

IOWA CITY TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

**DRAFT**

MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2009--5:30 P.M.

CITY CABLE TV OFFICE, 10 S. LINN ST.-TOWER PLACE PARKING FACILITY

MEMBERS PRESENT: Laura Bergus, Hans Hoerschelman, Gary Hagen, Robert Kemp,

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Brau, Bob Hardy

OTHERS PRESENT: Josh Goding, Beth Fisher, Lee Grassley, Michael McBride

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL

None at this time.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Grassley distributed a list of channel lineup changes. Eight new high definition channels will be added. The change will be effective this week. Mediacom will be producing a series of public service announcements featuring notable community leaders talking about their particular area of interest. The program will run on Mediacom's video on demand service, their website, and as inserts on cable channels. Grassley asked for assistance from the Commission in identifying Iowa City community leaders to be invited to participate. McBride reported that the University channel will begin broadcasting a new series of programs that came out of a conference sponsored by the University on black athletes and the problems they have in their roles in society. Experts from around the country attended. Goding and perhaps two board members will be attending the Alliance for Community Media's annual conference the third week in July. Hardy said he will likely have draft PATV contract for the next Commission meeting. The contract has again been extended for three months. Hardy said the Commission needs to determine if they are getting the information they need to determine if the access channels are meeting the needs of the community. Hagen said the Commission gets good reports from the access channels every month and a report every 6 months would be sufficient. However, in the long term if things change, the Commission may need more feedback than every six months. Bergus said the Commission needs measurable data for a long-term perspective to determine if the access channels are serving the community. It would be useful for the Commission to be able to point to some data that demonstrates to the City Council and community that the access channels are continuing to grow and develop over time. People outside the access community might not understand how well the access channels are performing and the Commission would have no way of justifying or demonstrating the access channels are serving the community well. Hoerschelman said that looking at long term data on programming and usage of the access channels would be helpful in identifying trends and progress and asked if the City has the data needed to review long term trends if they chose.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bergus moved and Hagen seconded a motion to approve the June 1, 2009 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

Bergus suggested that the Commission recognize Drew Shaffer's years of service to the community and City. Hardy said he will make some arrangements and email the Commissioners with ideas. Bergus suggested that meeting packets be electronic, perhaps on the Cable Division's website. Brau said he will explore options.

## SHORT PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

## MEDIACOM REPORT

Grassley distributed a list of channel lineup changes. Eight new high definition channels will be added. The change will be effective this week. Mediacom will be producing a series of public service announcements featuring notable community leaders talking about their particular area of interest. The program will run on Mediacom's video on demand service, their website, and as inserts on cable channels. Grassley asked for assistance from the Commission in identifying Iowa City community leaders to be invited to participate. Hagen asked about Mediacom's methods of informing subscribers about channel lineup changes. Grassley said subscribers will receive a letter, have an insert in their billing statement, and digital subscribers will receive an on-screen message. Hagen said that he recently had problems with the video on demand service and had a technician come to his house. The technician informed him that Mediacom had just upgraded the video on demand servers. The service now is working well. Grassley said Mediacom had had problems with the servers and made upgrades. Grassley said that Mediacom gave 1400 people free basic cable beginning in February when most of the local broadcasters went to digital transmission. Of those 1400, 1300 decided to keep cable service.

## CONSUMER ISSUES

Hardy reported that all complaints have been resolved. Grassley said that many technical problems can be traced to bad connectors, particularly if they are greater than 5 years old.

## UNIVERSITY OF IOWA REPORT

McBride reported that the University channel will begin broadcasting a new series of programs that came out of a conference sponsored by the University on black athletes and the problems they have in their roles in society. Experts from around the country attended. The conference has been made into a 12 part series. A new season of the "Women at Iowa" series will begin in the fall. Production begins this summer.

## KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Kirkwood submitted a written report. Kirkwood Student Productions KSP programming will return in the fall. Live Kirkwood volleyball games from Johnson Hall are being planned for the fall along with KSP Newscasts. The Kirkwood Channel continues to produce "The Involvement Report" on a monthly basis in partnership with the Heritage Agency on Aging. Production on the Linn County Master Gardener program series "Garden Connections" has been suspended indefinitely. The series was produced and hosted by several Linn County Master Gardeners on a volunteer basis. The time commitment necessary from each Master Gardener volunteer was too much so in the best interest of the program the group decided to stop producing programs for the immediate future. Rather than discontinuing the entire concept a "Master Gardener" segment has been added to the Involvement Report.

