



Hudson Cable Television Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: January 19, 2012.

Meeting Location: HCTV Studios, Hudson High School.

In attendance: Pat Simons, Reed Stith, A.J. Stokes, Brian Suntken and Nick Zaklanovich.
Ex Officio: Kerry Paluscsak, Mr. Alex Kelemen – Council Liaison

Not in attendance: Abby Boysel, Susan Terkel. Ex Officio: Barbara VanBlarcum.

Meeting called to order by Chair Nick Zaklanovich at 6:30 P.M. Notes taken by Nick Zaklanovich.

I. Greeting of members and guests

Nick Zaklanovich greeted all of the members in attendance. We also greeted Mr. Alex Kelemen, who replaces Dr. Dan Williams as our Council liaison. No guests were present.

II. Approval of Minutes

The committee approved as written the minutes from the regular meeting of November 17, 2011.

III. Station Manager's Report: Kerry Paluscsak

Kerry Paluscsak reported that he was pleased with the very successful and positive budget season that was just completed. Council has approved an adjustment to the HCTV carry over fund balance that has been building up over many years, which will allow the station to move forward with the purchase of four new studio cameras to replace the existing studio cameras. Our camera supplier has provided the station with a price quote below the state contract price, so bids will not have to be solicited.

An important component of the deal that makes the four camera purchase possible is that one of the four new cameras was the demonstration camera that we saw at the Sony show that we attended on November 15, 2011. Because it had four hours of use on it during the show, that demonstration camera was reduced in price to the point that all four cameras could be purchased for the budget amount.

Kerry added that the idea of using the City's American Express card to buy the cameras was a good one, but the additional charge that would have been incurred by using the card for the purchase would have put the total purchase cost over the budget amount.

III. Station Manager's Report: Kerry Paluscsak, continued

The final purchase amount for the cameras includes a \$70K allocation from the General Fund. Kerry estimated that the time to repay the allocation would be about the same time interval that a lease agreement would have taken. No specific pay back interval has been set by Council, but Kerry aims to repay the allocation as quickly as possible, using good financial management of the franchise fees.

Pat Simons asked what level the fund balance will be at after the reduction for camera purchases. Kerry responded that the balance should be between 20 – 30%, down from the 70% level that had built up. Mr. Kelemen asked when the new cameras will be operational. Kerry replied that some wiring changes must be made to accommodate the new equipment and the wiring should take most of the summer to complete. Kerry said that the fall sports and concert seasons will probably be when we will see the first use of the new cameras.

Kerry reported that the former "Green Room" across the hall from the studio has been vacated by the station for other school uses, but the schools are providing another room down the hall that HCTV can use for storage and perhaps as a conference room.

Kerry said that live streaming of the Hudson School Board meetings started in January and the station now has the capability, as of the meeting date, to stream the Public Access channel via the Internet. The School Board meetings will eventually be moved off of the City website and exclusively onto the School's web site. Nick asked if the School Board meetings will still be available on Channel #16 and Kerry said that they would still be on the channel, just not on the City web site.

Kerry said that technically things are going well with the station. The new control room is complete and no major problems were encountered during the upgrade. Basketball season is well under way and the hope is that the current cameras will live until the end of basketball coverage on February 17. The wiring for the current cameras will remain in tact and the cameras will still be usable, even after the new studio camera equipment is in use. The new cameras will require the installation of Triaxial (Triax) cabling, with the first Triax installation planned to be installed between the Control Room and the new Memorial Stadium that hopefully will be built this spring and summer just south of the High School. The wiring inside the studio and the wiring that serves the High School Auditorium, Media Center and the Gymnasium must all be upgraded to Triax cable.

Kerry mentioned the recent Holiday Music Concerts that were recorded by HCTV included in-studio music introductions and commentary by Brian Suntken. While the programs were good, they also were a learning experience by which improvements can be made for next year. One suggestion for improvement is to have more control over the flow of the concerts, rather than allowing the concert to dictate the flow of the production. Brian's comments during the concerts added enlightened, educational facts that made the presentations much more interesting and added tremendously to the beautiful music of the students.

