



## Hudson Community Television Advisory Committee

### *Committee Meeting Minutes*

Meeting Date: January 19, 2017

Meeting Location: HCTV Studios, Hudson High School.

**In attendance:** Michael Coburn, Ginny Frazer, John Funyak, Jeff Russell, Thor Wasbotten and Nick Zaklanovich.

Ex Officio: Dan Gerbracht and Barbara VanBlarcum, Dr. Dan Williams – Council Liaison.

**Not in attendance:** Don Drenski, A.J. Stokes.

Committee Chair Nick Zaklanovich called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M. Nick also took notes.

### **I. Greeting of members and guests**

Nick greeted all in attendance. Our guests included Mr. Hal DeSaussure, President of Hudson City Council and Mr. Kevin Powell, Hudson Assistant Public Works Manger – Utilities. We also greeted Ginny Frazer, who was appointed to the committee by Council to fill the opening left when A.J. Stokes decided not to apply for a new term. Welcome back, Ginny. Council also approved members Jeff Russell and Thor Wasbotten for new three-year terms.

### **II. Approval of Previous Meeting Notes**

The draft notes from the November 17, 2016 committee meeting were approved as written and will be posted to the City web site.

### **III. Discussion with Mr. Hal DeSaussure**

Mr. Hal DeSaussure asked time to address the committee concerning the role of the committee. He told the history of the committee in the formative years, and how the committee was heavily involved in the founding of HCTV. Over the years, the committee has drifted away from being involved with some of the critical decisions of the station operation, including the budget. While Council approves the budget for all departments, Mr. DeSaussure would like to see the committee be more involved, in an advisory way, with the important decisions at the station.

### **III. Discussion with Mr. Hal DeSaussure, continued**

The Advisory Committee guidelines were revised many years ago in an attempt to get the committee more involved with the station operation. Council would like to refocus the committee towards the charge that was intended. Mr. DeSaussure also wanted to assure the committee members that they do have an important role to play with the station and the roll is a substantive roll that is important to the City and Council. He recommended that we look at the Park Board meetings (which are recorded and available via archive streaming), to see how the Park Board interacts and provides advisory input to the Parks Department. Dr. Williams provided the established purpose and the committee charge that was created by Council many years ago. None of the members present had seen this document before and found it to be valuable information for moving forward.

Mr. DeSaussure said that the committee should start being involved in the budget decisions and more involved in other important aspects of the station operation. Michael Coburn added that the new station co-managers, Dan & Barb have mentioned that they are interested in the committee's role and would be in favor of accepting more advice from the committee.

Mr. DeSaussure said that looking forward, the evolution of technology and changes in the cable industry are subjects that the committee need to look into and plan ahead for. He suggested that perhaps we should invite City Solicitor Todd Hunt to one of our meetings to discuss the future legal ramifications of the changing public access world, including possibly using media outlets such as Facebook to broaden the scope and outreach of HCTV.

Dr. Williams added that the recent changes brought about a new day at HCTV and the committee should not feel restricted in their input and their suggested creativity.

Jeff asked about the expansion of the Velocity broadband service to residential customers and the possibility of adding a rider to the Velocity charges to help fund HCTV. Mr. DeSaussure replied that the current plan is to restrict Velocity availability to businesses only, due to the infrastructure not being generally available to homes. If the residential service does eventually go forward, then a surcharge for HCTV would be a possibility.

Michael added that he foresees a future decrease in the franchise fee revenues and the committee has been looking for alternative funding sources, but suggested that he did not want to be in the fund raising business. Mr. DeSaussure responded that it should be the goal of the station management and the committee to make the station so relevant to Hudson that Council could not consider not funding the operation, regardless of franchise fee levels and solicited funding.

Dr. Williams mentioned that Council does not subsidize the costs for HCTV to record and present the community meetings and perhaps Council should think about considering a subsidy for that public service, particularly since the recorded record is now the official public record of the City meetings. Dan Gerbracht added that he and Barbara VanBlarcum are meeting with the City Finance director about the issue on January 20.