## PATV REPORT

Goding said he misspoke at the last meeting. PATV recently taped Robin Henley at Prairie Lights Bookstore. Mary Swander will be taped July 21. Goding and perhaps two board members will be attending the Alliance for Community Media's annual conference the third week in July. There will be no board meeting in July. The next board meeting will be August 20. PATV taped some of the Arts Fest activities, which will generate four programs. Taping Jazz Fest is being explored. PATV staff will be taping Trek Fest in Riverside. Work continues on a program for the animal shelter on how to volunteer with them. The next guidelines workshop will be July 5<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. PATV has been working to correct their program listings in the Press Citizen.

## SENIOR CENTER REPORT

No representative was present.

## LIBRARY REPORT

Fisher reported that Jack Gantos, the library's Author in Residence, shot 6 shows in two days. The library is now submitting a program guide to the digital on-screen program guide that provides actual program information rather than program categories as they had in the past. Actual program listings are also on the library's website.

## IOWA CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT

Hardy said he received an email from Kevin Hoyland who said he will be attending future Commission meetings. He was unable to attend the June meeting as he received the meeting packet late due to having a new mailing address.

## CITY CHANNEL REPORT

Hardy reported that the Media Unit recently taped the Human Rights Awards ceremonies, several City Council Priority Setting sessions, several episodes of Market Music, 2 programs on

the new fire station, and a program on the Southeast District plan. Planned productions include a program on domestic abuse, the Johnson County Council of Governments meeting, a number of short programs for the Human Rights Commission, and a program for Habitat for Humanity. The Community Voice program has a new program called IC People. The next At Home program will be on “sharrows” which promote sharing the roads with bicyclist. Use of the division website is up.

### ACCESS CHANNELS AND THE DIGITAL TRANSITION

Hardy said the Mediacom proposal to move the access channels to the digital tier is on hold until Mediacom responds to some questions from the City. Grassley said he will have some information soon.

### PATV CONTRACT

Hardy said he will likely have a draft contract for the next Commission meeting. The contract has again been extended for three months.

### TRIENNIAL REVIEW

Hardy said he has been busy on other projects and progress on the Triennial Review has been slowed down. A public hearing will need to be held. A public hearing is also required for the PATV contract and the two might be combined. A draft document will be prepared prior to the public hearing and made available. Following the public hearing the report can be modified and adopted.

### ACCESS CHANNEL REPORTING

Hardy distributed a document with the range of topics the access channels have covered in their monthly and quarterly reports. Hardy said that the access channels’ reports differ because they each have different missions. Hardy said the Commission needs to determine if they are getting the information they need to determine if the access channels are meeting the needs of the community. Hagen said the Commission gets good reports from the access channels every month and a report every 6 months would be sufficient. However, in the long term if things change, the Commission may need more feedback than every six months. Hardy said that the monthly reports should give a good overview of everything the access channels are doing. If there is information the Commission needs for a specific purpose, that information can be requested. Bergus said the Commission needs measurable data for a long-term perspective to determine if the access channels are serving the community. It would be useful for the Commission to be able to point to some data that demonstrates to the City Council and community that the access channels are continuing to grow and develop over time. People outside the access community might not understand how well the access channels are performing and the Commission would have no way of justifying or demonstrating the access channels are serving the community well. Hoerschelman said that looking at long term data on programming and usage of the access channels would be helpful in identifying trends and progress and asked if the City has the data needed to review long term trends if the Commission chose. Brau said a

large amount of data on programming is available. Hoerschelman said the Commission needs to know what data the access channels have on their operations. There needs to be a baseline for evaluation. Hardy said each channel's mission statement could serve as a starting point to develop a report to help the Commission determine if they are fulfilling those goals. Bergus said it would be very difficult to quantify each channels mission statement. If even a few data points can be identified and quantified, then progress over time can be demonstrated. Kemp said there are two aspects that need to be reviewed—technical and content. For example, the school channel has made huge advances in technical quality. Improvements in programming is much more difficult to evaluate.

#### AGENDA CONTENT

Hoerschelman noted this topic was discussed previously in the meeting.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Bergus moved and Hagen seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Adjournment was at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Brau  
Cable TV Administrative Aide