IV. Public Access Coordinator's Report – Barbara VanBlarcum (submitted after the meeting)

After the busy election season ended, the holidays were also a busy time for HCTV with the production of several basketball games and the recording of the holiday concerts of Hudson High School, East Woods Singers and the 2011 HCF Career Panel / Intern for a Day event.

IV. Public Access Coordinator's Report – Barbara VanBlarcum, continued

Brian Suntken created the Hudson Community Chorus program, the Holiday Music Extravaganzas, Parts 1 and 2, an OSU Jazz program and an English Pilgrimage program. Abby Boysel recorded The Clash of the Titans Wrestling program. Nick Zaklanovich recorded a show featuring Ian Adams's photography. The Western Reserve Academy provided the recording of the Robert Tercek's (class of 1980) talk at the WRA Chapel. The Laurel Lake Retirement Community provided their Holiday concert, "Sounds of the Season".

Our Public Access regulars (Weirdness Really Bad Movie, Hudson Rotary Club, Gloria Dei Lutheran, Polka Time, City Club of Cleveland, First Congregational Church, Holy Trinity Anglican Church and The Half Hour Show) all provided their shows in a timely manner.

Hudson High School Business student Adam Rosenberg created a show about the "A Day in Business" event at the High School. He used the HHS equipment and brought a DVD to us in January 2012.

V. CAP ACT Update – Kerry Paluscsak

Kerry distributed an upsetting e-mail message about changes in state-wide Cable TV franchising fees and the impact the changes can have on PEG stations. The message reported that some facilities across the nation had closed down due to reduced funding from their franchising fees. In Ohio, the impact was definitely felt in Dayton, where cuts in funding lead to significant curtailment of the city's PEG operations. The situation in Dayton should inspire us to renew our efforts to contact Congress and our State Representatives about supporting for the federal CAP Act. While HCTV is currently grandfathered, and should be protected from franchise payment reductions, there is always the possibility that the cable provider could start charging for the fiber optic connection between the HCTV and the cable head end. If that ever happens, the charges could be significant.

Kerry said that there is not much chance of the Federal CAP Act moving forward any time soon, primarily because of 2012 being an election year. The two main organizations that have been involved in getting the CAP Act moving, the Alliance for Community Media and the American Community Television organization are both reporting positive support by numerous congress members, but the legislation is still being held in committee and there is no further action scheduled by the full Congress.

VI. Previous Meeting Follow-Up

Nick asked if there had been any further clarification on what the committee is allowed to do in regards to fund raising for the station. Kerry replied that the City Solicitor has said that applications for grants and going out and looking for grants would be allowed as part of the current council charge.

Pat asked about the idea of the creation of a non-profit charity organization linked to the station. Nick said that it was his understanding was that no member of the committee could be involved with a non-profit support organization that would benefit the station and its operation. Mr. Kelemen said that the Safe Routes Hudson group that he is involved with is also planning to solicit grants. He said that the Hudson Community Foundation was working with the Safe Routes group on grants, and that the Foundation may be a good grant interface opportunity for the HCTV committee's grant efforts. Mr. Kelemen said that the Community Foundation acts as a sort of incubator for small non-profits, who can later form their own independent organization, once they are established and have grown large enough to stand on their own.

VI. Previous Meeting Follow-Up, continued

Mr. Kelemen asked what our committee would want to solicit grants for. Nick replied that a series of programs related to how city government works was one idea for a grant application. Kerry added that developing Oral Histories was another potential grant fund application. Mr. Kelemen said that the Hudson Library recently received a grant for Oral Histories that allowed them to obtain cameras and equipment they can use to record library events and make them available for viewing via the library web site.

Mr. Kelemen asked about the DVD sales of HCTV programming. Kerry answered that the sports programming and the music programming are the most popular DVD sales programs, along with the high school graduations. The income from the DVD sales is a small, but important revenue stream that is then reinvested in the station.

Kerry added that Frank Youngwerth, host of the Good Day in Hudson program, has generated most of the donations that are currently available to the station, but the creation of a citizen group that would focus on fund raising would take the fund raising effort to a higher level. Kerry would like to see an effort put forth to raise funds for an intensive Oral History project, perhaps finding funds to bring on a person that would only do Oral Histories.

