

IOWA CITY TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

DRAFT

MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2009--5:30 P.M.

CITY CABLE TV OFFICE, 10 S. LINN ST.-TOWER PLACE PARKING FACILITY

MEMBERS PRESENT: Laura Bergus, Hans Hoerschelman, Gary Hagen, Robert Kemp,

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Brau, Bob Hardy

OTHERS PRESENT: Josh Goding, Beth Fisher, Michael McBride, Holly Berkowitz, and approximately 45 in attendance for the public hearing

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL

None at this time.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

A number of people had comments regarding PATV during the public hearing on the proposed PATV contract. McBride reported that the University channel begins a new programming season today with the start of the new school year. Thirteen series are in production. The public hearings on the location for the new Hancher Auditorium were very well received. Hardy reported that the City Channel's streaming video offerings have been updated. Hardy said there are still a few items to be worked out before the final draft of the PATV contract is finished. Hoerschelman asked how PATV determines the hours they will be open and said that people who work regular 9-5 hours maybe disadvantaged in finding time to use PATV's facilities. Hardy said he recently discussed the Mediacom proposal to move the access channels to the digital tier with a senior Mediacom official. Mediacom is requesting a minimum of four channels. A meeting will be held next Thursday with representatives of the local access channels to discuss the proposal. More compensation from Mediacom beyond the video on demand service and web streaming would be requested if the proposal is to be acted upon.

PATV CONTRACT PUBLIC HEARING

A representative from the Everett Conner Center said that PATV has helped them get their message out to the community regarding disabled citizens. Former PATV director Rene Paine urged the City to consider the contribution PATV makes towards a richer community experience. Theresa Carberry from the New Pioneer Coop said they have utilized PATV services to enhance their public education efforts. Tom Walz from the Extend the Dream Foundation said they have frequently utilized PATV and have plans to produce programs regarding people with disabilities. A pastor from Gospel Explosion Ministry said they have worked with PATV and it has been a great resource for their activities. Liz Ford from the Friends of the Animal Center Foundation said PATV has been a great help in reaching out to the public regarding the Animal Shelter's service. An employee of the Neighborhood Centers of Iowa City said he worked with PATV to provide a summer camp experience for kids from some of the outlying manufactured housing

parks. Gloria Williams said PATV is one of the best public access centers in Iowa City. PATV helps build a stronger community. Sylvia Boyer from the Gospel Explosion Ministry said PATV has been a large part of the growth of her church. A representative from the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Johnson County said they have utilized PATV to help raise awareness about mental illness in Iowa City. The associate pastor at First United Methodist Church said PATV helps them in their ministry by allowing those who could not attend church to view the services on television. A representative from a West Liberty Hispanic church said PATV gave them a lot of advice for their own video production initiatives and training for their members to use their equipment. A local producer of a dance program thanked PATV for the opportunities they offer the community. A local producer said the programming on PATV allows members of the community to express themselves. Julie Spencer said a local media voice is needed in the community and PATV provides that. Holly Berkowitz said her video work at PATV has helped her develop her photography work. PATV helps the community communicate with itself. The mainstream media is having a difficult time covering local news and public access helps fill that void. PATV can help the community in emergency situations. Tom Nothnagel said he has utilized PATV for over 15 years and PATV is a benefit to the community. Acie Earl said he has a program on PATV and frequently has people comment that they saw him on PATV, which indicates that PATV is well watched. A councilor from Systems Unlimited and on the board for the local chapter of the National Association for the Blind said PATV afforded her organization an opportunity to reach out to the blind in Iowa City. She also took the workshops and now produces a program with her husband. A producer said that PATV has allowed him to communicate his ideas to the public and would not be able to do so without PATV. Josh Goding said PATV is a great place to work. PATV averages about 2500 hours of new content every year. Goding distributed letters of support from the Women's Resource and Action Center, the Iowa City Cultural Corridor Alliance, Career Connections, Habitat for Humanity, the Iowa Women's Music Festival, the Landlocked Film Festival, Prairie Lights, the Bicyclist of Iowa City, Mediation Services of Eastern Iowa, and North Central Jr. High. Gary Hagen said he was quite impressed with the comments. Horschelman said PATV is a valuable public resource and is glad so many people came out to support PATV.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bergus moved and Hagen seconded a motion to approve the July 27, 2009 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

Hagen said the support demonstrated for PATV in the public hearing was quite impressive. Hoerschelman welcomed Mekies back to the Commission. Bergus the public hearing was a good example of how the value of the local access channels to the community can be demonstrated in an anecdotal manner.

