

**Minutes of the Community Media Access Committee's
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 16, 2009
Edith Stone Room, Albany Community Center
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kenny called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Clay Larson, Naomi Lucks Sigal, Jack Kenny, Jackie Hermes Fletcher,
Ellen Toomey

Staff Present: Jeremy Allen, Anthony Marchitello

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 2009 meeting were approved by consensus.

III. PUBLIC FORUM

None

IV. COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee member Larson noted that he had recently observed that the PEG capital fee on his cable bill had increased. The January bill included the note, "Beginning with the January 2009 billing cycle, your bill will reflect an increase in the Public, Educational, and Governmental (PEG) access support fee. This is a per month PEG required fee." While the fee (\$1.11 on Clay's bill) is small, it's now about a third of the franchise fee (\$3.48), when it should be about a fifth (1% vs. 5%). Clay contacted, Cheryl Chambers, Comcast Director of Government Affairs, who reported that, "the primary reason for the increase in the PEG pass through is due to the fact that we began making PEG payments effective April 2008 but we did not implement a pass through in the billing system until June." Clay sent a follow-up email asking Ms. Chambers to confirm that the higher PEG capital fees will return to normal levels once the back fees have been collected. Clay has not received a response yet.

V. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Snader installation update

Jeremy Allen provided an update on the status of Snader's Community Center AV installation. Snader has now at least acknowledged that there are problems with the system and is committed to correcting these. Snader has asked that Jeremy be present and available during the additional work on the system. The City is still holding back \$10,000 in payments to Snader pending satisfactory completion of the installation,

b. KALB programming

Chair Kenny asked staff to summarize the length and content of a KALB broadcast day. Anthony responded that the channel broadcasts 24/7. There are about 6 hours of meeting broadcasts each day, 3 – 4 hours of Satellite TV (Democracy Now, Grit TV), 4 – 5 hours of miscellaneous PEG content that Anthony has found. The balance is the bulletin board. Anthony noted that the bulletin board content is now more regularly updated and it looks much better. Anthony pointed out that we're still not getting much submitted content. Chair Kenny noted that this was probably the major goal of the committee. He added that AHS used to provide some content, but that this has stopped. There was general agreement that the committee should seek to reestablish the previous relationship with the AHS.

VI. KALB BUDGET

Jeremy Allen provided the current KALB (Dept. 240) budget sheets. The total working budget is ~\$95,000. On the expenditure side, to date we've spent ~54% of the allotted budget. The biggest expenditure items are salaries/benefits and the Granicus charge under the professional services category. Other expenditures under professional services include the Comcast digital subscriber fee, Dish Network, and the TMS fee. Jeremy reminded the committee that TMS provides a schedule listing service, but it hasn't proved valuable and it won't be renewed. Jeremy budgeted \$1,200 under education/conferences for a trip to NAB, which probably won't be used, and money for an on-camera DTE recorder, which probably will be purchased.

The revenue side includes the Comcast franchise fee and the AUSD board meeting broadcast fee. To date we've only received 53% of the franchise fee. The AUSD fee includes an initial "buy in" amount (\$14,550) and a \$5,000 annual fee for staff to broadcast the meetings,

Larson noted that the committee also needed to look at the cable TV fund (832) balance to get a complete picture. The Finance Dept. had provided this at the last meeting. Larson was still interested in monitoring the quarterly 1% PEG fee (a capital fee) to see how it was expended.

Jackie Hermes Fletcher asked if there was a need for more equipment. Jeremy Allen agreed that there was. He noted that the 1% PEG fee (\$25,000/yr) was a steady revenue source and that the City might be able to loan KALB a lump sum to be paid off with the PEG fee revenues. The committee could advise the City on what equipment to buy. Ms. Hermes Fletcher asked if staff could provide committee with an inventory of equipment we had. Chair Kenny suggested putting this on the agenda for the next meeting.

VII. CABLECASTING MEETINGS OF OTHER COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

Committee member Larson, who asked that this item be placed on the agenda, had prepared a memo from the committee asking the Council to revisit the city's meeting cable-casting policies in relation to current staffing and budget resources. The memo noted that the Council had last reviewed the City's cable casting policies in 2006. The policy at that time was to broadcast all Council meetings as well as waterfront planning process meetings. The 2006 policy provided for broadcasting additional meetings when staffing and budget resources become available.

The committee's memo noted that since 2006, the Recreation and Community Service Department had added resources including a ¾ time staff person to support KALB-33. That staff person's work schedule covers Monday and Tuesday evenings. The memo recommended that the City cablecast all waterfront committee meetings as well as selected planning & zoning commission meetings or other meetings of general or special interest.

The committee approved the memo with some minor revisions

VIII. CITY WEBSITE

Jeremy Allen summarized a memo prepared by Penelope Leach, Director of the Recreation and Community Service Department, which described the City's current program for maintaining and updating its website. The program includes a workgroup comprised of City staff. Jeremy noted that the Council resolution that created CMAC did not appear to include any oversight of the Albany web page. Member Larson said that he was still concerned that the website was not as functional and it could be and that he would communicate his suggestions for improvement of the site to the workgroup.

IX. MOVE BACK TO CITY HALL

Jeremy Allen reported that the City had hired Dave Snell (Pinole TV) as a consultant for the move. The consultant will advise the City on the various options (e.g., new cameras/control vs. reusing old equipment). Jeremy emphasized that nothing has been decided yet.

X. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Chair Kenny summarized a list of possible agenda items for the next meeting including: a review of CMAC's goals and objectives; a review of the criteria for airing content on KALB and the criteria for using KALB equipment. He also wanted to discuss the possibility of providing training to committee members. Member Hermes Fletcher noted that staff had agreed to provide the committee with an inventory of current equipment.

XI. NEXT MEETING: Monday, April 20, 2009, 6 – 7:30pm

XII. ADJOURNMENT 7:00 pm