

Minutes for June 24, 2008

GATComm: Government Access Television Commission

Present: Theresa Burr-Bahner, Jonathan Furst, Sheila McCreven, Nancy Polk

Excused: Hank Kopel

Also: Pua Ford (coordinator & clerk)

This meeting was videotaped.

1. Call to Order: Burr-Bahner called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of Town Hall.

2. Approve minutes: March 25, 2008

McCreven moved approval of these minutes; Polk seconded. Vote to approve: Burr-Bahner, McCreven, Polk. Vote opposed: none. Abstain: Furst

Motion passed.

3. State and Regional Issues

- a. Since the March meeting, PA 08-159, "AAC Third-Party Nonprofit Community Access Providers and Community Antenna Television Companies" passed, signed by the Governor on 6/12. The upshot is that, if Woodbridge wants its G channel programming to be town-specific, Woodbridge must request this from Sound View and Sound View must allow it. It also sets aside \$100,000 annually for community access production and programming in Area Two, to be disbursed by the Cable Advisory Council through a grant program to be developed.
- b. SVCM Board meeting 6/23 – McCreven reported that she was excused when the Board commenced discussion on PA 08-159. This commission discussed the pros and cons of filing a complaint with the Freedom of Information Commission. The commission also discussed DPUC docket 08-06-03, "DPUC Investigation of the Sound View Community Media, Inc. (SVCM)" and its origins. McCreven will discuss this matter further with the First Selectman.
- c. E channel: PA 08-159 also allows a town to request and receive town-specific control of the Educational access channel (78). GATA discussed this at the 6/17 meeting; they believe this is the prerogative of a school board, superintendent, school principal, or school technology personnel. The law specifically favors town-specific dissemination, but GATA discussion was inclined to favor collaboration among school entities, including the Amity Regional district.
- d. The Woodbridge-SVCM scheduling and grant agreements
 - i. The grant application outlines use of the \$10,000 through December 2008.
 - ii. The scheduling agreement only runs for six months from its ratification by the Board of Selectmen (12/12/07), but did not go into effect until the grant money was received (2/7/2008).
 - iii. Those present believe that the scheduling agreement ended 6/12/2008.
 - iv. Orange Government Access Television believes that PA 08-159 overrides any agreement.
 - v. The online program listing for Sound View's channel 79 shows Woodbridge Board of Selectmen showing 1 hour 30 minutes or 1 hour. The past two BOS meetings have each run over 3hr 30min, so we must suppose that the

meetings are not being shown gavel-to-gavel. Sound View has not communicated with Woodbridge about this.

- vi. There are reports that AT&T's U-Verse has been showing everything on the Sound View channels, including Woodbridge programs, despite the explicit prohibition in the scheduling agreement. If Pa 07-253 overrides that part of our agreement, Sound View has not communicated with Woodbridge about it.
 - vii. At the 10/30/2007 mediation, Sound View said they did not need Woodbridge to expend time or funds to send programs. The Woodbridge team did not ask how Sound View intended to obtain the programs, but it is supposed that they use the I-Net connection at the Bridgeport library. Cablevision and the Cable Advisory Council would probably view this as a violation.
- e. **It was the general consensus of the commission to ask town counsel to request town-specific status for Woodbridge Government Access Television, if the Board of Selectmen agrees, as soon as possible.** Further, town counsel should ask them to stop showing Woodbridge programs, however obtained.

4. Receive Coordinator Reports

Ford offered hardcopy activity and budget reports. The last purchase order of the fiscal year was sent earlier in the day.

- a. For the next fiscal year, if a board or commission being recorded is comfortable with live carriage, GATCom is agreeable with it.
- b. Ford proposes a limited, live carriage of the summer town concerts on the green, which can always be heard clearly from Town Hall. She can set up an unmanned camera and microphone in Town Hall, with the scheduler set to carry the feed during the scheduled start and end of the concert. This might encourage people at home to attend in person in order to see and hear more clearly, and it would not incur unbudgeted camera operator costs. Commission did not object, except to hope for a better recording of concerts, closer to the gazebo.
- c. Ford proposes some regular scheduling of commissions now being recorded.
- d. The equipment used for the failed recording of WBOE's June meeting is in working order. The cable between microphone and camera may have been disturbed by someone in the audience trying to get more comfortable on child-sized chairs. McCreven said it might be possible to get Ms. White's slide show of her trip to China with narration, for programming.

5. Other business: The Commission decided to cancel the July 22 meeting, and meet next on **Tuesday, August 26, 2008.**

6. Adjournment

McCreven moved to adjourn at 7:24 p.m.; Polk seconded.

Approval unanimous.

Motion passed; meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Pua Ford, WGATV coordinator