Ginny asked if the school system is involved in the decisions impacting the operation of HCTV. Mr. DeSaussure responded that the schools have not asked for anything specifically in regards to equipment and events that are covered. Decisions relating to those items have solely been made by station management.

### **III. Discussion with Mr. Hal DeSaussure, continued**

Ginny also mentioned that the idea of locating the station at the High School was to get the students involved. Mr. Powell answered that the discussions with the school board regarding their involvement were just restarted in November. Dr. Williams added that City Manager Jane Howington and School Superintendent Phil Herman are talking about the partnership between the City and the Schools in regards to the station and he expects those talks to be fruitful towards getting greater student involvement. Ginny said that she would like to see the students doing graphics projects and the like that would count towards their class while giving them an opportunity to get involved with the station.

Jeff asked about restrictions on soliciting funds from local businesses for underwriting contributions. Dan Gerbracht said that Good Day in Hudson is underwritten by several local businesses who have their names mentioned before and after every Good Day program. Dr. Williams said that it would be a good idea to have the City Solicitor spell out guidelines for underwriting. Dan said that he knows of many other potential underwriters, but they need to have viewer data before they will contribute. For the next meeting, we should invite the question to the legal team for their input.

Jeff asked about the involvement of the City Communications Department in promoting the station. Mr. DeSaussure responded that the City Manager is a strong advocate of tearing down the “silos” that have grown up in the city between the differing operations and will be working towards getting the cooperation between the City departments that had not been there in the past.

Mr. DeSaussure also said that the committee members should contact Council with ideas and problems and perhaps ask for time at a Council Workshop session to discuss HCTV related items.

### **IV. Station Management Report - Dan Gerbracht & Barbara VanBlarcum**

Dan said that new channels of cooperation have been opened between the station management and the Communications Department that should lead to a better cooperation between the two entities. Dan said that they would be meeting with Communications Manager Jody Roberts in the next week to discuss mutual opportunities. One of the first projects that they will be working on is a production that will follow the snow removal crews as they go about their important task. Of course, there must be snow on the ground to have something to discuss with the snow workers, but Mother Nature should be providing us with some snow to work with soon.

Dan reported that the station had a new Facebook page in place just before the recent holiday concerts. Reports were that over 50 viewers worldwide accessed the concert while it was happening. The City and the School administrators were excited by the new Facebook access opportunity and are thinking of other ways that it can be utilized.

Dan recently posted a production on the Hudson Fuel Gas Fire on Facebook as well as the on demand web site. Dan showed all in attendance the media that was being shown and the amount of viewer interest that it had generated. The viewership via the on-demand web site showed that over 1,300 viewers had accessed the Fuel Gas Fire program. Dan is able to view the number of times that each program is accessed via the web site, which could be important information that could be shared with potential underwriters, including a possible underwriter for the web site itself. A legal opinion on the extent of the underwriting opportunities is needed.

#### **IV. Station Management Report - Dan Gerbracht & Barbara VanBlarcum, continued**

Thor asked if it was possible to measure both the Facebook and web page access numbers, to see if the new Facebook viewers have affected (decreased) the web site access numbers. Dan said that he would check with Communications Manager Jody Roberts to see if she could provide that data.

Thor said that he thought that the recent addition of Facebook Live access to HCTV was a monumental accomplishment in improving viewer access.

Barb said that she suggested that each week, perhaps on Friday afternoon, a new video be posted to Facebook Live from the history archives. Ginny added that the weekly posting idea could be promoted to the citizens via a Hudson Hub-Times notice as well as exposure on the City web page. Jeff added that the Hub would be a great place to announce the Facebook access and Dr. Williams mentioned that he could bring the new access up during a Council meeting.

Dan is working with Mr. Powell to inventory and attempt to sell, sometime in the future, some of the accumulation of old, unused equipment that has gathered at the station over the years.

Barb said that they are looking at a redesign of the station logo. Since the change over to Community Television, they have found that the current logo becomes distorted and unreadable when used as a “bug” on the video screen during HCTV productions. Help in the design of a new station logo has been requested from Kent State University via Thor.

Dan said that the station is looking at getting a new vehicle, which could be used as a remote broadcast vehicle. They would also like to wrap the vehicle in the station logo, much like the Velocity vehicles in town.

