

Fairhaven Cable Advisory Committee  
May 16, 2019 – 7:00p.m.

**Present:** Chairperson, Barbara Acksen, Michele Merolla, Ron Medina, MJ Carvalho, Robert Espindola and John Methia

**Absent:** Kenneth Souza  
Cable Access Director, Derek Frates was also present.

Meeting opened at 7:08p.m.

**Minutes:**

April 11, 2019 – Mr. Merolla made a motion to approve and was seconded by Robert Espindola. The motion passed unanimously, with one abstain (John Methia abstained as he was not present).

**Cable Director's Report:**

Mr. Frates reported that they covered Town Meeting and it was a successful production. He thanked his staff, as it was a long day and they did great.

Mr. Frates stated they were purchasing a smart board touch screen that was being installed within the week in the Banquet Room. He said that department heads would be able to use it and he hoped that people will take advantage of using it in meetings and for meetings.

He quickly went over the different tabs on the [www.fairhaventv.com](http://www.fairhaventv.com).

Mr. Frates also visited Milford studio with staff and went to Mr. Methia's studio in Providence. He said they were able to get different ideas on set pieces and design and how these studio's run. It was a nice experience.

Mr. Frates reported they are working with the Director of Tourism, Chris Richard to do a PSA on the Riverside Cemetary Tour, Poverty Point and the Huttleston Marketplace.

They will be advertising the Memorial Day Parade.

They will be talking with Frank Fostin, of the Fairhaven Improvement Association to do PSAs for the summer concert series, along with having a presence at the Fairhaven Homecoming day.

A discussion was had to hold a 'community PSA' night, where different community civic organizations could come in and use the studio to do a PSA for their organization. Perhaps a "drop-in" opportunity. More discussion to follow in the future.

Mr. Methia stated he wasn't able to attend the Town Meeting but was very impressed with watching it on Channel 18. He congratulated Mr. Frates stating it was very clear and understandable. He said it looked great watching it.

**Update – Broadband Study Committee:**

Mr. Espindola reported that the Broadband Study Committee met in April and had a web conference with a consultant in the field who provided them with a scope on what they could do. He said that information now lies with Mr. Rees to see if they can move forward on a contract. Mr. Espindola stated their next meeting is set for May 28<sup>th</sup> with the guest being, Taunton Municipal Light (who also does their own fiber services to the Town).

Mr. Espindola also reported that SRPEDD is going to hold a resource workshop on June 11, 2019 at the Taunton office of SRPEDD from 1-4. Everyone is invited.

**Discussion re: MOU Update & Cable Enterprise Funds:**

Mr. Espindola passed out the Memorandum of Understanding with the School Department for review. He said there were no real revisions since the fall, but for right now it's a starting point and it could change down the road.

He said there was a five-year plan from both the Public/Government side and the School side and they would now begin to work on how to sustain the programs, whether it be through capital budget or other. He said that the board need to know this is the first year that they've had a detailed budget.

Ms. Acksen stated that she believed they needed to have a plan going forward, thinking about what the board wanted representing the Comcast fee payers (the residents who pay into Comcast).

Mr. Methia stated because he wasn't at the last meeting, he had submitted a letter to have read aloud and didn't feel his true intention of the letter was read at the meeting, when he watched it. Mr. Methia read the letter for the record and explained what his intentions were. He asked if he could forward the letter to the School Committee and Dr. Baldwin so that they could address and reply back. Everyone could all be on one footing and move in a positive direction.

Michele Merrolla stated he wanted to move a motion to endorse the letter and forward to the schools.

Mr. Espindola stated that he would rather have the motion to send the letter and await a reply for a direction in communication versus the board say that the School needs to do it one way or the other.

Mr. Methia stated it was his opinion that funding a teacher's position is not the proper use of the funds; but rather have a production manager/director for the position.

Mr. Espindola stated he was under the impression that there were a number of communities using PEG access monies to supporting school teachers. He believes it may be a matter of opinion, if it's not a legal issue.

Ms. Acksen stated the Committee should be representing the concerns and needs of the citizens who pay the franchise fees.

Mr. Espindola stated that the only way to do that is to do a survey or collect data from the citizens who pay Comcast and have an opinion of what kind of information they would like to see on these channels – all 3 channels: public, government and education.

A brief discussion was held on the last meeting and Mr. Espindola stated that he felt the meeting got out of hand and confrontational quickly and it wasn't intended to do that. He would rather the committee and the School department move forward in a positive manner to utilize the resources at hand. He said that they would need to be straight forward in communicating.

Mr. Methia stated he would forward the letter and perhaps ask to be on their agenda for discussion.

Mr. Methia asked a basic question on how New Bedford and Dartmouth were able to film a live Friday night football game.

Mr. Frates, in his experience at working in Dartmouth stated that it took a full crew of people. And currently Fairhaven only has himself as full-time, where New Bedford and Dartmouth has 4-5 'production team' of people who are full-time. Whereas, Fairhaven is just starting he is the only full-time person and in Fiscal year 2020 choose to give up his administrative assistant to hire a full-time production coordinator.

In a sidebar note, Mr. Espindola stated that Mr. Frates should revisit that because there are monies that he should be able to use for cost for an administrative assistant.

Mr. Frates just reiterated that currently Fairhaven doesn't have the man power to really film or tape a football game.

Ron Medina suggested having a 'suggestion box' on the fairhaventv.com website to invite subscribers to voice their opinion on what they want to see on the air.

Mr. Espindola made a motion to send Mr. Methia's letter to the School Superintendent and School Committee and ask them to review and respond and was seconded by MJ Carvalho. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Discussion on Long Term Budget:**

Ms. Acksen stated it was important moving forward to articulate what the Committee felt was important and what the School Department felt was important within a long term budget.

Mr. Espindola asked if they could do a random sample of a football game under the lights on a Friday night so they could collect the data whether or not it is something subscribers want to view.

Mr. Merolla left the meeting at 8:16pm due to a prior commitment.

Mr. Espindola stated that the MOU had a lot of other focuses and asked if everyone was happy with it, so they could move forward on more positive platforms. He recommended at their next meeting that they be more conscience about specifically going through the MOU to create focused tasks.

Ms. Acksen suggested perhaps pilot programming.

Mr. Espindola made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by MJ Carvalho. The motion passed unanimously at 8:30p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Patricia A. Pacella  
Recording Secretary

Documents reviewed:

- 1) MOU between School and Fairhaven Cable
- 2) John Methia's letter – (attached for reference)