

A.N.C.C.

Area Nine Cable Council c/o Wilton Town Hall , 238 Danbury Rd, Wilton, CT 06897 www.westportct.net/ancc

TO: ANCC MEMBERS
FROM: Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Secretary
RE: MINUTES OF MEETING (February 17, 2010)

March 3, 2010

ATTENDANCE:

Darien: David Dever, Jim Cameron
Easton: Douglas K. Dempsey
Greenwich: Paul Curtis, Stuart Reider
New Canaan: Paul Sedlak, Roger Williams
Norwalk: Herbert A. Grant
Redding: Robert Moran
Stamford: Geza Ziegler
Weston: Harvey Bellin, Don Saltzman
Westport: Hal Levy, Judith Freedman
Wilton: Carole Young-Kleinfeld
Cablevision: Mike Chowaniec

Excused: Phyllis Bolden, Marge Costa, Diana Paladino (Norwalk), Andy Anderson (Easton), Lisa Bogan (Wilton), Chris von Keyserling (Greenwich)

Public: Patricia Donovan (Litchfield County League of Women Voters), Wilder Baker (Darien TV-79 Advisory Committee)

Hal Levy called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. Thanked Dave Dever and Jim Cameron for hosting and televising the meeting in Darien. HL welcomed a new representative from Easton, Doug Dempsey, who worked on the Easton G-channel start-up and is a documentary film maker.

HL also welcomed Mike Chowaniec (Cablevision) to the meeting and offered congratulations from the ANCC to Jennifer Young on the recent birth of her new baby.

1. The minutes of December 2, 2009 were approved with no changes.

2. The financial report from the Treasurer was distributed, discussed, and approved. HL reported that the report will now be generated using Quicken. HG reported a balance of \$12,846.57 in the Escrow account, which matches the bank statement. The balance in the Operations account is \$9703.54, also matching the bank statement.

HG reported that ANCC has not received an invoice for payment of a past grant request from Greenwich. PC to check with the Town of Greenwich for invoice status. HL stated that \$3000 in funds for access equipment awards to schools from last year's EAAA video competition have been encumbered, but will be awarded and paid next month. After paying these expenses, there will be less than \$5000 remaining in the escrow account. JC suggested two corrections to the spelling of a payee on the treasurer's report.

HL reported that funds for 2010 ANCC operating expenses and community access grants funds have been received from CV and expressed the thanks of the ANCC. HL questioned whether supplemental equipment grants will be available this year from CV. MC stated that this has not been discussed yet.

3. Old business

- JC reminded members to place a priority on generating original programming from their towns. HL added a section on programming activity to the access grant applications.
- Discussion of PEGPETIA fund's future and its dependence on state's financial status. DS reminded group that 50% of this fund goes to support E-channel equipment. PS reported that New Canaan has received its PEGPETIA funds from state. Several members reported that communications with DPUC continue to be challenging. SR was interested in getting the details of Norwalk's grant from DPUC. CYK re-stated her ongoing concern that no portion of grant funding can be used for paying camera operators by Area Nine towns who implement Cablevision's community access role, when Sound View Media, as the community access provider in Area 2, does use a portion of community access funds to pay camera operators and salaries.
- HL reported that he submitted the 2009 ANCC Annual Report to the DPUC and the ANCC administered E&G access grant program report to CV—both before required deadline. The ANCC Annual Report is accessible on ANCC links page, and was sent to all municipal CEOs and superintendents of schools. All 2009 I-Net Logs have been received except from Easton.
- Cablevision's petition to the FCC for a waiver of the prohibition on encryption of the basic service tier, including PEG channels, in its NYC franchise areas, was granted by the FCC on January 8, 2010. ANCC submitted comment to the FCC with concerns for the precedent-setting nature of such a decision. This decision allows CV to encrypt digital channels, so a QAM tuner won't work in a TV. Customers will need a converter box or cable card. Decision affects New York City franchise areas only. MC: No plans for CT at this time.
- ANCC member appointments for 2009-2011 are complete.

4. Review of Scripps/CV Carriage Dispute

Because the two companies couldn't reach agreement on terms of a contract renewal for HGTV and Food Network, Scripps pulled the channels from CV's line-up. ANCC passed several complaints to CV and issued a press release urging both companies to resolve their disagreements. JC regretted the expenditures for advertising and publicizing the disagreement.

JC asked HL to review ANCC's role in programming decisions and in determining costs. HL and DS reviewed the role of the ANCC as a voice for customers but that, by federal law that deregulated the cable TV industry in 1995, even the DPUC in Connecticut cannot intervene in determining cable rates and programming. Viewers should call Cablevision's Customer Service to report problems and the DPUC as a back-up. Customers are urged to e-mail the ANCC too at the contact information contained on their bills. HL reminded group that few regulations exist for satellite TV and that cable companies must submit planned channel changes to the DPUC 30 days in advance.

5. Legislative Activities

The ANCC will be following several Connecticut and federal proposals.

- The CAP Act (H.R. 3745) Community Access Preservation Act: Supports PEG funding, quality of signals, number of PEG channels required, studies impact of statewide franchising. ANCC to follow this. Congressman John Larson (CT Congressional Dist 1) is a co-sponsor of this bill.
- The Commercial Advertisement Loudness Mitigation (CALM) Act (HB 1084) requiring the FCC to make regulations about loudness of commercials. Discussion about the various locations where audio levels can be modified—network vs. station. DD to follow this legislation.

6. Control of programming on town-specific access channels

Because of a recent E-channel subcommittee decision in Weston, the ANCC discussed clarifying the decision-making process for pre-empting scheduled programming on access channels in favor of broadcasting programs from other groups, such as community college programming. DS recommends that individual towns control programming decisions on E and G channels. JC advised that ANCC ask E-group revisit its recent decision. HL reminded group about authorization form for G channel changes. DS to draft letter to CV stating the ANCC position on for program switch authority. JC asked MC for clarification on who controls scheduling of programming from CV's viewpoint. MC agreed that CV would defer to individual towns for scheduling decisions and changes.

7. Other Business

- Visit <http://www.alliancecm.org/> for information about ACM's International Conference and Exhibition July 7-10 in Pittsburgh, PA. Scheduled sessions: citizen journalism, effective boards, technology vendor showcases, technical training, and more.
- Litchfield LWV is conducting a study that includes interviews with community access groups and operators around the state in an effort to make recommendations for better subscriber/cable council/cable provider communications and service to Litchfield residents. The Litchfield area cable council covers the 8 towns in the regional CV franchise. As reported by PD from Litchfield LWV, there is no effective G-channel operation in the area, concerns over service issues, questions about the purpose of community access funds, and growing interest from residents in improving community access.
- MC announced a change in HD programming on 3/10/2010. Customers will be directed to HD channels. HB asked how best to direct customer questions. MC: customers should contact CV Customer Service.
- PS inquired about remaining grant funds and plan for disbursement. Still TBD and discussed at next meeting.

Next Meeting: 4/7/2010—Easton.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Secretary, ANCC
March 3, 2010