SHORT PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Berkowitz said that PATV might begin showing the works of local artist in their facility.

CONSUMER ISSUES

Hardy referred to the complaint report in the meeting packet. Hoerschelman said that the report indicates that problems get resolved in Iowa City.

MEDIACOM REPORT

No representative was present. Hardy said Grassley informed him that he is busy working on applications for the broadband stimulus program.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA REPORT

McBride reported that the University channel began a new programming season today with the start of the new school year. Thirteen series are in production. The public hearings on the location for the new Hancher Auditorium were very well received. Eight experienced students are working at UI Television this fall.

KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

No representative was present.

PATV REPORT

Goding reported that PATV will be cablecasting programs on the Iowa City Art Festival, the Iowa City Jazz Fest, an Americans with Disabilities Act celebration, and a town hall meeting on healthcare with Congressman Dave Loebsack. PATV will tape some of the activities associated with the Landlocked Film Festival. Six shoots at Prairie Lights are planned between now and December. Two new episodes of "Food as Medicine" will also be taped soon. Another episode of a program on the animal shelter is underway. A new program by former state senator Jean Lloyd-Jones featuring discussions with local state representatives will begin production soon. The Bike-In Theater will begin Sept. 10. The next guidelines workshop is the first Sunday of the month at 2 p.m. and the next board meeting will be the third Thursday at 7 p.m.

SENIOR CENTER REPORT

No representative was present.

LIBRARY REPORT

Fisher reported there were 6 live events shot in August. Nineteen are planned for September. The International Authors program begins September 4. Eco Iowa City has 2 programs planned. The Intellectual Freedom Festival will start September 30. Some of the events will be covered live.

IOWA CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT

No representative was present. Hardy said Hoyland informed him that he would be unable to attend as the meeting conflicted with a school board candidate forum he was recording.

CITY CHANNEL REPORT

Hardy reported that streaming video offerings have been updated. The Media Unit has been working on a video on fire safety for the University residence hall advisors and a program on work on the wastewater sewer line being constructed under the Iowa River. The Community Television Service has produced a promotional piece for the Landlocked Film Festival and the Bicyclist of Iowa City ride to raise awareness and funds for cancer research. Programs sponsored by the Visitor's Bureau Hayden Fry Way (a street) opening ceremony and the AARP are planned. The next episode of IC People will feature author Cheeni Rao. The next Community Voice episode will look at a mural painting at Creekside Park.

PATV CONTRACT

Hardy said there are still a few items to be worked out before a final draft is finished. Hoerschelman asked how PATV determines the hours they will be open and said that people who work regular 9-5 hours maybe disadvantaged in finding time to use PATV's facilities. Hoerschelman noted that PATV is closed on Sunday. Goding said PATV is often available to clients by appointment, including Sunday and will stay open late if staff is available.

ACCESS CHANNELS AND THE DIGITAL TRANSITION

Hardy said he recently discussed the Mediacom proposal to move the access channels to the digital tier with a senior Mediacom official. Mediacom is requesting a minimum of four channels. A meeting will be held next Thursday with representatives of the local access channels to discuss the proposal. More compensation from Mediacom beyond the video on demand service and web streaming would be requested if the proposal is to be acted upon. Bergus said that if the proposal is adopted, the access channels need a plan to inform viewers of the change. Bergus noted that Mediacom has many analog channels that might be utilized rather than the local access channels. Goding said that the access channels might request additional bandwidth for expanded service. One possibility would be a high definition signal. Hoerschelman noted that the franchise agreement contains language requiring the local access channels signal be comparable to other channels.

ACCESS CHANNEL REPORTING

Hardy said that the Commission agreed at the last meeting that quarterly reports and an annual report would be sufficient. PATV has additional reporting requirements. Hardy said Commissioners should think about what information they need to adequately oversee the access channels. Hoerschelman said access channels should quantify their quarterly reports where appropriate.

ADJOURNMENT

Bergus moved and Hagen seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Adjournment was at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Brau
Cable TV Administrative Aide