

A.9.C.C.

Area 9 Cable Council c/o Wilton Town Hall, 238 Danbury Rd, Wilton, CT 06897

www.a9cc.org

TO: A9CC MEMBERS
FROM: Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Secretary
RE: MINUTES OF MEETING (September 14, 2011)

September 16, 2011

ATTENDANCE:

Darien:	David Dever, Jim Cameron
Easton:	Doug Dempsey
Greenwich:	Chris Von Keyserling
New Canaan:	Paul Sedlak
Norwalk:	Herbert Grant, Art Scialabba
Redding:	Bob Moran
Stamford:	
Weston:	Don Saltzman, Harvey Bellin
Westport:	Hal Levy, Judith Friedman, Stan Witkow
Wilton:	Carole Young-Kleinfeld
Cablevision:	Jennifer Young

Excused: Paul Curtis, Stu Reider (Greenwich), Geza Ziegler (Stamford), Erin Halsey (Norwalk).

Guests: Gary Battaglia (Wilton)

Hal Levy called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, welcomed members and guests, and thanked Cablevision for hosting the first meeting of the new season.

1. The minutes of June 1, 2011 were approved as submitted.

2. The financial report provided by the Treasurer was distributed and approved. HG reported a balance of \$102,373.08 in the Escrow Account. The balance in the Operations Account is \$10,834.97. All expenses and grants approved so far have been paid.

3. Old business

A9CC Appointments for 2011-2013: Chief elected officials—mayors or first selectmen—from Darien, Greenwich, Stamford, and New Canaan have not submitted names of appointees to the A9CC yet. Members are asked to remind their officials to submit these to: Area 9 Cable Council, Wilton Town Hall, 238 Danbury Rd., Wilton, CT 06897 c/o Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Sec.

HL acknowledged recently resigned members: Lisa Bogan (Wilton), Marge Costa (Norwalk), and Diana Palladino (Norwalk).

4. Removal of Channel 25 (WTIC) from Cablevision Line-Up

Several members reported that subscribers had contacted them with complaints over the loss of Channel 25—one of the few Connecticut-specific channels available to Area 9 subscribers. JY explained that the NY-based Fox affiliate, WNYW—Channel 5, had exercised its non-duplication protections allowed by the FCC. Since Area 9 is part of the New York market area, WNYW has exercised its right to be the sole provider. If WTIC continued to be included, Cablevision would be required to eliminate any duplicative programming from WTIC, leaving it almost entirely

blacked out. A9CC members expressed frustration that the same steps could be taken with other CT affiliates of NY stations. Do subscribers have any recourse? Several members noted that Cablevision's competitor, AT&T, carries both NY and CT affiliates. DD recalled a past waiver of the non-duplicative protections in place for Area 9. JY will research. JF volunteered to contact WTIC to discuss possible recourse.

5. Grant Program –FY 2011 Access Support

HL reviewed the history of community access TV in Area 9 and our town-specific model of providing governmental and educational access channels to Cablevision subscribers. The A9CC serves as the administrator of the fund resulting from Area 9 subscriber fees earmarked for governmental and educational community access under federal and state law, through an agreement with Cablevision of Connecticut, the official community access provider (CAP) in the 10 towns of Area 9. Public access programming originates from Cablevision's studio in Norwalk and is broadcast on a channel shared by the 10 towns. Any member of the public may contact Cablevision to discuss broadcasting a public access program.

HL reminded members that towns have an October 14, 2011 deadline to apply for grant funds—up to \$5,000 per town—to support G-channel operations. The E-channel sub-committee of the A9CC has not submitted grant requests to date. Before applying for new grant funds, towns must submit reports for past grant expenditures. The following towns must submit completed expenditure reports before receiving approval for new requests: Darien, Easton, Greenwich, and Wilton.

PS clarified several aspects of New Canaan's previous grant submission, as requested by the council.

Pilot Project—Production Grants. JC introduced discussion of the recent pilot projects—limited grant awards to support production and operation costs of G-channels. HL reminded the group that expenditure reports of the grants should include time sheets and/or another means of accounting for hours worked, such as canceled payroll checks, letters from municipal officials, or 1099s. Reports from Easton, Redding, Weston, and Wilton are still outstanding.

Without objection from Cablevision, the A9CC voted unanimously (motion: CVK; seconded: JF) to “continue, through the next funding cycle, the funding allotment for production personnel for G-channel programming, in an amount to be determined by the council.”

6. To Discuss Grant Applications—PS (New Canaan) and CYK (Wilton) reported on their experience in applying for PEGPETIA grants: a generally positive but slow process, resulting in grant approvals, although with monetary awards lower than the amount requested. JY and HL reviewed the history and funding of the PEGPETIA fund. This fund has been “raided” in the past to support state budgetary needs.

7. CT DPUC Docket #11-07-09 HL reviewed this docket—a request for a declaratory ruling—filed by Sound View Media. The request challenges the validity of Public Act 08-159 and alternatively argues that the Area 2 Cable Council ceased to exist legally in 2008 concurrent with newly introduced certification of video providers. HL reviewed the structure of our town-specific model of E and G access, our relationship with Cablevision, and our role as a financial agent for access funds and a voice for subscribers—a structure that differs from that found in Cablevision's other market areas. The sense of the A9CC meeting is that A9CC has a unique relationship to Cablevision which serves as the official CAP agency in this geographical area. Therefore, members believe that the docket does not apply to Area 9. However, interested members can follow the docket on the PURA website.

8. Storm Irene

JY explained the challenges raised by power outages during the storm. Subscribers should contact Customer Service at (203) 847-6666 to discuss individual circumstances and the possibility of rebates due to cable outages. CYK raised a complaint from a Wilton resident who had power from a generator, but no cable service. Reportedly, Cablevision's customer service rep told him that he was supposed to have called during the outage to receive any rebate. JY requested more information about this case and will research. JF raised similar questions using her own cable service as an example of having home generator power but no cable signal. JY will deliver feedback from A9CC members to Customer Service.

9. Schedule 10/19/2011 (Westport), 11/30/2011 (New Canaan) , 2/15/2012 (Wilton) , 4/4/2012 (Greenwich), 6/6/2012 Annual Meeting Location TBA.

10. Other—JC requested information from the members on a good source of PSAs. JY will share some that CV receives and forward them to HL for distribution to interested members.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Secretary, A9CC

September 16, 2011