



Town of Hudson - Cable Television Committee

Meet at 7:30PM, first Tuesday of the month in the Town Hall 3rd Floor Conf Room

A = Absent P = Present	7-Jan	21-Jan	4-Mar	17-Jun	7-Oct	2-Dec	2-Mar	6-Apr					
Andy Vickery	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P					
Elaine Baly	A	P	A	A	P	A	P	A					
Jose Cabral	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P					
Tim McCoy	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P					
Tony Ippolito	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	E					
Official Meeting (with quorum)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					

Meeting Minutes from 06-Apr-2004

- Meeting started at 7:35PM with voting quorum.
- Approved minutes from December 2nd and March 2nd
- Scott Darlington was present at the meeting.
- Discussed the BOS concern regarding perception of Comcast involvement.
- Discussed that RCN were previously interested in coming to town but there was a disagreement with HLPD.
- Reviewed the Comcast TV studio breakdown of costs that was provided by Comcast to the BOS on Monday.
- Tim did some research into the franchise related costs (FRC) breakdown costs.
 - Discrepancy in the \$22,323 payment on 01/01/2003. Check received was for \$19,690.65 on 01/30/2003.
 - The \$194,000 cost for the completion of I-net (\$0.66 per month), the license states that the “licensee shall continue to provide, maintain and support the INet without charge to the town...” Section 3.2(a). While the contact states no cost to the town, it does not state no cost to the subscribers.
 - License section 3.2(e) states “The Licensee shall be responsible for maintaining the I-Net, at no cost to the Town...”. This relates to the \$12,050 fee.BFN I-Net maintenance. Again, while the contact states no cost to the town, it does not state no cost to the subscribers.
 - It is our understanding that the cost associated with personnel seems to be disproportionately assigned to Hudson at 95%. Is the town receiving a dedicated 95% of their workload? Are the employees being used for other towns?
 - The license definition “no cost to the town” does this include subscribers?
 - Tim wants to review the license some more and get back to the committee.
- Options to reduce FRC:

The Hudson 2003/2004 allocation for the expenses resulting from the Comcast production of PEG programming and Comcast local broadcast studio totals \$204,391 for CY2004. This allocation includes \$122,513 for employee wages/benefits, \$36,221 for property rental, \$45,657 for utilities and supplies. These costs are embedded within the franchise related costs and passed onto the Hudson subscribers.

Below are suggestions from the cable committee in ways the BOS could modify the license to reduce this burden on the Hudson subscribers.

- A new television studio has been built and fully equipped at the new HHS. It would be possible to extend the use of this studio beyond the school system to the Hudson community. This dual usage of our HHS studio would eliminate the license mandate for the Comcast studio to be maintained within the Comcast Hudson facility for use of the Hudson residents. Subscribers are paying for the rental of this space within the Comcast facility at a cost of \$36,221 per year. The utilities for this space are an additional \$31,489 per year.
- Consider having town government related production performed in-house. This could be achieved by taking the existing part-time HHS TV studio operator position and extending to a full-time employee shared between the school department and the town. The employee's duties would then be extended to include the taping and broadcasting of town BOS, school committee meetings etc over the existing HHS educational channel. Subscribers are paying \$122,513 in wages/benefits to have this work performed by Comcast employees.
- Potential exists for using the HHS TV studio to broadcast public access material in addition to the educational material.
- Shrewsbury run there own cable municipality. A detailed project exploration would need to occur to understand the viability of creating a Hudson municipal cable television entity.
- The Comcast studio production facility is used very little, but the video and editing rooms are used often by the Comcast employees for PEG production.
- Are the cleaning, hauling, building repair overhead recurring costs or onetime?
- Is the studio space really 60% of the building? How can this be reduced?
- The cable television services fund (section 7.11) is an asset to the town as we use these funds to operate the HHS TV studio.
- The BOS can file a petition to intervene at the next rate hearing process, this will be started by MCTD in Fall 2004. There is a three week window period for which the town can intervene in the process once the 1240 and 1205 forms are provided to the town. So this process will need to be expeditious.
- Discussed Intel grant of \$14,243 that was awarded to the HHS TV studio. Scott is now working with Dell to get quotes on the price of the hardware.
- Reviewed proposal for 2004-2005 funding of part time TV studio operator position. Scott needs to get his Masters degree this year as the teaching requirement. So this position is helping to reduce the extensive hours that Scott is at the school facility. Committee approved funding the position at 740 hours for \$12,580 for school year 2004-2005 at a vote of 3-0-0.
- HHS now has the ability to broadcast live from any room directly over the cable network.
- Need to investigate having the school department provide some funds for supporting their educational TV studio in school year 2005-2006. There is no guarantee of this funding in the future from the CAC.
- Everyday the students have a radio station which is broadcasted over HudTV Channel 9 each day from 2-5pm.
- Letters to Frank Foss and Mr. Richards. Andy to send both letters that were drafted by Tim.