

PEG Access Advisory Committee

March 11, 2021

Virtual Meeting, 9:37 AM

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the PEG Access Advisory Committee convened in a virtual meeting on March 11, 2021 at 9:37 AM.

Present were: Karlen Reed, Chr; Court Booth, Vincent Carlson, Ruth Lauer  
Absent: Scott Hopkinson,

Also present were: Matt Johnson, Select Board Liaison; Terri Ackerman, Select Board member; Jeremy Romanul, Select Board Administrative Assistant; Phil Lupsiewicz, Station Manager; Mark Pauley, Media Technician; Tammy Rose, Producer; Frank Breen, Carol Cushing COA Observer, David Allen, Nancy Pierce, Brooks Read, Lois Suarez

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Reed called the meeting to order with a quorum present and announced that it was being recorded.

**MEETINGS AND MINUTES**

Meetings are scheduled, virtually, for the remainder of 2020-2021 season on April 8, and May 6. The Enterprise Fund Hearing will be on May 11 and Annual Town Meeting will convene on June 13.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

**VOTED:** to approve the February 11, 2021 minutes.

Court Booth	aye
Vince Carlson	aye
Ruth Lauer	aye
Karlen Reed	aye

**PROGRAM VIDEO AWARDS**

Chair Karlen Reed suggested that PAAC institute awards for MMN programming. The tangible award would be a plaque installed at the studio. The purpose is to recognize exceptional programming and note local appreciation. She suggested the time period from March 13, 2020 until the present and each person would nominate at least one candidate from programming on each MMN channel. There was enthusiastic agreement with her proposal. Veteran videographer and producer Frank Breen stated his support and showed the meeting examples of awards he has received in the past. He stated the Alliance for Community Media (ACM) would be interested. Ms. Reed stated that she would alert the *Concord Journal*.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

**VOTED:** to approve the video awards programming initiative as described.

Court Booth	aye
Vince Carlson	aye

Call to Order

Meeting/Minutes

Video Awards

Ruth Lauer     aye  
Karlen Reed    aye

MMN Update

## **MMN UPDATE**

Station Manager Phil Lupsiewicz stated that the discussion on awards was very timely as MMN is in the process of submitting the video of the CCHS Choir performance of *You Raise Me Up* for an Emmy. Submittals are being made to ACM for two additional programs – Annual Town Meeting and CCHS Graduation.

Phil stated that MMN continues to investigate methods for providing a *TV Guide*-like listing of programs, but it is complex. In the past month, MMN has broadcast 47 public meetings and high school sports as well as a range of programs such as *Concord Days*, special programming for the Friends of Minuteman Historical Park winter lecture, Robbins House events, Concord Players, and League of Women Voters. CCHS will have a spring football schedule which MMN will cover. Since current plans call for virtual celebrations of Patriots Day, footage from previous Patriots Day Parades will be broadcast. The Public Ceremonies and Celebrations Committee has invited units that have participated in the past to submit short video clips to be inserted. Holiday events at Concord Museum, the National Park Service, and Concord's Dawn Salute will be broadcast.

Phil Lupsiewicz stated that there has been other programming that MMN has been hired to provide by Concord Players for local fundraising. It is not appropriate for larger ensembles in the current health situation, but Concord Band or Orchestra concerts and other arts events could be other venues appreciated by viewers. There was discussion of various new media such as audio podcasts and apps available for smart tvs, and whether it would be appropriate to begin including these into MMN programming. The consensus is that exploration of new technology is always good, but that choices should not limit the core mission of the enterprise and what the public expects. MMN was commended for doing a great and helpful job in capturing and editing footage of the arts.

## **PAAC CHARGE REVISIONS**

Chair Karlen Reed provided three examples of committee charges: Cable Advisory Committee charged to review the renewal of the franchise agreement with Comcast; PEG Access Advisory Committee charged more broadly to advise the Select Board on a wide range of cable television matters; *Best Practices for Municipal Communications*, a report to the Lexington Select Board. She recommended one change to the current Charge and that was to reduce the size of the committee to better ensure the ability to reach a quorum.

Ruth Lauer stated that the Cable Advisory Committee had a single limited purpose. The Lexington report is a much broader take on all forms of communications to and from the community but is not focused on PEG Access television. She said that she could accept Karlen's proposed change, but more opinions from a wider range of insights are always

CHARGE

better. Vince Carlson stated that the Lexington situation and that of many communities has resulted from the loss of reporting and disseminating local news. Carlisle has the perfect response in its *Carlisle Mosquito*, a weekly hyper-local newspaper free to all. He noted that MMN disseminates news in its unedited reporting of committee meetings. Few people tune in to watch all of the meetings. A focused local news television station could be a secondary mission beyond PEG access. It would be tough to balance and manage in the world of special interests and higher journalistic priorities.

Select Board Liaison Matt Johnson stated that accepted process calls for the Committee to fully discuss any amendments needed to the Charge and to make them known to the Select Board for action. Drivers of the need for amendments could be the structural changes in MMN that made it an organ of the Town and not a separate entity; the transformation in our local communities with a new reliance on electronics; citizen oversight demands. Matt Johnson stated that there is no digest of local events that can be shared with the public. Perhaps MMN could provide that by a review and summary of the many committee meetings it broadcasts. Select Board member Terri Ackerman stated that she was intrigued with an expansion to the Charge to local news and looked forward to it being on a future Select Board agenda.

Frank Breen of Philip Farm Rd. stated that a local news channel would require an additional channel and hiring a reporter. At a minimum it could broadcast a 24-hour bulletin board. There may be a perceived objectivity problem when it is controlled by local government. However, Wayland does this and we could learn from them.

David Allen of Heath's Bridge Rd. stated that there is a potential problem with news sources being controlled by government. There has been a dramatic change in technology and cultural patterns. Concord has Fiber to the Home mechanisms to enable delivery of Broadband and now sound thinking is needed to grow it. News is a separate discussion from this.

Nancy Pierce of Carlisle stated that she had been associated with the *Mosquito* for many years. Production includes finding sufficient volunteers, non-partisan analysis of issues, selection of stories to print. In her opinion, it would be deadly to think of the *Mosquito* being controlled by town government.

Brooks Read of Estabrook Rd. stated that this option of local news being provided from a town department or division consolidates too much power in government.

### **PEG ACCESS ENTERPRISE FUND BUDGET -- preliminary**

Chair Karlen Reed reported that there is no FY22 Budget available for review yet. She provided information from the 2020 Finance Report and Enterprise Budget Report for discussion. She stated that prior year budgets did not include a capital fund allocation. The fund balance has grown to \$1.4M. There were questions noted for future discussion when the budget can be shared.

### **LIAISON REPORTS, PUBLIC COMMENT**

Budget

Liaison reports/  
public comment

Carole Cushing thanked the Station Manager for information about scheduling programming of interest to seniors so that it could be published.

Brooks Read thanked Ruth Lauer for her attention to details.

**ADJOURN**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

- VOTED:** to adjourn the meeting and conclude business at 10:50 AM.
- Court Booth aye
- Vince Carlson aye
- Ruth Lauer aye
- Karlen Reed aye

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth C. Lauer, Clerk  
Approved: April 1, 2021

Adjourn