We were happy to learn from Kerry that HCTV does have some video history of former mayor John Krum and his wife Marcy, both of whom have recently passed away. The station is in the process of creating a historical program related to The Krums.

Mr. Kelemen asked about the hourly costs for producing a program. Kerry said that it would depend on what type of program was being produced. For instance, the recent holiday concerts that Brian produced probably involved 3-4 hours of staff time, and perhaps 8-10 hours of research time that Brian devoted to gathering information that he used in the concert programs.

Mr. Kelemen mentioned that the Safe Routes Hudson organization would like to produce a program regarding safe interaction between vehicles, bikes and pedestrians. Brian added that he had no idea how long it took to do a program when he first started producing, but he quickly learned that the amount of time required to produce a quality program is enormous. Kerry said that if Safe Routes Hudson would want to make a video program, HCTV would be available to work with the organization on the production. Using funds that would be devoted to the project, an intern from one of the local colleges could be brought in to work on the production, and the intern would be dedicated to exclusively work on the Safe Routes project.

Mr. Kelemen asked Kerry to generate some ballpark figures for the costs involved with producing a program, and then he would take that information to the Safe Routes group for possible grant or funding requests. Mr. Kelemen asked if there was a minimum requirement of a half-hour program length. Kerry said that any program length would be acceptable, since the station is not tied to any fixed time schedule. Kerry added that HCTV has been producing educational programming to meet the city's requirements for the EPA in regards to waste water and water treatment, but the future plans in that area are for short bursts of information productions, used like PSA announcements, rather than devoting a full half-hour to the subject.

VI. Previous Meeting Follow-Up, continued

Nick said that the previously discussed plans for a mutual project in video production and video editing with HCER are still proceeding, but the upcoming session of HCER classes is already fully committed. There is a class in the current HCER session for first and second grade students that will allow them to create their own five-minute news program and record their program in the HCTV studio.

Nick also mentioned that progress can be reported on reviving the Business Link program that will focus on businesses in the community. The meeting that was held on December 8, 2011 was productive, and both Chuck Wiedie of the Hudson Economic Development Office and Carolyn Konfel of the Hudson Chamber of Commerce were in favor of bringing the program back to life. The new program would be a free service available to Hudson businesses, and the Chamber of Commerce would do the preliminary work that would lead to the actual program recording. Kerry said that HCTV's production time would be minimal for the Business Link program.

Nick inquired about the Small Business seminars that the Hudson Library & Historical Society is putting on at the current time. Mr. Kelemen replied that he was under the impression that the seminars contained proprietary material and it would probably be difficult for HCTV to record those sessions. He also suggested that we approach the Library Board about building a relationship between us. The Library Board meetings are held on the third Monday of each month. Nick added that when he recorded the Ian Adams presentation at the Library in August that they had just purchased a new Panasonic camera for their in-house use. He also noted that the audio that was recorded for the Library sound system was of excellent quality.

Pat asked about the possibility of presenting Library archive material on HCTV. Kerry responded that anything that is on HCTV must have the cablecast clearances in place before it can be put on the station. Pat also asked about the committee approaching the Library Board to try to build a relationship with the station. Kerry said that he thought that the committee could make an effort to build a relationship that would be a good thing for both organizations.

Mr. Kelemen asked about the music that is part of the Public Access church services that are on the station. Kerry said that as Public Access programs, the producers are responsible for having the proper rights to have the program content cablecast.

Reed asked about on-demand cable casting of Public Access programs. Kerry said that it would be possible to do on-demand cable casting, but the file space requirements and the cost to maintain the server space needed to store all programs could quickly become prohibitive.

Mr. Kelemen suggested waiting until March to contact the Library Board about building a relationship, because new board members will in place at that time. Pat and Nick volunteered to team up to make the effort to get in touch with the Library Board.