Dan said that they are looking at obtaining new mobile cameras to replace the old access cameras that are over 12 years old. The Sony NX camera was selected as the preferred replacement camera because they have a similar picture quality to the current studio cameras. The new cameras list for \$3,200 and the station hopes to buy three or four cameras. The new cameras would be used by staff and well trained access producers. The old access cameras would be kept for the use of other access producers.

Dan is also looking at obtaining a digital countdown clock for the studio for timed production events. The audio section of the station is also being looked at for upgrade to a digital format that could be controlled from an I-Pad. Dan said they have found that the existing audio control board is too big and cumbersome for the productions that are done in the studio.

All of the above ideas have not been purchased or budgeted at this time. Thor asked Dan to scan the information on the equipment purchases and to send that information to all committee members. Dan said that he would do so.

Dan said that his connections with the Hudson Players have resulted in plans to construct a new set for the HCTV studio. Dan will share the design information for the new set with the committee when he has new information.

Barb said that a trip was made recently to Alliance Community Television (ACT) to look at their operation. Barb said that the alliance operation is 45 years old and is operated as a non-profit operation. The Alliance station is run as an educational opportunity for school students and has a large amount of student help in the station operation.

#### **IV. Station Management Report - Dan Gerbracht & Barbara VanBlarcum, continued**

Barb said that the operations committee for ACT is made up of people from all facets of the community, including the schools, businesses, library and theatre. ACT is housed in what was originally a theatre. Barb showed pictures that were taken during the visit. Alliance produces many mobile productions in and around the schools.

Dan said that the visit was well received and the operations people at ACT are willing to talk with our committee about how their operation is run.

Ginny asked if the arrangement at ACT of having a diverse group of members on their operations committee appears to be an advantage. Barb responded that the original HCTV Advisory Committee was made up of 13 members and had representatives from the Hudson City Schools and Western Reserve Academy. She was not sure why or when the representatives from the schools stopped being involved with the committee. Barb suggested possibly adding more non-voting members, such as the new Chamber of Commerce director and possibly representatives from Seton Catholic & Hudson Montessori. Dan said that they would reach out to the school organizations and the Chamber to see if they have interest in being involved.

#### **V. Time-Warner / Spectrum Update**

Barb reported that the grant request from the Burton D. Morgan Foundation should be decided by the end of January. The grant, if approved, will cover the expense of the transmission equipment upgrade as well as entrepreneurial programming. Dan said that they would be recording an event for the Morgan Foundation next week.

#### **VI. Public Access Update – Barbara VanBlarcum**

Barb distributed the programming hours report to the members. She also reported that the station is a member of the Alliance for Community Media and they will be having their annual national conference in Cincinnati at the end of March and Barb & Dan plan to attend. Dan feels that with the uncertainty of the Spectrum change over, that working with the Alliance could be valuable and educational.

Barb reported that the Genealogical Society has produced several programs, as has Kabir Bhatia with his KB Time program. Kabir would like to do a monthly program and the station would like to promote it as a regular production.

Dr. Williams asked if the station would be recording the interview that Kabir will conduct with Step 2 and Little Tikes founder Tom Murdough at the Library. Dan said that the program would be recorded, if Mr. Murdough agrees to being recorded, which has not yet happened.

Ultimate Game challenge has recorded new programs and staff member Meg Andrus is producing her own program called “Scenes and Things” about random scenes around Hudson. The Clocktower Band has recorded a concert and the Laurel Lake Christmas Choral also recorded their holiday event for presentation on HCTV. NZAM productions has contributed several new programs and a new version of Inn Chat was produced with Miss Ren at the Jerimiah King house. The guest interview in that program was long time veterinarian Keith Colwell.

## **VII. Community Organization Liaison**

Nick said that he had created a new e-mail blast to go out to organizations in town to invite them to use the station to promote their organizations. Nick said that an e-mail blast had been sent out last year, with very little in the way of response, but it would not hurt to try again this year.

