

CABLE AND COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Date: March 19th 2008

Committee Attendance: Mark Berman, Kelly Cameron, Yen-Ju Chen, Trish Evans, Nat Finkelstein, Suzanne Weiss, Noreene Wells and Ben Wu. **Cable Office Staff:** Amy Wilson, Andrea Gardner, and Keith Watkins. **Absent:** Jay Boyar, Kernan Chaisson, Nat Finkelstein, David Friedman, Gabriel Nmah, Joy Ragsdale and Jim Schleckser. **Guest/s:** Brian Baker and Richard Turner.

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Discussion</i>	<i>Response/Action</i>
1. Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting began at 7:00 p.m. with round table introductions. 	
2. Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> February minutes reviewed with corrections noted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved as amended.
3. Brian Baker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thanked the committee and the Cable Office for their assistance and support with the PEG budget. The budget will be presented to the county executive this coming Monday. Joe Will is a new member to the PEG Network. Joe is the Vice President and General Manager at the University of Maryland, College Park Television. MCPS has secured safe housing for the mobile production vehicle. Montgomery College has a new ITV Station Manager. Ms. Melissa Adams has accepted the position and will start on April 14th and will represent the college at the PEG Network and CCAC meetings. PEG Network managers meeting is scheduled to take place tomorrow. The PEG Network retreat is scheduled for sometime during the month of June. The exact date will be determined at the manager meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nat stated that since his recent switched from Comcast to Verizon he has noticed that Verizon, unlike Comcast, designates the PEG channels as local programming. Discussion ensued with Mark suggesting the Cable Office first invite the representative from the Verizon to answer questions relating to this issue prior to sending a letter. MOTION: The Cable Office will send a letter to Verizon inviting a representative to come to address the committee regarding Verizon's inability to provide channel identifiers. Letter to be prepared and sent out before the next meeting. Mark asked about a 25,000 line item decrease in the County Executive recommended budget for fiscal year 2008. Amy responded there were 3 decreases. The first was for a study for digital migration, the second study to hire a facilitator to assist the MCT Board and the third was for the Park and Planning GIS system, all totaling approximately \$150,000.00.

<p>4. Amy Wilson, Acting Cable Supervisor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy provided the committee with an update on Cavalier and an overview of the following reports. See attached. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cable Office Report 2. New Department of Technology Organizational Chart 3. Press Release on Comcast 4. FY09 Operating Budget and FY09-14 Public Services Program • Mark asked for an update from the FCC on Effective Competition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy responded this issue is still with the FCC and it would probably be months before we get an update.
<p>5. Suzanne Weiss, Committee Chair</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susanne has requested from the Cable Office a monthly report on the providers on areas where they are out of compliance with the franchise agreement. These areas include customer service issues, summary of complaints etc. • Mark inquired about the idea of televising a committee meeting and inviting the cable providers to join in order to address existing issues whereby utilizing the mobile production vehicle. Suzanne spoke to the issue of community outreach and the possibility of moving the venue of the meeting largely due to the lack of attendance. Discussion ensued. • Suzanne asked for input on the letter to the County Council in support of the County Executive's recommended budget. Item which should be highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Need for resources to improve county resident awareness of digital television transition ◦ Funding of PEG Equipment Replacement budget in addition to the cost of the shared mobile production vehicle ◦ Additional staff support for MCT, Montgomery College and MCPS ◦ Continue with to include awareness of the Public access channel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy responded that she would be sure that the committee would be provided this information.
<p>6. Unfinished business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzanne readdressed the topic of digital conversion education. Further discussion ensued on ways to get this information out to county residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy responded that Donna Keating is working with the Office of Consumer Affairs doing some community outreach and developing a pamphlet. Amy also reiterated that there is information on the digital transition on the Cable Office website. Yen suggested we work with Donna Keating so as to not duplicate efforts and inquire how the committee can support the Cable Office with the transition. Suzanne has requested a copy of the draft pamphlet that Donna is working on.
<p>7. New business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzanne asked the committee what they would like to accomplish over the next few months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trish responded there was discussion at a previous meeting about formation a subcommittee on outreach activities consisting

		<p>of Jay, Joy and Trish. This subcommittee has discussed several ways of providing community outreach activities with some further brain storming planned and will provide a report upon Jay's return. Richard offered the committee the option of doing a studio show on Access Montgomery or to create a video with the help of their staff. Nat reminded the committee of their role as an advisory committee to the County Council and the County Executive. If the committee started doing community outreach we could conflict with the County Executive or the County Council. It would be better to make recommendations to either party, if at their request we are asked to provide community outreach at that point we proceed. Susan responded the intent is not to provide a service but to attempt to more effectively reach the county residents we are unable to reach. Ben suggested the idea of using the presentation to the County Executive with outreach programs on a federal level.</p>
8. Next meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate letter to Verizon and invite a representative to the next meeting. • Address any issues regarding the budget. • Invite a representative from Comcast to the May meeting. • Investigate more ways to tackle Comcast issues. • Continued discussion on outreach to digital conversion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzanne has requested the Cable Office review the franchise agreement to see if there is any information in the agreement that requires Verizon to place the PEG channel in the program guide. Kelly asked if the Cable Office received any complaints about the PEG channel listing.
9. Adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 23rd at 7:00 p.m. Meeting location to be determined.

Submitted by: Andrea Gardner, Office Services Coordinator