

IOWA CITY TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT -- FY2004

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Iowa City Telecommunications Commission (ICTC) is a city commission comprised of five Iowa City residents and is mandated to facilitate and to regulate the smooth and effective development and operation of the City's Broadband Telecommunications Network (BTN), the City's cable television system, as well as advise on telecommunications related matters. The Commission makes its recommendations to City Council in matters pertaining to the BTN, resolves disputes about the operation of the BTN, conducts periodic evaluations of the BTN operation, and in general facilitates BTN use by the citizens of Iowa City, which includes the promotion and facilitation of the access channels and community programming.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FISCAL YEAR 2004

Assisted in selecting refranchising consultant

Assisted and oversaw refranchising process

Assisted in and oversaw subscriber survey for refranchising

Designed new method of tracking and analyzing subscriber complaints

Examined new technologies Mediacom will introduce in Iowa City

Monitored the subscribers being informed about nonaddressable converter use and return policies

Reviewed rate increase in basic cable by Mediacom and oversaw agreement to reduce rates.

Oversaw system upgrade to 860 MHz, including an increase in cable modem speed capacity.

Oversaw a drop audit of the cable system by Mediacom

Reviewed the Avatar Project

Monitored cable company phone response time

Reviewed subscriber complaints reported to the Cable TV Administrator

Reviewed Community Television Service (CTS) programming

Reviewed all City cable TV related funds, including cable TV pass through and PATV funds

Oversaw the budgeting process for cable TV

Oversaw the distribution of pass through funds to the Community Television Group (CTG)

Received monthly program and progress reports from from the Cable TV Administrator, City Channels 4 and InfoVision channel 5, Library Channel 10, PATV Access Channel 18, Educational Channel 21 and Senior Citizen Television (SCTV)

PATV had 738 new community programs totaling 1411 hours. There were 620 new locally produced programs cablecast and 876.75 hours of new programs cablecast on cable channel 18. PATV also had 28 workshops in the last year and certified 87 people. PATV had 767 camcorder checkouts, 1,500 hours of studio usage and 2199 hours of editing usage.

SCTV had 17 volunteers that gave 4,727 hours, the equivalent of 227 full time employees valued at \$81,257.13. SCTV created 104 new programs, providing 1040 hours of airtime not counting North Liberty and Hill. SCTV was featured in the Autumn 2003 issue of Community Media Review. A new computer and two web cameras will be added to SCTV's studio. The UI Dept. of Intermedia awarded a grant from the Gannett foundation to get SCTV programming on the internet.

The Library was in temporary quarters for 11 months of FY04. As a result programs were either produced by the ICPL on one camera, or were taped with the assistance of the CTS, PATV or City Channel 4. Still, the ICPL played back an average of 550 to 625 programs monthly. During the time the ICPL was being renovated virtually all media systems have been upgraded. In addition the ICPL can go live from the Pedestrian Mall area.

The Educational access channel produced 167 programs, totaling 116 hours of programming that were played back 10,074 times on the channel for a total of 4743 hours.

The U of I channel converted to a digital channel line up, which will allow them to cut back the number of SCOLA hours of programming and add new local productions, including the possibility of U of I hospitals programs. Their program guide is now on their website at http://www.uiowa.edu/tns/uitvschedule/uitv_schedule.htm.