

Fairhaven Cable Advisory Committee
August 13, 2019 - 7:00pm

Present: Chairperson, Barbara Acksen, Ron Medina, John Methia, Kenneth Souza, Cable Access Director, Derek Frates

Absent: Robert Espindola, Maria Carvalho, Mike Merrolla

Meeting was called to order at 7:07pm by Chairperson, Barbara Acksen who thanked everyone for attending.

Cable Access Director, Derek Frates presented members of the committee with shirts and hats "Swag" to thank them for their time and dedication to the Cable Advisory Committee.

Review of Minutes:

Chairperson, Barbara Acksen passed out the minutes from the May 16, 2019 meeting for everyone to review. Ms. Acksen made a motion to approve and the motion was seconded by Ron Medina. Motion was passed unanimously.

Cable Director's Report:

Mr. Frates showed the members the new Cable Advisory apparel. Mr. Frates stated his hope is by wearing the shirts and hats it will provide exposure. He said he had a staff meeting recently thanking the staff for everything they've done during the re-branding campaign.

Mr. Frates showed the committee the re-designed Web page pointing out there are 2 parts (Government/Media). He reviewed all the links and advised the committee it is updated weekly. At this time the site will post community videos and all but Government meetings will be added.

Mr. Frates stated he recently did a promo video with the fitness instructor who holds free weekly events at Cushman Park.

Mr. Frates provided the committee a run -down of the recent community events that have been recorded and posted online all part of the new re-branding and marketing plan:

- Fairhaven Pride Ceremony
- Poverty Point walking tour
- Fairhaven Homecoming Fair
- Fourth of July festivities
- PSA for Boat Safety
- Adopt a pet, Mr. Frates said the ACO loves that this is online and shares it. This showcases the animals monthly and helps get the animals adopted stating this has been very successful.
- All concerts and Family Table are also posted on Mass Access

Mr. Frates discussed the positive response to our social media sites. We are doing weekly contests on both Facebook and Instagram. Right now we are doing a "Summer Photo Contest" using the hash tag #FairhavenTV. The plan is to post the winners and also invite them to the town Halloween event and publicly recognize them there. They are still looking at tentative dates for the Halloween event. Mr. Frates said they have found that updating direct videos versus links get more views and shared examples of the analytics of the interaction with Facebook.

Mr. Frates outlined the future plan for the social media sites:

- Conduct in depth interviews with members of the Fairhaven Opioid Task Force that will showcase to people what resources are out there if needed.
- A profile on Tim Cox who recently was awarded Harbormaster of the year.
- A feature on the Bikeways Advocacy meeting about riding from Providence to P-Town
- Livesey Club open house
- Highlight on the new BMX track
- Eating healthy over 50 and Cooking with grandkids presented by the Council on Aging
- National Night out event – currently being edited

Ken Souza asked Mr. Frates who provided the "swag" that was presented to the committee and Mr. Frates responded they used Katman Sports a local screen printer.

Update on Municipal Fiber Committee:

Ms. Acksen asked about the quality issues and Mr. Frates said the fibers have been run through buildings waiting for video to be dropped to add equipment to make access flow better.

Mr. Methina said he was not at the last meeting and suggested waiting for Mr. Espindola to review.

Ms. Acksen said the proposal is for a feasibility study. Mark Rees e-mailed and is willing to go through phase 1 which is a conference call and narrow down a group who would like to do this for us.

Mr. Souza said it would be nice to have at least two groups to see who would be better to go with.

Mr. Methina told the committee he is the "5G" man and that technology is moving at lightning pace and we need to build out to fiber in this community.

Update on RFP for additional Cable server:

Ms. Acksen provided copies and advised the committee that RFP letters for additional Cable servers have been sent out to RCN, Verizon, and Cox. Ms. Acksen explained the letters talked about the town looking for completion with Comcast. She went on to say that people are questioning rates and more options.

Mr. Souza said currently Marion, Mattapoisett, and Rochester have Verizon. Mr. Methia advised the committee that Verizon isn't currently building out at this time but it is worth asking them.

Ms. Acksen said this might help with capital improvements which is relevant to the FCC letter.

FCC ruling and impacts:

Ms. Aksen said the ruling would not go into place for a few years and if it did it would impact the budget. Mr. Methia told the committee he has spent many years dealing with the FCC and it is not easy to sway their position. Ms. Aksen said she hopes there will be some more advocacy meeting and if possible we could put a person to represent the town in Boston. Mr. Souza mentioned follow up meetings and Ms. Aksen said they have had some already and doesn't know if they will have any again,

Mr. Frates stated one big issue is they are going to try and charge you for certain channels and Cable Access is paid for by a percentage of fees we currently pay to the Cable companies. If this goes through the FCC will give more of a percentage back to the Cable company.

Ms. Aksen said there will be more to come.

Long Term Planning and Budget Development:

Ms. Aksen said budget issues last time were having similar equipment between the Town and schools to share. Mr. Medina said they have hired a new media person at the Middle school that was within the budget. Mr. Frates advised the committee the sets here are coming together and that will provide an additional location.

Ms. Aksen discussed she would like a place where residents can register complaints regarding quality image, sound, losing internet service. This would allow them to be put together in a way to see what types of people have and get an algorithm that will help to indicate what the issues are and use the data.

Mr. Methia said the Middle school had hired the media teacher and was building a studio where the students were going to produce programming. He said one of the key points that he would like to find out is if we can cover school functions as part of a community. Mr. Frates said this was something the school committee could possibly put on their agenda. Ms. Aksen said there may be legal issues surrounding this. Mr. Methia acknowledged that and said it would be nice to see more content on the channels and this may be a question to pose with the Town council. If we can cover the events would there be a "Release" issue and the next step would be to get an answer to that and would like to cover events such as the High School football games, "Thanksgiving" game, and any other public event that has to do with the schools. These events used to be covered in the past and we need to find out whom to contact regarding what we can legally cover. Ms. Aksen suggested reaching out to the Town attorney regarding what is the process to be able to televise school events.

Mr. Methia made a motion to appropriate funds to contact the attorney regarding this.

Mr. Souza seconded the motion. Motion was passed unanimously.

Ms. Aksen advised the committee that Mr. Frates is trying to do more programming and make post cards or mailings to try and get more non-profit organizations involved. Mr. Frates said he would like to make PSA's for the non -profits and already has Frank Fostin (Fairhaven Improvement Association) to participate and do a group statement to let people know what we do. Mr. Frates said the post cards are part of the re-branding and would be passed out when the upcoming Harvest Festival is covered.

Ms. Acksen stated she would love to see a Town news program and Mr. Frates let the committee know he has talked to Beth David from The Neighborhood News and asked her to send him the "Around Town" happenings to add to the Web site. Ms. Acksen said that would be good to have a recap of happenings and what's coming up around town added.

Other Business not on Agenda:

Ms. Acksen asked the committee if anyone had any other issues they would like to discuss and apologized for not having a meeting for so long due to scheduling. Ideally the meetings are to be held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month and she would like to return to that schedule and stick to it unless unable to get everyone here.

Mr. Frates motioned to set the next meeting for Tuesday September 17, 2019 at 7:00p.m. and motion was agreed to unanimously.

Mr. Medina made motion to adjourn and was seconded by Mr. Methia. Motion passed unanimously and meeting ended at 7:58p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Mary Lou Baumgartner
Recording Secretary