



TO: ANCC MEMBERS

September 9, 2006

FROM: Carole Young-Kleinfeld

RE: MINUTES OF MEETING (September 6, 2006)

ATTENDANCE:

Darien: Dave Dever, Jim Cameron
Easton: Richard Seclow
Greenwich: Stu Reider
New Canaan: Paul Sedlak
Norwalk: Marge Costas, Vic Cromwell
Redding: Bob Moran
Stamford: Geza Ziegler
Weston: Don Saltzman, Bob Atkinson
Westport: Hal Levy, Judith Freedman, David Dreyfuss
Wilton: Carole Young-Kleinfeld, John Repicky
Cablevision: Myles Rich

Public (observer) Ann Gill (Westport)

The meeting began at 6:20 pm at the Westport Town Hall, Room 102, with 10 towns represented. HL welcomed the members and observers.

1. The ANCC approved the minutes of the meeting of May 30, amended by correcting the amount of the 2006 access grants to read, "... \$60,000 for ed access and \$40,000 for governmental access". The ANCC approved the minutes of June 21, 2006 as submitted.

2. **Treasurer's Report** was approved following clarification of reason for unexpended grant funds, previously encumbered via grant approval process. Two towns (Darien and Easton) must complete their final paperwork in order to receive 2005 supplemental grant funding previously approved by the ANCC. One town (Norwalk) must complete final paperwork for 2004-2005 grant, previously approved. In several instances, final paperwork can be late due to equipment acquisition delays.

3. **Discussion of Docket # 05-04-10: Cablevision 2007 Franchise Renewal**

Chairman Hal Levy updated the group by reviewing the activities of the summer—evidentiary hearings, process hearings, and cross-examinations. He and Vice-Chairmen Don Saltzman, along with the ANCC's attorney, have represented the ANCC at these meetings. The ANCC will file final briefs due to the DPUC in two weeks. This week the Attorney General's office recommended DPUC deny Soundview Media's application to become Area Nine's PEG access operator and maintain the current model of PEG in Area Nine. The AG's Office also urged the DPUC to require faster customer service response by Cablevision and a shorter franchise term, 8 years, instead of 15 years. Hal Levy reviewed the upcoming timetable: 10/17/06—draft decision due, 10/31/06—written exceptions due, 11/2/06—final oral arguments regarding draft decision, 11/8/06—final decision due.

HL clarified that the AT&T/Verizon application—to provide statewide IPTV without franchise regulations—was in the courts and would not affect the decision on this docket.

4. New “G” Grants—JR reviewed the grant process: towns file applications for funding, ANCC reviews and approves/denies, towns (if approved) submit voucher for payment (available on ANCC Website), towns report on expenditure of funds on Grant Report form. HL reminded towns that any equipment purchased with grant funding is the property of “government access”.

Motion (DS/DD): “The ANCC will establish 10 government access grants of \$4,000 each from 2006 access funds. The deadline for application will be 12/31/06. After the deadline, this grant cycle will expire and a new pool of funding will be established with any unencumbered funds. After grants are approved, the recipient has 30 days to submit vouchers for payment.” Motion was approved, unanimously.

Representatives were reminded that towns are ineligible to apply for 2006 grant funds until final Grant Report of the 2005 supplemental grant expenditures is received by the ANCC. Towns that still must file final reports are: Darien, Easton, New Canaan, Norwalk, and Westport.

5. Supplemental equipment grants. MR reported that there were 8 equipment requests and that obtaining this equipment was proceeding through Cablevision’s purchasing procedures. He estimates that equipment may arrive in the middle of October. Distribution and/or delivery—to be arranged.

6. PEG Access Issues—

- a. The Schools and Libraries Committee needs a Cablevision representative on the committee. JR and HL are discussing this with Cablevision. JR chairs this committee.
- b. HL asked how “Public” access would be affected if DPUC were to approve a reduction in access funding under the franchise renewal application. He suggested that the ANCC add a P representative to the Council. The ANCC has argued for no reduction in PEG funding.
- c. Several communities—Weston, Wilton, Darien—have repeatedly requested Cablevision’s assistance in moving equipment from one location to another. DS mentioned that assistance like this—which requires staff support from Cablevision—is one reason why the ANCC opposes any reduction in PEG access funds under the current franchise renewal application.
- d. DS commented that he has spoken with AT&T representatives who said that they plan to webstream E and G channels. How PEG channels would be carried over IPTV is unclear.

7. ANCC Goals 2006-7—Development of a system for disposing obsolete equipment which is the property of “Access”. One E-access site in Stamford is closing and turning equipment over to JR, representing the ANCC Schools and Libraries Committee. DS suggested that towns tag or label equipment purchased with “access” funds: *Property of Government Access of _____* (or *Property of Educational Access of _____*). HL recommends that the ANCC should develop a record and procedure to assess the value of old equipment and recommend how to dispose of it.

JR recommended adding a footnote to the ANCC grant application, indicating that all equipment purchased with access funds may be used for access purposes only.

8. Schedule for 06-07: 10/18—Weston; 11/29—Easton; 1/3—Wilton; 2/17—Greenwich; 3/21—Darien ; 4/25—Norwalk; Annual Meeting—TBA. See <http://westportct.net/ancc/mtgsched.htm> for directions and locations.

9. Other matters

a. A member of the public complained about losing 3 channels from the Basic Family package to the digital service tier and that she finds the descriptions of available packages poorly written and difficult to understand. HL has received additional complaints that moving these channels constitutes a rate increase without increased service for those wishing to remain Family Basic customers. He has conveyed these concerns to CV. DD questioned whether the ANCC can monitor the loss/gain of channels across the spectrum to determine whether customers are losing or gaining service. JF questioned the impact of changes to Family Basic on seniors. DS reminded the group that the U.S. is about 2 years from the federal deadline for moving all channels to digital.

HL commented on the proper role of the ANCC: to relay customers' to CV complaints and advise CV on addressing them through clearer written communications with customers.

b. Some ANCC members or G-Access personnel—Greenwich and Redding— may be assisting local groups like the League of Women Voters during election season by taping candidates' debates. The tapes will be taped and re-broadcast on the area's G-channels, unedited, with no commentary, in order to preserve the nonpartisan nature of the debates. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Next Meeting: 10/18, Weston Town Hall
Adjourned: 9:20 pm