

# Missoula Civic Television Advisory Commission

## Minutes ~ January 19, 2010

Commission Members in Attendance: Jason Wiener, Ed Childers, Ginny Merriam, John Rettenmayer, Link Starbureiy, Carol Bellin

Commission Members Absent: Lesli Brassfield, Antonio Guglielmo, Jean Curtiss, Jen Sauer

Others in Attendance: Melani Coyle (Commission Secretary), Geoff Badenoch (MCAT Board Liaison), Joel Baird (MCAT)

John Rettenmayer called the meeting to order.

Ed Childers moved to approve the December minutes; Jason Wiener seconded. The motion passed.

### **Elections**

Jason Wiener nominated John Rettenmayer for Chair and John accepted the nomination. Ed Childers said he is pleased John is willing to be chair another year.

Ginny Merriam nominated Jason Wiener for Vice Chair and Jason accepted the nomination.

The nominations were approved.

### **Old Business**

- ❖ Review current programming schedule that has been recorded/is being recorded
  - The current programming schedule was handed out.
- ❖ Programming ideas from the commission
  - Jan 28 – Kick-off for the active transportation plan (Ann Cundy)
  - Dennis Burns, the parking consultant will be in Missoula Feb 3 – 5 (Anne Guest)
  - Jan 20 - HPC Forum with the Bozeman consultant

### **Annual Report**

Ginny Merriam asked Commission members to think about what the Commission accomplished last year. She said this is not a report about the MCAT government channel, but about what the MCTAC body this year. Items that were brought up and discussed were:

- Changed name from Government Channel Cable Advisory Commission to Missoula Civic Television Advisory Commission.
- Covered many additional meetings such as DRB, Health Department, Zoning Rewrite, County BOA.
- Discussed innovations such as streaming videos.
- Bylaws overhaul which led to more efficient meetings.
- Created more magazine style programming which gave more information to the public.
- Highlighting the Zoning Rewrite meetings and the magazine style format.
- Jason said the Commission is covering the demand for additional meeting coverage with media assistance grants. This would be important for City Council to know going into the contract negotiations. Ginny asked Joel Baird for the number of media assistance grants the Commission has used to cover the hours that went beyond the contract.
- Health Board meetings
- Negotiations

Other discussions came from this topic.

- Geoff Badenoch said the Commission has talked about a recommendation to increase funding with the next contract in order to provide more programming. He asked if there is an evaluation planned. When expanding coverage, the Commission should determine if it is beneficial to the public and he asked how feedback could be received. Could there be a survey at the end of the program asking citizens to let the City know what they thought of the program.

Ed Childers said some care, but a lot of citizens don't. He would like to have a count of how many people watch which programs. He said having the information about how viewers can provide feedback available on the programs is important, so the Commission would have some feedback. It should be throughout the program, not just at the end.

- Ed Childers said there has been a large number of meetings added to the ongoing coverage, but asked if the Commission has looked at removing some meetings in order to meet the contracted hours. Ginny Merriam said she would like the Commission to review the programming every six months to see what the hours have gone for and make changes as necessary with a goal of preserving a balance between meeting coverage and magazine-style enterprise programming. Geoff Badenoch suggested doing it quarterly, and Carol Bellin suggested that annually would be often enough. She said the Commission may want to ask for more contract hours in the negotiations so that more meetings could be regularly covered. Ginny said all meetings should be brought forward and discussed but that our programming should reflect a balance between meetings and magazine-style programs. Meetings that MCTAC members decide don't fit with the mission of the government channel should be discussed and evaluated for another funding source, such as the media assistance grant.
- Jason Wiener asked if the Zoning Rewrite meetings were done magazine style or just taped. Ginny Merriam said there was a meeting with Roger and Laval to create context around the meetings. Jason suggested covering more meetings like this where the context is created around the actual event/meeting.

❖ **Planning for negotiations**

Melani will send the current contract to the Commission.

This is a three year contract. Jason Wiener suggested Joel Baird meet with the Mayor and Brentt Ramharter, Finance Director to discuss the upcoming negotiations/contract.

Carol Bellin asked who does the actual negotiations and Joel said he attends an Administrative Leadership Team (ALT) meeting where Jim Nugent, City Attorney and he goes through the contract. It must then be approved by the Mayor and referred to City Council for approval.

Carol asked who the contract is with and Joel said it is between MCAT and the City, not Bresnan. The Bresnan contact is an eight year contract.

Ed Childers said the franchise produces funds and asked where the funds are specified and if it states anywhere about a franchise with Bresnan and Joel said no.

Thirty-five percent of all cable revenues go to the City, and then MCAT gets a percentage of that revenue. Every four months, subscribers pay a \$1.00 fee and the city gets 35 cents of that dollar. In the last franchise agreement, a fee of 25 cents per month per subscriber was added as cable related activity so MCAT could purchase some equipment.

## **New Business**

### **❖ Links on screen during live meetings**

Jason Wiener said he needs to work with Carl Horton, IT Director and Marty Rehbein, City Clerk. Marty is interested in having links added during the live meetings. Carl has been unavailable, but when he returns, Jason will meet with Carl and Marty.

## **MCAT Board Comment**

Geoff Badenoch said there are a number of MCAT Board members whose terms are expiring. MCAT is interviewing the applicants and he will have an update at the February meeting.

MCAT is looking at possibly moving to a more affordable place, but nothing has been determined. There are a lot of costs associated with a move, such as the wiring from Bresnan to the new location. They pay a lot in rent and it escalates every year.

## **Additional Comments**

### **Date of next meeting:**

February 16, 2010  
Mayor's Conference Room  
3-4 pm