



Board of Directors Regular Meeting
October 28th, 2024, at 6:00 PM
LCATV & via Zoom
63 Creek Farm Plaza, Suite 3, Colchester, Vermont 05446

Board of Directors in Attendance: Dirk Reith (DR), Greg Drew (GD), Curt Taylor (CT), Ken Rocheleau (KR), Jeff Hathaway (JH), Al Getler (AG)

Staff in Attendance: Kevin Christopher (KC), Rebecca Padula (RP), Michael Wright (MW)

Public in Attendance: Matt Kelly via Zoom

1. Call to Order by Chair DR at 6:00 PM.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda by CT, second by GD, passed unanimously.

3. Public / Board Members / Staff Comments

None

4. Approve Minutes of 10/3/24

Motion to approve Minutes of 10/3/24 with small change by GD, second by CT, passed unanimously.

5. Executive Director's Report

KC reported that election forums have gone well, and that he is preparing for the 30th Anniversary party Friday.

6. Treasurer's Report

JH reported everything balances out. We are 10k less in cash than last year at this time which is not a real concern.

7. Old Business

a. Use of LCATV Content

KC stated that LCATV has signed a letter of engagement with the attorney. KC has collected content policies from other Access organizations around the country and is passing them on to the attorney. The attorney will put together a draft policy that the Board can then review.

b. 30th Anniversary Celebration

KC stated that he had little to add to what he had stated earlier. He expects a good turnout.

c. Prospective Board Member

Motion to untable consideration of a new Board member by CT, second by GD, passed unanimously

DR stated that he sent the prospective Board member (Matt Kelly) a request for resumé, CV and Letter of Intent but had not yet heard back. MK stated that the documents had been sent this day by email. DR had not had a chance to get to them, so a motion was made to table the issue until the next meeting.

Motion to table consideration of a new Board member by GD, second by CT, passed unanimously

8. New Business

a. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget – First Reading

The Board received draft budget documents from KC. He stated that LCATV is expecting a 7.6% decrease in cable operating revenue this calendar year. He does not know if we are plateauing at that reduction or not. He budgeted for another 5% decrease in 2025. He hopes for more State income but he is being conservative in that estimate as well as in the estimate of interest income. With that, he projects a \$47,000 deficit for the next fiscal year unless there are adjustments to the draft budget.

GD asked if there are any large capital expenses coming in the next. KC's reply was that there is not, but that in the year after there may be the need for replacing the playback server. Next year the battery backup for the servers are being replaced.

AG asked about any potential sources of revenue beyond the PEG fees. KC's response was that the biggest would be to go to a paid production model and charge entities for broadcasting, recording and archiving their content. The fear is that charging for the services LCATV currently offers for free would only lead to those clients no longer using LCATV. LCATV would be "pricing ourselves out of content."

There is also the option of LCATV becoming a "production house" but there are tax implications as LCATV is currently a non-profit. AG asked if other Access organizations have come up with revenue sources. KC said that some have found additional financial support from town budgets. He doubts if there is enough in that source to offset LCATV's deficit.

CT asked about fees for the camps and whether they have recently been changed. KC replied that they were increased within the last five years. CT also asked about the balance between government and other organization coverage. The idea being that we might charge for services to non-government enterprises. KC said he does not know if the non-profits we currently service could afford to pay for the services we currently offer for free.

The discussion then turned to the funds received from the State. In previous years the amount given to Access programming was not part of the State's base budget, meaning that it was not assumed to be incurred in future years, but was a one-time appropriation. This year that state expense was placed in the base budget and should be a recurring item.

With the current budget (2024) LCATV expected a \$47,00 deficit. LACTV is receiving \$55.7k from the state which will result in a projected \$11k in profit after other adjustments. KC clarified that the State appropriates funds to Vermont Access Network which then uses a formula to determine what each Access organization receives. The formula is based on a base amount, the percent of Vermont population served and the amount of lost revenue.

The issue of the Health Care line item was then discussed. LCATV currently covers 100% of health insurance premiums for full-time employees. KC recommends that not be changed for the 2025 budget but that staff be told that things may change in the next year.

Possible changes in the PEG fees and the amount received by LCATV were also discussed. KC sees no change in those percentages.

CT asked about the cost of archiving and whether we would save money by charging for services or not storing as much. KC stated that the storage cost is minimal and that it is a capital, rather than operating, expense. The operating budget is the primary concern.

CT asked about soliciting donations. KC responded that LCATV does not currently actively solicit donations.

After considerable discussion concerning Health Care, the Board decided to approve the draft budget and bring it back for 2nd reading. In the meantime the Board will consider health care options.

Motion to approve budget for 2nd reading by GD, second by KR, passed unanimously

b. LCATV Procedures – Discussion Item

KC explained that staff had come up with several procedure changes that he would like to implement. He recalls that a previous Board had approved the idea that such procedural changes could be made without Board approval, but he cannot find any record of that action by the Board. After some discussion the Board approved the process.

**Motion by KR, second by GD to allow staff, with approval by the executive director, to make changes to documented procedures as long as they do not conflict with policies.
Passed unanimously**

9. Executive Session (if needed)

**Move to enter executive session to discuss staff salaries and benefits by KR, 2nd by GD,
passed unanimously**

Motion KR, 2nd by GD, to implement decisions made in the executive session regarding salaries and benefits and present that information to the executive director. Passed unanimously

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by CT, second by KR, passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM

DRAFT Respectfully submitted by Curt Taylor – Secretary on October 23rd, 2024
FINAL approved at 11-26-2024 meeting