## **VIII. Friends of Hudson Community Television**

Nick said that the Friends of HCTV need to have another organizational meeting to get things moving with the group. Nick suggested meeting at the Library again, as they had in the past. Barb said that there is still interest in a Friends of group and that a further organizational meeting should move forward.

## **IX. Student Discussion Program meeting update – Thor Wasbotten**

Thor reported that he had a good meeting with the School Administration before the end of last year, but not much had happened since about moving ahead on the idea of a discussion program with the Hudson High students. Barb said that she had contacted Kelly Kempf, Director of Pupil Services for the schools about the program and that Ms. Kempf was going to try to get things moving on getting a discussion program set up. Thor said that he thought asking Kabir Bhatia to help with a discussion program would be a good move.

Barb said that they have been considering wiring a conference room in the school that could be used for a discussion program. Thor said that he would invite the School Administrators to his upcoming discussion program at KSU in hopes that their attendance will spur their interest in holding a similar program at Hudson High.

## **X. Previous Meeting Follow Up & Once Around**

Michael said that his experience in volunteering as a camera operator at several of the music concerts and a basketball game was a good experience for him. He said that he was not aware of the entire behind the scenes work that goes into one of the live to tape productions and recommended to all the committee members to try helping sometime. Michael said that he would like to see more HHS student involvement in the concert and sports productions.

John Funyak said that he had a lot to catch up on since he had missed the last meeting. He also asked if there was a signup sheet for volunteering as a crewmember for program shoots. Dan said that he has been using Signup Genius for scheduling of program staffs. Nick will share that link to the members for those that would like to volunteer.

John suggested that a culinary show focused on either the Family & Consumer Science class at the High School or some of the fine restaurants of Hudson may be a good idea for a future program. John also mentioned a real estate update program. The committee members were concerned about the legality of such a program. We need to get an opinion from the City Solicitor about what is allowed in the area of underwritten public access programs.

Ginny asked about a presence at the upcoming PTO Pancake Breakfast. Dan said that they would like the station to be involved with the event. Ginny thought that it would be a great opportunity to promote the new Facebook access capability.

## **X. Previous Meeting Follow Up & Once Around, continued**

Ginny asked if the committee would be more effective if the meetings were scheduled monthly, instead of bi-monthly. Dan said that he would like to have the meeting monthly to get more involvement with the committee. Thor said that he felt that a monthly meeting would be a good idea and moved that the change be made. Ginny seconded the motion. The committee accepted the change in schedule unanimously. Nick will provide a new meeting schedule to the members with monthly meeting dates noted, starting in February.

Nick reported that the Louis Bromfield / Malabar Farm / Tom Vince program that has been in the works for months still needs to be completed. Tom Vince also provided a movie that was produced by Western Reserve Academy about 10 years ago called "A Trumpet at the Walls of Jericho: The Untold Story of Samuel Harrison" that tells the life of the first African American student at the Western Reserve College. The movie currently stands at 2 hours in length. We will try to edit it down to 1:30 for airing on HCTV for February, which is Black History Month.

Nick said that they had recorded the Mrs. Sherlock Holmes book talk at the Hudson Library in the past week. The next Through the Eyes of the Artist presentation pertaining to photographer Steve McCurry will be recorded at the Library in the next few weeks.

Nick suggested contacting the new Economic Development Director and the new Director of the Hudson Chamber of Commerce concerning the Business Link program that had been discussed a few years ago. With the recent change in management in both areas, there may now be more interest in working with the station on a business-focused production. Dan said that he had met the new Chamber of Commerce personnel at the State of the City program that was recorded earlier in the week.

Nick mentioned that he had not heard any news about the Hudson Community Expo that is usually held every odd numbered year and presented by the Chamber of Commerce. The event is usually held in the spring, but nothing has been posted about the event. If the event does take place, the committee may be interested in being involved in recording at the event and possibly having a booth.

Finally, the committee minutes posting on the City web site needs to be updated, as there are some minutes that are not available on the site. Barb will work with Nick to get all of the committee meetings posted.

## **XI. Next Meeting Date**

The next scheduled HCTV Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 16, 2017 at 6:30 PM in the HCTV studio at Hudson High School.

## **XII. Adjournment**

With no further business indicated, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.