

Old Lyme Area Cable Advisory Council
9 October 2014
East Haddam
Minutes

Present: Peter Sielman, Chair, Gary Mezzi, Brian Bowes, Cathy Frank; John Bairos (Comcast rep), Lynn Perry (Public Access Coordinator)

Absent: Pam Munro, Tim Devlin

Call to Order

Chairman Peter Sielman called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Peter Sielman, seconded by Brian Bowes, to approve the minutes of July 10 2014. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Cathy Frank reported current bank balances as: Checking: \$356.47, Savings: \$17568.00, for a total of \$17,924.47.

Statewide Video Council Report

Russ Gomes was not present to give a report from the Statewide Council.

Comcast Report

John Bairos distributed information on a new channel line-up, Comcast's Internet Essentials program for low income families, now in its fourth year, and the C-Span/Comcast annual student documentary competition.

Comcast has a relationship with Western Union and UPS offices now to accept bill payments and equipment returns. The Groton and Norwich service centers are consolidating operations. In November, the Norwich center will close, although the Public Access studio will still be located there.

John addressed a customer service issue in Old Lyme. An Old Lyme resident wrote Peter with concerns about the increasing cost of her cable bill. The resident had enrolled for an introductory rate which had expired. Comcast customer service was working with the customer to explain her options.

Comcast has a dedicated webpage where subscribers can check the status of programming contracts and potential programming changes. The website is xfinitytv.com/contractrenewals. The information is also available by phone at 866 216 8634.

Public Access Report

Lynn Perry said she has initiated a more aggressive training schedule and she has received many inquiries about training. Recorded programs can now be uploaded directly to Norwich through ftp. Peter would like to let more people in Salem know about the Public Access studio.

Old Business

Scholarships

Peter suggested that we may want to extend the Council Scholarship program to college students. We will discuss this in 2015 for the 2016 scholarships.

Pam Munro interviewed one of our former scholarship recipients for a Public Access "info" program. We will try to interview other recipients, possibly during the holiday break.

Lyme renovation project/Comcast wiring

Brian reported that he has worked with John Bairos to resolve some issues that occurred during the Lyme Town Hall renovation.

New Business

Letter from Old Lyme resident requesting relief for seniors

Cathy asked if Council members would be interested in discussing something the Council might do to assist seniors in our communities. John said he has seen other Councils donate televisions to Senior Centers. Members agreed that this will be discussed at 2015 meetings. Members will look for ways to contact seniors in the communities we serve through Senior Centers, senior housing, or other means.

Set 2015 Meeting Schedule

The Council will continue to meet quarterly on the 2nd Thursday of January, April, July, and October as follows:

January 8, 2015 – Old Lyme Public Access Studio (John & Lynn will arrange for a demonstration of Comcast's new X1 box)

April 9, 2015 - Lyme

July 9, 2015 – Salem

October 8, 2015 – East Haddam

Articles

Council members received two articles that Peter thought may be of interest: one from *The Economist*, October 4, 2015 about Comcast's bid for Time Warner Cable; and one from the *New London Day* about Verizon offering a la carte pricing.

John explained that Comcast offers a la carte choices through packages. Brian suggested that channels with limited popularity could not survive if they were not included in packages.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Cathy Frank

10/14/14