

CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 26, 2022

Affiliations	Name	Present
Cable Director	Derek Frates	Yes
Committee Members	Barbara Acksen, Chairwoman	Yes
	Ronnie Medina	Yes
	Maria Carvalho	Yes
	Thomas McAfee	Yes
	John Methia	No
Select Board Representative	Stasia Powers	Yes
Recording Secretary	Stephanie Fidalgo	Yes

Minutes:

Ms. Acksen opened the meeting at 5:33 PM and read the open meeting law for the record. Afterward, she held a moment of silence for John Methia’s mother, Joanna Methia. Following that, Ms. Acksen forwarded the minutes of the previous meeting to be voted on.

One amendment was requested for page 3, paragraph 1 to better clarify Ms. Powers statements in regards to the memorandum of understanding between the town and the school department and the amendment was made by Ms. Fidalgo.

Ms. Carvalho made the motion to approve the amended minutes of the January 25th meeting, seconded by Mr. Medina. The motion passed unanimously.

Cable Director’s Report: Update on the Public, Educational, and Governmental (PEG) Access (Channels 18 & 95):

The reports presented by Mr. Frates are recorded here in a condensed format:

Channel 18			
Month	January	February	March
Meetings Broadcast	34	27	29
Events / PSA’s Produced	2	2	1
Original Programming Hours	53	41	43
Government Meeting Views	2,444	2,014	2,777
Facebook Followers	1,774	1,780	1,798
Average Watch Time	00:18:50	00:17:32	00:24:15

The specific events and PSA’s are as follows – **January:** “Where to find a Covid Test and Fairhaven Board of Health: Covid-19 Updated 1/21/22,” **February:** “BSCO Covid K9 Program” and “Fairhaven Board of Health: Covid-19 Updated 2/24/22,” **March:** “Adopt-A-Pet March 2022.”

Channel 95			
Month	January	February	March
Events / Shows Produced	0	2	3
Total Shows Imported	7	9	9
Affiliated Access Stations	111	112	112
Community Views	199	290	1,673
Facebook Followers	1,774	1,780	1,798

The specific events and shows are as follows – **February:** “Getting Personal with Pattie: Episode 8, Guest Melissa Kucharski – Feb 2022” and “The Magazine – Episode 24 – March 2022,” **March:** Getting Personal with Pattie: Episode 9, Election Special – March 2022,” “The Magazine – Episode 25 – March 2022,” and “The Family Table – German Special.”

Mr. Frates noted the success of the Meet the Candidates night and Pattie’s Election Special during March as part of the uptick in community views.

In addition to the reports, Mr. Frates let the committee know that the “Hometown Haunts” specials won “Best Production Value” at the MassAccess Mass Creator Awards, following up on the win for “Best Virtual Event” from the previous year.

Ms. Powers requested that in addition to the monthly reports, Mr. Frates could also share the report spreadsheet with the committee, preferably with a sheet focused on viewership analytics to be able to follow trends from month to month.

To round out the update, Mr. Frates covered what had recently been added to the YouTube channel such as the Fairhaven Boater Safety Course info video and the video on the Millicent Library Lizard. There are also plans to work with Mark Badway from the Fine Arts Commission to do an overview with the curator from the Whaling Museum on several paintings on display at both Town Hall and the Millicent Library. There are also plans to cover the Manjiro Cherry Blossom Friendship Festival, the Memorial Day Parade, and Arbor Day in the coming weeks.

Update on Outreach to Attorney William Solomon Re: Cable License:

Ms. Aksen reached out to Mr. William Solomon on arranging a date for him to visit the committee. Currently, there are conflicts between Mr. Solomon’s schedule given that he requires surgery, and the technical setup happening during the week ahead of the June Town Meeting. In the interim, Ms. Aksen sent several bullet points of her concerns along questions for him to answer and will be including new Town Administrator, Ms. Angie Lopes Ellison, in the discussion.

Reviewing the history of the committee, Ms. Aksen covered how previously representatives from other towns had spoken to the committee and Select Board on the different models available for a town public access program. Fairhaven utilizes a town model, but other models such as a 501 c. 3 also exist. In addition to towns that use different models, she would also like to speak to anyone who helped a town transition from one model to another to inform the committee of what that process entails. The move to broadband would also need to be factored into any future contract plans.

The committee also discussed different citizens' issues with Comcast itself, its rates, and the lack of competition in the area. More than likely, there would still be a contract with Comcast, with Mr. Frates noting that New Bedford recently made a new contract with them, though he express some concerns with how FCC Access Fees will be handled.

Ms. Aksen also brought up Fairhaven's participation with Mass Access and the Alliance for Community Media which help to provide programming for local access channels.

Planning and Next Steps:

Going forward, the committee would like to reach out to other communities to discuss different models, the process of transitioning from one model to another, and if possible, find a community that has a comparable arrangement with the local school department. Hopefully, that process can begin next month, though it may be a while until Mr. Solomon will be available due to his surgery.

Ms. Aksen will work on finding guests ahead of the next meeting and suggested that committee members begin compiling questions they might have. The previous round of guests came from all over the state and all proved to be very helpful and gracious, with representatives from Plymouth being specifically noted with hopes to return.

Broadband Study Committee Update:

Mr. McAfee and Mr. Frates updated the committee on the activities of the Broadband Study Committee. Currently, the committee is meeting every two weeks as they work on the language for the articles for Town Meeting. At least one of the two will need to pass to continue funding the next step of the process. Being able to properly inform the citizens of the benefits of adopting broadband will be of the utmost importance. Especially since during the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a greater push for work at home which has exposed the need for better internet infrastructure.

Other Business:

The annual cable budget will be a part of the Town Meeting but there will be no new articles presented. Mr. Frates noted that there are 60 articles planned for Town Meeting. For 2022, the Town Meeting is planned to be fully in person and will be broadcast live.

For the next meeting for this committee, there are plans for either the 17th or 24th of May depending upon the availability of any guests. Zoom would be offered for guests for convenience.

Mr. McAfee asked if there were any questions for the Broadband Study Committee ahead of their next meeting but the committee did not have anything to forward aside from well-wishes for composing the articles for the Town Meeting.

Ms. Carvalho made a motion to adjourn at 6:15 PM and was seconded by Mr. McAfee. The motion passed unanimously.