City of Franklin
316 Central Street
Franklin, New Hampshire 03235

Dear City Council Members:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Lakes Region Public Access Television and the communities of Belmont, Gilford, Laconia and Meredith, we are writing to you to solicit your financial support. Lakes Region Public Access Television was created in 1999 by several communities who came together to negotiate a cable franchise agreement with Metrocast (successor to Community TV owned by Harmon White); the original agreement included language which allocated an annual contribution to Lakes Region Public Access Television as the area's PEG provider. This contribution and contributions from member communities provided financial support to Lakes Region Public Access Television for over 14 years.

During the course of negotiations for a successor agreement with Metrocast, some members of the Lakes Region Consortium noted they were no longer contributing to LRPA-TV and had begun using internet technology to provide residents with access to public meetings. Ongoing discussions with Metrocast ultimately eliminated the annual contribution to LRPA-TV and reference to them specifically in the new franchise agreement. A majority of the Consortium members were of the opinion that LRPA-TV needed to modify its business model to become self-sustaining without relying on the annual subsidy made by MetroCast that was in turn, passed onto every cable subscriber in the region. This way, communities that voluntarily contribute financially will be able to view and submit programs, while communities that choose not to contribute, will lose the ability to view LRPA channels and/or have to develop their own public access programming. The LRPA-TV Board of Directors suggested that a sponsorship model similar to that used by National Public Radio and the Public Broadcasting System as well as a fee-based system to cover programming and production costs could generate enough funds to support the organization. Through much discussion over the past 18 months by the Board of Directors and a dwindling cash flow balance, it has been determined that the new model needs to be supplemented with member contributions as it has for the past 14 years.

Public Access Television is not just access to public meetings; it is access to programs of interest to your residents that goes beyond Selectmen's and Town Council Meetings. It is programming such as, the Children's Auction, Lakes Region Spotlight, Today in Focus, Living United, Humane Happenings, Fitness Made 4 You, Belknap County Commissioner meetings just to name a few. Your community's contribution to LRPA-TV is vitally important for the organization to continue; currently 4 towns in the Lakes Region are contributing however the burden of funding should not fall solely on their taxpayers when others across the region are viewing LRPA-TV programming for free.

As Town Selectmen or City Council members, you were chosen to consider the interests of all of your constituents; we understand that there are a number of communities who choose to use the internet to provide public access to your community's meetings and this meets a very real need, but LRPA-TV is about way more than just governmental access, it is access to a wide variety of programming that entertains and enlightens viewers across the region.

We urge you to discuss our request at an upcoming meeting and we would be happy to attend to answer any questions you may have about our organization, its budget and what methods we do plan to pursue to help defray the cost of running LRPA-TV. Your support is needed now and into the future if public access television is going to continue to provide programming of interest to the Lakes Region viewing area. We can be reached using the contact information below; please do not hesitate to contact any one of us with questions or to pass along your vote of support.

Sincerely,

Lakes Region Public Access Television
Board of Directors



Dale Eddy, Gilford

Chairman

shockwave@tarnover.us

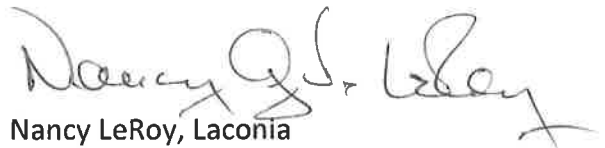


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