

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 (April 7, 2010)

April 11, 2010

ATTENDANCE:

Darien: David Dever
Easton: Andy Anderson, Douglas K. Dempsey
Greenwich: Chris von Keyserling
New Canaan: Paul Sedlak
Norwalk: Herbert A. Grant
Redding:
Stamford: Geza Ziegler
Weston: Don Saltzman
Westport: Hal Levy
Wilton: Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Lisa Bogan
Cablevision: Mike Chowaniec

Excused: Jim Cameron (Darien), Judith Freedman (Westport), Stu Reider (Greenwich), Roger Williams (New Canaan).

Public: Dolly Curtis (Public Access Producer)

Hal Levy called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm. Thanked Easton (Andy Anderson and Doug Dempsey) for hosting the meeting at the Easton Town Hall. HL noted that Mike Chowaniec (Cablevision) was attending a meeting in New Canaan and will be arriving late to the ANCC meeting.

1. The minutes of February 17, 2010 were approved as submitted.

2. The financial report from the Treasurer was distributed, discussed, and approved. HG reported a balance of \$108,108.57 in the Escrow Account, which matches the bank statement and reflects the deposit of a check (2/18/2010) for \$100,000 from Cablevision for E & G support for 2010. The balance in the Operations Account is \$11,621.55 which reflects a check from Cablevision for \$2,000 (deposited 2/18/2010) for annual operations of the ANCC and also matches the bank statement.

3. Old business

- Although **Easton's two representatives to the ANCC**—DD and AA--have been appointed and have been attending ANCC meetings regularly, the ANCC requests that a formal letter of appointment be sent by Easton's first selectman to the ANCC at the above address. AA will contact First Selectman Herrmann about the letter.
- **Update on policy of switching programming on E-Channels by Cablevision.** Following a request from Norwalk Community College to pre-empt local E-channel programming recently in all 10 towns, HL has distributed a form requesting the names of local contact people who have the authority in each town to approve a request to pre-empt local programming on E- and G-channels. In many cases these are the local E and G operators and/or the chief elected officials of each municipality. The G list of authorized

contacts was submitted to CV along with a request to contact the Ed access committee for the E list. Future pre-emptions will require the approval of local operators on both E and G channels and Cablevision agrees with this policy. The ANCC Website has posted the forms required to request preemptions.

- **Review of ABC/CV dispute.** HL summarized the dispute and the complaints that several ANCC members had received from subscribers. He also reviewed the Cablevision offer of free Movies on Demand service during the dispute as partial restitution for customer inconvenience during the dispute. HL also communicated the many complaints about CV's automatic re-routing of customers' "last channel watched" to a channel with a PSA that recapped the dispute.

4. Grant Program Formulation for 2010

After discussion of the options for distributing the \$100,000 grant funding between the E-channels and G-channels of the 10 towns and for an equipment grant from CV amounting to approximately \$25,000, the ANCC voted to:

- Establish a 60/40 division of the \$100,000 between E-channels and G-channels--\$60,000 to Area Nine E-channels and \$40,000 to G-channels. G-channels will be also eligible to participate in CV's supplemental equipment grant offering.
- Accept applications from the Area Nine towns at the June 2 meeting for an equitable distribution of grant funding among towns that apply. HL and DS reviewed the purposes of the grant funding and allowable costs: equipment and accessories, installation, repair and maintenance.

HL noted that none of the towns that received most recent supplemental round of grant funding has returned the required expenditure reports. Those towns are reminded to submit them.

Member towns' G-channel operators should consider the equipment needs in preparation for the supplemental equipment request to CV.

5. Legislative Activities

- The ANCC will write a letter to CT legislators asking for their support to bring Substitute House Bill 5463 to the floor of the House for a vote. This bill passed favorably through the Energy and Technology Committee. It would require a biennial performance review by the DPUC—as a contested case-- of all certified video service providers and would designate advisory councils as intervenors in these cases. Intervenor status allows advisory councils to provide input to the proposed performance review based on their experience with customer complaints. ANCC members are urged to contact their own legislators in support of this bill and in support of raising it on the floor of the House for a vote.
- HB 5509—which dealt with quality of PEG channel signals on CVFAs—was not raised by the E/T Committee.

6. Review of CV Outage Policies

In light of recent severe storms and widespread power outages in southern CT, MC summarized CV's company policies for customer credit. These pertain only to outages shorter than 24 hours. CT law covers outages of longer duration: credits are automatically applied to customers' bills. MC described the accessibility problems in recent storms in which tree repair and electric repairs delayed cable repairs. For periods shorter than 24 hours, each case is reviewed

separately to determine the extent of utility outages and difficulty of access. Customer credits will vary proportionally with the subscriber's service tier and will depend on whether the cable outage was a cable problem or a power outage. HL related the complaints he received over the lack of accessibility of customer service during the recent storms.

7. Annual Meeting Plans

- Meeting date is Wednesday, June 2. Place TBD: HL to research possible venues. Speaker TBD: CYK to contact the Office of Consumer Counsel to request Bill Vallee as guest speaker or a member of the E/T Committee. Guests welcome.
- Nominating committee of CYK, GZ, and DS will recommend a slate of officers for the next two years.

8. Other Business

- MC reported that it was announced that the Bridgeport system (Area 2) will be going all digital next month. It is expected that Area 9 will follow suit within a few months. He described the digital conversion box options for customers, including an option for subscribers who are low income (Medicaid eligible). Current analog customers can get up to 3 digital boxes for 2 years at no charge, and current digital customers can get up to 2 additional digital boxes for 1 year at no charge.
- LB, GZ, AA, and DD raised the issue of frequent midnight Emergency Broadcast System announcements. MC agreed to research this with Cablevision.

Next Meeting: 6/2/2010—TBD.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Secretary, ANCC
April 11, 2010