

**City of Bloomington
Telecommunication Council
Business Meeting – January 6, 2009**

Common Council Chambers
City Hall at the Showers Building
401 N. Morton St.

I. Members Present: Carl Zager, Eric Ost, Suzann Owen, Jesse Strycker

Others in Attendance: Rick Dietz- ITS, Justin Goodwin –ITS, Kevin Bowlen – ITS, Michael White – CATS

(Note: At the beginning of the meeting there were not enough members present for a quorum but following Suzann's report others arrived for business to be conducted.)

II. Approval of December Minutes: Motion was made by Jesse Strycker postpone the approval of December minutes to February. Eric Ost seconded the motion. All moved. Motion was passed.

III. Public Comment – None

IV. Reports

1. Telecom Members

Suzann – There was a problem with Comcast operations immediately after Christmas. Apparently a lot of people, who needed digital cable boxes or were turning them in, had a waiting time of 45 minutes at the Customer Service Center on South Henderson. One gentlemen particularly returned is converter because it did not work, got a new one, but then it took 2 hours on the phone to get it activated. He was put on hold, and disconnected several times. This was a serious service deficiency on the part of Comcast; they should have been better staffed.

Regulation of telecommunications falls under the Department of Commerce, in the last days we found out that Bill Richardson would not be taking as the secretary of Dept. of Commerce. It will be interesting to see what person is chosen for the position and what effect it has.

In the state of California, telecommunications companies have moved in to influence how the laws are written. They provide production support, and facilities. The new legislation no longer provides for that, and there is considerable concern in California that they may lose the support they have. There is no indication now, but in time with the new law there is no authority to have them keep providing it. This doesn't affect us directly, but there could be a domino affect.

Jesse – He went thru the process of getting the federal coupon for a digital converter, and found the process to be very easy, though delivery date was later then promised. He enjoyed the over the air broadcast of WTIU 30.1, 30.2, 30.3

Suzann – Over air broadcast have limitations if you do not have an outdoor antenna, and you can't get the affiliates out of Indianapolis.

Eric – WTIU is expecting coverage to increase. If folks have an outdoor antenna and are going to experiment, particularly if they haven't used the antenna in awhile, you should check the transmission line, the cable that runs from the back of your TV to the antenna because of contacts are very important

Carl – Each member has a copy of the notes from the Emergency Override Taskforce meeting.

Purpose of the task force is approach a solution about the Emergency Override situation in 4 areas:

- 1.) Local override previous negotiated in franchise agreements is no longer required under state law.
- 2.) Any emergency override for local areas exists at the good will of the cable operators, and could be eliminated if operator so desires.

- 3.) Because digital/analog issue, current equipment is a decaying asset. Equipment in place right now have problems with digital channels. When we move to the digital, we could experience more problems.
- 4.) Local override capabilities, while required are believed by majority of local communities to be in the public's best interest.

We are looking to approach the state legislature with some amendments to the video law, which would give local communities an opportunity to work with video providers and to have local overrides that were once negotiated. Our goal is to have something in place within two weeks to communicate with 20 other counties that also have local emergency override rights, and get them on board.

Questions:

Suzann – What is the strategy for making certain this happens and the emergency overrides are protected? How are you planning to do this?

Carl – It has to come thru the legislative action and Representative Matt Pierce plans to introduce a bill and assuming that the bill gets a hearing, there needs to be a broad range of support from people other than us. This will hopefully convince the members of the legislature that local overrides are a valuable asset for the communities.

Eric – We encourage anyone in the viewing public that values the emergency override or the potential of it in your community. Contact your representative, without public input, it will not succeed.

2. CATS – Michael White

Programming listed. Highlighted Mark Tolmency, who submitted an independently produce show called El Grupo Loco at Yellowstone, third entry in a series. Also highlighted, Jeff Rudkin and the students from Batchelor Middle School with their production of The Secret Hero.

Suzann – Are there many people putting their productions on CATS as in the past or are more turning to YouTube?

Michael – We seem to still have a steady flow. Numbers for individually produced programs are down, but church groups still very steady. The internet has changed the way public access works across the country. Public access is at risk.

Suzann – What is the advantage of having an individual producer submitting their program to CATS versus YouTube?

Michael – There is no need to choose. Producers can do both, but we provide the training and equipment. From the viewer's standpoint, we give quite a bit rotation to programs. Folks can also request programs to be played again.

Eric – By donating a program to CATS it becomes part of the collection, a magnificent resource that will be available indefinitely. CATS have a significant number of hours and programs. Ch. 7 alone has logged 4662 hours of programming. CATS offers studio, resources for training and networking, and it's a bridge to the past.

Suzann – Have you heard anything from any video service provider about getting delivery of CATS programming so they can put it on their system?

Michael – No, but did attend a Chambers Chat, in which I was approached as to why people who subscribe to the AT & T were not receiving local channels. They were disappointed, and wanted to know what they could do to get those channels, because they thought they were paying for them. I directed them to the telecommunication council, and the IURC.

Carl – Could you report on the Progress Report of the City Grant?

Michael – 3 main parts of the memorandum of understanding

- 1.) On the website, a searchable field. Eric Ost is working on.
- 2.) Saving the old programming
- 3.) Server delivery

3. WTIU – Phil Meyer – No Report

4. ITS Dept. – Rick Dietz

* Notice of BDU Advisory Meeting on Thursday Jan. 8th at 4pm.

* Introduction of Kevin Bowlen, who will be taking over for Justin

* I am working with Jeff Schemmer to put together a letter articulating the value that residents of Bloomington and Monroe County see in having a local emergency override system.

Carl – The key point is marketing.

Rick – As explained in December, there had been contact from AT&T. I created a response of acknowledgement letter, and inquired about the progress regarding PEG channels thru their system, at full screen, full resolution of normal channels, placement of channels, and providing emergency alerts on all tiers. No response as been received.

5. Comcast and AT&T – No Report

V. Old Business

VI. New Business

VII. Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting

Tuesday February 3rd, 2009 at 7:30

Common Council Chambers in City Hall at the Showers Building
401 N. Morton St.

Emergency Override Taskforce Meeting

Monday, January 12th, 2009 at 6:00pm

Meeting Room: TBA

Submitted By:
Stephanie Jachim 1-17-09