



Vernon Area Cable Advisory Council

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VERNON AREA CABLE ADVISORY COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting dated June 22, 2016

Community Voice Channel Conference Room
105 Notch Road
Bolton, Connecticut

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VERNON TOWN CLERK
16 JUN 28 AM 8:33

Attending Members: Paul Batterson, Tolland Representative; Elaine Buchardt, Andover; Larry Perosino, Tolland; Ed Meincke, Hebron

Attending Guests: John Bairos, Comcast; Nick Lavigne, CVC Executive Director

1. **Call to Order/Approval of Minutes.** Paul Batterson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. in the CVC Conference Room. Elaine Buchardt made a motion, seconded by Ed Meincke to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2016 meeting. Motion was unanimously approved.
2. **Comcast Report** – John Bairos, Comcast Manager of Government and Community Relations, reported that Comcast had awarded 45 scholarships in its Leaders and Achievers Scholarship program, which awards scholarships for students who have demonstrated accomplishments in the areas of academics, community involvement and leadership. Two students from the VACAC area—one from Rockville High and another from Bolton High—received scholarships.

John said as of today, the NFL network is being made available as part of the Standard Basic package. He also noted that PURA has announced its annual subscriber rate, which is increases from \$10.35 to \$10.39 per subscriber.

Paul Batterson said he noticed Comcast has been notifying customers on their monthly bills of the existence of the VACAC. John Bairos said they also include a once-a-year insert notice in bills which includes this information.

Larry Perosino asked how subscribers can find out when their contract expires. He said that information used to be on the monthly bill, but it isn't anymore. John Bairos said customers might be able to find out that information online and he will check into it.

Paul Batterson noted that Frontier now offers Netflix as part of their package. Nick Lavigne said he assumes this is an app they offer.

Larry Perosino asked if there had been any more talk about the YES Network situation. John Bairos said there is still talk, but no movement on this issue as of yet. Larry noted that YES is

the highest priced regional network, yet despite no longer offering the network, customers are not seeing any deductions on their monthly bills. Paul also noted that Direct TV seems to be having a similar issue with the FOX stations.

Ed Meinke said he read in Consumer Reports that Comcast has the worst customer service of other cable providers. He described a wiring problem he has been experiencing with his own service. He said a technician did come out to his home to repair the wiring but still had to return to get it installed up off the ground, but twice they said they would be coming out and did not show. This problem has been going on now for a few weeks. John Bairos took Ed's address and phone number and said he will look into getting the problem resolved.

Larry Perosino referenced the pending legislation they discussed in the March meeting, where the Connecticut Television Network (CTN) had proposed adding a 40 cent subscriber fee onto cable bills to pay for the network instead of funding it through the state's gross receipts tax. This bill didn't go anywhere, so the situation remains the status quo.

3. CVC Report – Nick Lavigne, CVC Executive Director, said they are trying to get more exposure to the public by doing farmers markets and various opening day events, including an Indian culture holy festival event at the Ellington Library. They are also going to be doing a fundraising event at a frozen yogurt shop in the Tri-City Plaza in Vernon as a means to begin raising funds for their studio equipment upgrade. They are working toward upgrading their equipment from analog to HD digital equipment.

Nick said he ordered another HD field camera, which brings their total to four. Basically, they train people doing three shows with an SD camera, before allowing them to train on an HD camera. They also purchased some additional equipment, including monopods, an audio recorder, and boom poles. He said they have gotten positive feedback about their service which converts old VHS home movies to DVD. People pay \$10/hour for the time involved.

Nick also said they've gotten a lot of positive responses from customers since John Bairos helped get them on the television Guide. He referenced a few offerings on the Guide that have become popular such as Blue Plates Special and Geeks of the Round Table. Ed Meinke asked about whether Nick has considered teaming up with other people who put on shows that the CVC might wish to air. Nick said there has been some talk about either creating their own server or show-sharing.

Nick provided a copy of the Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual statement for the CVC, which the VACAC reviewed.

Ed Meinke said he couldn't make the last CVC Board meeting, but said he would try to attend the next one. Nick said the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 19 at 11:15am. Ed also asked what kinds of filming the CVC does in Hebron. Nick Lavigne said they film at the Farmers Market, and used to do the Hebron Fair, but haven't done that for a long time. The Board discussed various town meetings and events that are filmed in the towns in the catchment area.

Ed Meinke asked if there was any update on the insurance money for the CVC on the embezzlement case. Nick Lavigne said there was not, and he didn't expect it likely that anything would come of it. He said, however, that the CVC's finances are in good order now and, moving forward, they are working to build the CVC's presence within area communities.

4. Financial Report – Paul Batterson distributed a financial report, which reflected ordinary expenses. There is currently \$2,852.16 in the account.
5. Scheduling Next Meeting/Adjournment: The VACAC scheduled their next meeting for Wednesday, September 7, at 7:00pm in the CVC Conference Room. A motion was made by Larry Perosino, seconded by Elaine Buchardt to adjourn the meeting at 6:00pm. Motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Gentile
Recording Secretary