



VERNON AREA CABLE ADVISORY COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting dated October 30, 2013

Community Voice Channel Conference Room
105 Notch Road
Bolton, Connecticut

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

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

1. Acceptance of minutes of June, 2013 meeting. Elaine Buchardt/Ed Meincke motion to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2013 meeting. Motion was unanimously approved.
2. Comcast Report – John Bairos – John Bairos provided handouts for high schools promoting C-Span’s annual, national StudentCam competition. In celebration of StudentCam’s 10th anniversary, they have doubled the number of student prizes and prize money and so this year they will be giving out 150 student prizes, 53 teacher prizes and \$100,000 in cash prizes. In the competition high school and middle school students compete by creating short documentaries on a pre-determined topic.

John Bairos also provided channel lineup updates. Since the Council last met in June, the Fox Network went through a lot of rebranding and he reviewed those changes. Additionally Esquire Magazine purchased Style TV, and last month ESPN 3D ceased operations. TBS and TV Guide are moving to expanded basic service. John reported that MSG (Madison Square Garden) will not allow Comcast to overflow any programming; however Comcast is continuing to have conversations on where they may carry MSG.

John Bairos provided an update on the Community Voice Channel and the pending litigation. He said in a meeting about a year ago in October of 2012, an agreement with outside counsel was made with CVC that CVC would keep PURA, Comcast, and the VACAC updated at least every 45 days on developments. He said they have received just one update from the attorney. John said he sent an email to Marie Burbank at the CVC and he got a brief response reporting no changes.

Paul Batterson reported that he received an email from Marie Burbank that the next scheduled court appearance on the criminal case is December 5; however, the court appearances keep getting pushed back. Paul said Marie Burbank requested that the VACAC write a letter from the group expressing the need for urgency in moving this case forward. John Bairos said the other issue is the two insurance claims related to this case. Elaine Buchardt said the irony is that the premiums on the insurance policies they had to protect

CVC monies from theft went unpaid because the money in the CVC account that should have been used to pay the premiums was stolen.

The Council discussed various Comcast services, with John Bairos saying that there are a lot of pricing, packaging and promotional efforts going on. Both Ed Meinke and Nick Lavigne complimented the courteous customer service they generally encounter when contacting Comcast..

Larry Perosino had a few questions regarding services. He showed an X-Finity flyer he received in the mail and asked if he had to purchase wi-fi in order to get the service, or if he received the flyer because he is in the system as already having wi-fi. John Bairos explained that Larry probably got the flyer because he has wi-fi. He explained that with this new wi-fi service, if Larry had guests in his home, they could use his wi-fi service without having to use Larry's password. He said the flyer will walk him through the steps to access the service. Larry also requested some technical help with his service and John Bairos said he would arrange for someone to contact him.

3. Closing of Comcast Bolton Office – John Bairos reported that the service center in Bolton will be closing November 30. He said more people are paying for services on-line and they also have a partnership with Western Union for ease in making payments. They also provide prepaid boxes now that they send to customers to send their equipment back, so there is less need to go to a service center. John said Comcast is moving more toward locating service offices in retail centers and the closest centers for this area are in Cromwell and Bloomfield. Members expressed concern that there would be no service center within the Vernon Area. Bloomfield and Cromwell are more than a half an hour away.
4. CVC Report – Nick Lavigne – Nick Lavigne reported that he has held some studio classes. He is also working on changing the CVC logo. He said he completely redid the website again.

Nick Lavigne said he has been getting some quotes on broadcasting equipment and is looking into a better lighting plan. He also reported that he, Chris Moyer, and Marie Burbank attended the Alliance for Community Media Conference in Sturbridge, which he found useful. The conference offers class for better training and setup. Nick also bought a new printer that heats with LEDs, costing them less to operate as well as a better paper shredder, and he has disposed of three printers.

Justin Waine asked Nick Lavigne if he has any plans to purchase better digital cameras. Nick said his goal is to have better cameras with specific capabilities such as HD, and the ability to adjust professional settings. He would like cameras that would allow them to cut down on the number of attachments needed. He said the better cameras are coming down in price and right now are in the \$1,700 to \$2,000 range.

Nick Lavigne outlined his top priorities. His first is to get a new broadcasting tightrope system. The one they currently have is dated from 2002 and is constantly breaking down. His second priority is new cameras, and his third priority is the switchboards. He said they need a new soundboard.

Nick also reported that he is doing some bartering on getting some painting done at CVC. He said he discovered that the windows, which were painted shut in some cases, were actually open on the outside for possibly the past four years and just by closing them finally, will likely save on some heating costs. He also had the conference room measured for new windows. There was a brief discussion on whose responsibility it is for the building maintenance. Nick said CVC rents the building from the Town of Bolton, but that interior maintenance is generally CVC's responsibility. John Bairos suggested that Nick Lavigne might want to check with CL&P to see if they can offer any energy efficiency options.

Nick Lavigne provided copies of the CVC Board meeting minutes from their September 19, 2013 meeting, which Elaine Buchardt and Ed Meincke also attended. The Council briefly reviewed the process being followed for bill payments, noting that there appear to be good checks and balances in place.

Nick Lavigne also noted that Melanie, an employee at CVC has moved to full time.

Paul Batterson reported that he got a copy of a recommendation from Carl Slicer of Ellington, suggesting that the CVC film their meetings. For those unaware, Paul explained that Carl was a former chair of the VACAC and also served on the CVC Board. Nick Lavigne said he will bring the suggestion up at the next CVC board meeting.

5. Financial Report – Paul Batterson – Paul Batterson distributed a financial report showing the VACAC's income and expenses from January 2012 through October 30, 2013. The VACAC shows a bank balance of \$6,909.85.
6. Plans for Surplus Funds – This item was tabled to the next meeting.
7. Other Business: None.
8. Scheduling Next Meeting: There was consensus to set the next VACAC meeting for Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 7:00p.m. in the Community Voice Channel Conference Room.

Nick Lavigne noted that the next CVC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 21, 2013 in this same conference room. Paul Batterson and Ed Meincke plan to attend. Nick said he will post those meetings on the website.

9. Elaine Buchardt/Justin Waine motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm. Motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Gentile
Recording Secretary