

Minutes of the August 15th, 2019 Harvard Cable Access Committee Meeting

Approved October 10th, 2019

Committee Members Attending: Nick Browse (vice chair), Bill Johnson, Robert Curran, Amy Bassage, Chris Jones

Others Attending: Brittany Blaney (Station Manager), Hristina Tasheva

Called to order at 7:05 PM

Meeting Minutes:

- Minutes of the June 26th meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

Public Comments: none

Welcome:

- Nick took a moment to welcome Robert Curran as the new HCTV committee member, recognizing his expertise and experience in video production. The committee looks forward to Robert's contributions.

Treasurer's Report:

- Bill identified the roughly \$9,000 savings the station realized for FY19 as a result of Anya's departure, and he offered a final accounting for FY19. "It was a good fiscal year."
- Bill, Brittany, and Hristina have spent some time restructuring the appropriation of funds for FY20, and as a result of the strategy change (hiring Brittany as an independent contractor), the station has saved \$26,000.
- Brittany has reached out to The Assabet Vocational School hoping to hire a student intern at 60 hours a month for FY20. The station would also employ a Bromfield student. As Brittany suggested, getting the station connected to another local academic institution should be beneficial. Bill thinks bringing in a new intern could really free Hristina up.
- Brittany explained the FCC's legislative matter, "Third Report and Order." Details about the bill are located in the Station Manager's Report. Bill thinks the downside to the bill is minimal, and Brittany also doesn't see imminent risk. Community Cable Access appears pretty safe.
- Bill reiterated that the \$9,000 savings from FY19 gives the station a nice financial cushion should we run into unexpected expenses. Nick wondered if the extra money should be used for added services/personnel, and although he believes in being fiscally prudent, he also believes that we shouldn't hesitate to use the funds to create programs that the Harvard community would enjoy. This would be good for the station.

- Amy floated the idea of creating an Advanced Video Production course at Bromfield for students who have expressed a real interest in the field and have exhausted current offerings.
- Brittany would like to see the extra money go into paying personnel rather than purchasing new and more sophisticated equipment.

Website Upgrade:

- Brittany identified definite limitations to the current HCTV website, and that we will have to take a hard look at our streaming host (TellVue) and our archiving component (YouTube).
- Robert pointed out that if you lose YouTube, then you lose the analytics that come with it. Robert is more of a Vimeo fan and does not like some of the choices YouTube has made recently. Switching to Vimeo would be time-consuming, but it's definitely possible. Robert is most concerned about the website being user-friendly.
- Bill emphasized that we need to be the most concerned with how the website streams and stores and how people interface with all of this. In addition, our current website is not viewable on a mobile device, and there is a "pointer" problem. These are important issues that need to be addressed.
- Bill believes we need to take a holistic approach to creating a new website. He suggested we should look at existing Cable TV websites from other towns to see if there is one we like. If we find it, then we can look into the costs of creating it.
- Nick asked about the expense of website creation and the figure that triggers a bidding process. For the town, that figure is \$10,000.
- Brittany and Hristina have begun researching websites but haven't found much they like.
- A discussion about archiving old meetings that currently exist on tape or DVD ensued. Both Robert and Nick felt strongly about holding onto these records and digitizing them sometime in the future. Currently the DVDs take up two shelves of space at the station, so they will remain there unless that space is needed.
- Nick would like Brittany and Hristina to continue the website upgrade research and then come to a recommendation for the committee to consider.

Station Manager's Report:

- Brittany distributed and discussed the attached report. Additionally...
- Bill made a motion that Brittany send the list of excess equipment for disposal to Marie Sobalvarro so that it can be posted publicly. The motion passed unanimously.
- Chris will contact Scott Hoffman and Jon Snyder about fixing the leaking pipe and broken AC server. The pipe has been a problem dating back to the spring, and there are potential safety concerns associated with it.

New Business: none

Personnel Change:

- At this point Hristina left the meeting.
- Both Brittany and Nick conducted a recent performance review for Hristina which was favorable.
- At this time, Hristina is being paid at the low end of a Grade 5 employee (camera operator), but the work she is performing exceeds that grade. She should be earning an hourly wage commensurate with a Grade 6 employee, and that would constitute an 11% raise.
- Bill made a motion that the committee ask the personnel board to approve a position called HCTV Station Operations, and should we gain the approval, we recommend Hristina for the position. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:33 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 10th.

Thursday, August 15, 2019

HCTV Station Manager Report

- Studio Reorganization - Separate workspaces, open area for class congregation/ video viewing, easy access to dry erase board
- Excess Equipment Disposal - Board Decision Needed
- Meeting Archiving - DVD & Digital - Board Decision Needed
- File Recovery - Digital, DVD, & Mini DV
- Website
 - Changed coloring of Telvue embedded objects to match the HCTV logo
 - Moved from Playlists to Categories on Main Page, Cleaner presentation, thumbnails of our choice, Subcategories
 - Removed "Next Air Date" from schedule fields
 - Rough Website Map Created
 - Researched other Public Access Websites
- Livestreaming on Website, \$5K
- Created show "categories" and categorized all HCTV program files, as well as giving them descriptions - Website search more effective
- GOV 191 weekly schedule created & implemented
- Shakers in Harvard Program - Hristina
- 08.14 - Spoke with Shana Garr, Curator at the Fruitlands Museum re: joint venture public viewing of Little Women in the Spring/Summer of 2020. Now in contact with Museum Director, Michael Busack to begin planning.
- Facilities - Water Pipe, Landscaping, AC Unit

- Water Delivery
- Legislative Matters
 - “Third Report and Order”, FCC ruled that cable companies can now deduct certain in-kind contributions from their financial obligations, including free cable drops and costs tied to running “Institutional Networks” (“I Nets”) in their communities.
 - Rep. Paul McMurtry (11th Norfolk District) H.4045 “An Act relative to digital entertainment on public rights of way”, Bill has 85 Cosponsors.
 - Would create parity among cable and digital streaming providers using public rights of way in order to sell their services to MA residents by establishing a 5% fee on digital streaming providers which are already using the rights of way, free of charge.
 - 2015-2018, 7% drop in cable households
- Analytics

Future

September - 14th Fall Fest, 21st Craft Fair & Artist Talk @ Fruitlands, 28th Barn to Barn Tour

October - 26th Harvard Family Association Halloween Parade

November - 3rd Grade Puppet Shorts, Author Talk @Fruitlands