Nick asked a question about political discussion programs in a non-election time frame. Kerry said that 90 days prior to the election, HCTV must provide an equal access opportunity to each candidate. Beyond that time period, the discussions on programs still must be in general about the operations of government and not specific positions on issues. Mr. Kelemen asked about the candidate's usage of HCTV prior to the elections. Kerry answered that all of the local candidates running for office were invited to use the facilities of HCTV, on a fair and even basis, to state their platforms. The programs that were shown prior to the elections are all Public Access programs, produced by the candidates, and were not produced by HCTV.

VI. Previous Meeting Follow-Up, continued

Mr. Kelemen said that he has been wondering why there was not a talk show-type program about happenings in Hudson. His suggestion was something along the line of the NewsNight program that airs on the local PBS station that has media people comment on the events in the area. Mr. Kelemen thought that something along that same line could be an interesting program for HCTV. Kerry added that he has talked to Bill Hammerstrom of the Hudson Hub-Times on several occasions about working with HCTV about developing a program that would include his newspaper and his reporters. Kerry said that there appeared to be some interest from the Hub-Times, but the interest never did turn into a solid action. Kerry added that maybe someone from the Akron Beacon Journal or someone from the Political Science department of Kent State University could be brought together for a show with Mr. Hammerstrom to discuss issues and give opinions about happenings in the city.

Brian said that the ideas brought forward are all good ideas, but we need to find producers that will bring the programs beyond concept and to do the leg work arranging for the ideas to become programs. He said that the shortage of available producers is the confining point that makes it very difficult to bring good ideas forward into actual programs for the station.

Mr. Kelemen asked about ways that we can grow the number of producers available. Pat contributed the idea of soliciting the organizations in town to develop producers that can generate programming. She also said that the idea of an on-going, regularly scheduled current events commentary program would be a very intense commitment. Brian suggested that in the upcoming surveys that the committee will be developing, that we should include questions and information aimed at recruiting new producers. Reed added that he felt that educating the public and getting more exposure for the station's capabilities is a good road to recruiting more program producers. Kerry said that the discussions have come full circle and the upcoming surveys need to identify the holes that need to be addressed and then we can address those holes. This was an ideal transition into the next subject on the meeting agenda.

VII. Mission Statement/Strategic Plan Subcommittee Update – Pat Simons & Reed Stith

Reed started the discussion on planning by explaining the subcommittee's recent efforts, including the subcommittee meeting that was held on January 2, 2012. The subcommittee developed a plan to go out and talk to the community, with representatives from the three sectors that the station serves, Public, Education and Government (PEG). The face-to-face, or telephone interviews with the key community people will allow them to be better educated about the HCTV operation, and allow the committee to learn first hand about their needs and ideas. Following the completion of the one-on-one interviews, the committee should then proceed with a full community survey. Reed reviewed some of the candidates that were selected for interviews. After the surveys are complete, we are hoping that the interviewees will supply us with names of other people in their organization that we can interview.

Pat said that she has been working with surveys that the School Board has been conducting. One thing that she learned from working with those surveys was that the telephone interviews seem to be more successful than the interviews that are conducted via e-mail. The School Board uses two services to conduct their interviews, and Pat thought that maybe HCTV could share in the use of those services. Pat also said that the School System surveys may be a good pattern to use when generating questions for our own surveys. Pat is hopeful that the initial HCTV survey garners an almost 100% return rate, and considering who we are planning on surveying, that number should be obtainable.

VII. Mission Statement/Strategic Plan Subcommittee Update – Pat Simons & Reed Stith, continued

Kerry mentioned that HCTV is planning to have an Open House of the studio on March 3, 2012 during the PTO Pancake Breakfast event. He thought that the Open House would be a good opportunity to conduct surveys with the citizens that attend the breakfast and Open House.

Reed asked the committee members to team up in groups of two and conduct the key community leader interviews in the next two months, with an update on progress at the March, 2012 committee meeting.

Kerry said that a survey link, to Survey Monkey or some other survey web site, appearing on the City of Hudson's newly updated web site would be the ideal way to perform a city-wide HCTV viewer survey. The surveys that have been completed in the past would definitely be different now, and after fifteen years of operations, concerns and items of importance back then, may not be relevant to today.

Pat asked if there is any information on the surveys that were conducted in the past. Kerry responded that the last survey was done six year's ago, during one of the PTO Pancake Breakfasts. He also said that that survey showed that the sports programming, city history and any type of "how-to" programming were rated as most popular.

