

Old Lyme Area Cable Advisory Council  
8 April 2010, 7:30 pm  
Salem Town Offices, Room 2  
Minutes

Chairman Peter Sielman called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

Attending: Council members Peter Sielman, Pam Munro, Ed Blaschik, Sue McKinlay, Russ Gomes, Robin Purcell, Cathy Frank; Comcast representatives John Bairos, Hans Hartman; Absent: John Eichholz

Approval of Minutes

Pam Munro made a motion, seconded by Russ Gomes, to approve the minutes of 14 January 2010. Ed asked that the minutes be corrected as follows:

Ed Blaschik reported account balances totaling **\$22,038.73** which includes interest income of \$12.94. Motion to approve with correction passed unanimously.

Comcast Report

Peter thanked John Bairos for helping to resolve a problem transmitting live meetings from Salem.

John provided marketing updates. Xfinity is the new Comcast brand name. On April 24, a 2.8% overall price increase will take place. New package pricing was distributed and is attached to the minutes. He called attention to a digital economy package and a Family Tier package, both designed for specific programming interests at a reasonable price. Hans Hartman, Access Coordinator at the Old Lyme studio said that he continues to provide training for potential access users and is still planning an Open House at the Studio. A new text editing machine is in place at the studio and a green screen wall is almost completed.

Peter asked John to clarify the impact of a DPUC decision setting public access fees. (Peter forwarded the entire report to members before the meeting; the fee section is attached to the minutes). John explained that the DPUC uses the Cost of Living Index to determine the portion of subscriber fees to be used in each area to fund public access costs (studio, equipment, staff, etc.). In the Old Lyme Cable area, the new funding portion has been set at \$8.03.

Peter asked about the FCC's attempt to regulate internet usage. According to John, this had to do with a small number of internet users- less than 1% of users overall - and a lower court has ruled that the FCC has no authority over the internet.

Peter also noted that he recently subscribed to a phone/cable/internet package through Comcast and his monthly costs have gone down.

Ed asked if AT&T has any obligation to include Comcast phone subscribers in its (AT&T) phone books. John will investigate but does not believe there is any obligation.

Treasurer's Report

Ed reported a balance of \$24,049.34 in Council accounts, which includes accrued interest of \$10.61 and a \$2,000 annual payment received from Comcast.

### Old Business

Pam described how the scholarship application was developed and distributed to guidance departments. A copy of the application is attached. Applications were emailed and sent via USPS to the four high schools that serve students from the Council towns. Scholarship applications were received by four students from the same town (Old Lyme) and the same high school (Lyme-Old Lyme): Sophie Bakoledis, Sarah Briscoe, Megan Devlin, Sarah Schmidt.

In January, the Council discussed allocating \$1,000 per school for scholarships. Pam presented the scholarship committee's recommendation that we award \$500 to each of the four applicants. Robin suggested that awarding \$1,000 to each would still be in line with the "budget."

Members discussed the importance of creating a scholarship program that will be sustainable in future years and agreed that they did not wish to disburse all budgeted funds this year.

Russ made a motion, seconded by Robin, to award \$500 in scholarships to each of the four applicants. Motion passed unanimously.

Sue stated that the Council should request proof that the scholarship funds will be used for ongoing study in communication. It was agreed that letters will be written to each applicant and sent c/o the High School Guidance Department to be presented at the Senior Awards Night, congratulating the students and stating that a check will follow when proof of enrollment is received by the Council. Members also discussed refining the application for distribution to the schools in the fall.

### New Business

#### Election of New Treasurer

Ed will not be continuing on the Council. Members expressed gratitude for his 17 years of service. Robin Purcell agreed to succeed Ed as Treasurer.

A motion was made by Pam, seconded by Russ to name Robin Purcell Treasurer of the Old Lyme Area Cable Advisory Council.

#### Verify location of 2010 meetings

The July 8 meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place at the Lyme Town Hall. Robin will confirm. Members agreed that meetings should rotate among the towns we represent.

A motion to adjourn was made by Ed at 8:21pm. Meeting adjourned.

Cathy Frank  
9 April 2010

#### 2010 Meeting Schedule

January 14, Old Lyme Comcast Public Access Studio

April 8, Salem Town Offices

July 8, Lyme Town Hall

October 14, to be determined