Mr. Kelemen advised that when creating a survey, we need to be careful to ask simple yes/no questions that need no interpretation to answer. He said that Safe Routes Hudson did a survey that allowed for too broad of answers, and that only lead to a list of goals and not answers to specific questions. He said to keep the questions simple and brief - to gain as much information from the survey taker, without requiring too much time to complete the survey.

Mr. Kelemen asked if the station has ever tried a call-in event during a program, where a small token could be given away to a certain number caller. Kerry said that HCTV did try a call-in event during one of the sports programs, and the call-in lines filled almost immediately. Mr. Kelemen also suggested creating a Facebook site for HCTV, by which viewers could keep in contact with the station on a continuous basis. Pat said that she liked the idea of being able to stay in touch constantly with our viewers, rather than waiting for a once a year survey. Mr. Kelemen suggested that a slide could be posted at the end of each program that would invite viewers to comment on the program via Facebook. He also suggested that a local merchant could be involved with the Facebook effort, offering some type of small token for some random number responses to the Facebook request. Kerry added that any type of Facebook effort would have to go through Jody Roberts, the City Communications Director.

Pat asked about linking with the Hudson Schools in a Facebook effort. Mr. Kelemen reiterated his idea of adding a comment request to the end of every HCTV program. Kerry thought that we could ask for responses to be addressed to the generic e-mail address (hctv@hudson.oh.us) and those responses could be funneled to the appropriate people as needed.

Pat added that she felt that when we do a survey that is important that we share the results of the survey with the public, either via the newspaper or the city web site. Kerry said that he has not had time to do a lot of experimenting with the capabilities of the new city web site, but he is quite sure that there are many capabilities available that he has yet to discover.

Pat asked about the current make up of the committee, with the impending loss of Susan Terkel as a member. Susan leaving would bring the committee down to six active members. Kerry said that it would make sense for the committee members to encourage anyone that the current members think would be a good candidate to pursue applying for committee membership.

VII. Mission Statement/Strategic Plan Subcommittee Update – Pat Simons & Reed Stith, continued

All of the committee members present agreed to conduct the interviews with the selected community officials, as assigned to them by the planning subcommittee. The subcommittee will meet soon to finalize the interview plan, select the interview candidates and assign those interview candidates to the two person teams of committee members that will carry out the interviews. Reed suggested that the assigned interviews be completed by the next meeting on March 15, 2012. Mr. Kelemen asked what would be asked in the interviews. Reed responded that the questions will relate to how the person interviewed uses HCTV and ask for suggestions on how to improve the service that is provided.

Kerry again mentioned the PTO Pancake Breakfast on March 3rd as a good opportunity for the committee members to conduct a survey of random citizens that attend the event. The station will have an Open House at that time to allow visitors to see the studio and the control room.

VIII. Committee Fund Raising Development – All

Nick said that the grant subcommittee of himself, Pat & Brian should schedule a meeting in the next month to start the ball rolling on grant opportunities, now that we are comfortable that we are allowed by charted to pursue grants for the station.

IX. New Public Access Program Ideas

Nick said that he has no new ideas for Public Access programs, but he will keep watch on events in town as they come up, and record any interesting programs or gatherings as they are available.

X. Once Around.

Mr. Kelemen made the suggestion that surveys for the station could be taken when spring arrives, at baseball games and other sporting events around town. He suggested that any type of sporting event would be good venues for short (five minute) HCTV viewer surveys. He suggested that another possible venue for surveys would be at the Hudson Farmer's Market.

Mr. Kelemen asked if monitors could be put on display during the Open House. Kerry responded that the regular station programming and the goings on in the studio would be shown on the monitors in the Commons area during the Pancake Breakfast, along with graphics inviting the breakfast attendees to visit the station and studio.

XI. Next Meeting Date

The next HCTV Advisory Committee meeting date is scheduled for Thursday, March 15, 2012 at 6:30 PM in the HCTV Studios in Hudson High School.

XII. Adjournment

With no further business indicated, the meeting was adjourned at 8:51 P.M.