



TOWN OF HUDSON

Cable Utility Committee



Michael O'Keefe, Chairman

Roger Coutu, Selectmen Liaison

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Minutes of the Hudson Cable Utility Committee (“CUC”) Meeting Thursday, May 25, 2011

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman O'Keefe called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

2. ATTENDANCE:

Present: Michael O'Keefe, Leo Bernard, Selectman Roger Coutu, Rupert Cote, Kristofor Georgeou, Stewart Kroner, Michael Blau and Harry Schibanoff. School Board Representative Lee Lavoie was excused. Jim McIntosh the Cable Facilitator (“CF”) also attended.

3. PUBLIC INPUT:

None.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

The minutes of the March 24, 2011 meeting were reviewed by the CUC. There were no changes or corrections. Motion was made by Mr. Coutu to accept the minutes and seconded by Mr. Kroner. The minutes were adopted with seven votes in favor. Mr. Cote abstained due to his absence from that meeting.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

None.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Franchise Fee Receipt Report

Mr. O'Keefe distributed the Comcast quarterly report of franchise fee revenues. The report showed that total revenues to the Town were \$53,738.40 for the first calendar year quarter. This amount is above the anticipated income shown in the budget for the quarter.

B. Access Center Air Conditioning Proposal

Air Conditioning for the studio portion of the Access Center (“AC”) was included in the FY 2011 CUC budget. The AC is busier now and without air conditioning in the studios, the environment would be very uncomfortable and would not be conducive to public use. Permission was received from the landlord to install the units. Bids were received from two companies to provide the units and to do the electrical work. The bid from Harry W. Wells & Son, Inc. was \$6,480.00 for two

air conditioning units. The electrical bid was \$1,150.00 from Brian Mason Electric. Both companies have done work for the CUC in the past. Mr. O’Keefe said that these units could be moved in the future, if a new AC is approved. Following a brief discussion, Mr. Cote moved that:

MOTION: Mr. O’Keefe is authorized to spend an amount not to exceed \$8,000 to purchase and install two air conditioning units for the AC.

Mr. Bernard seconded the motion. The motion passed with seven in favor. Mr. Blau abstained.

C. Cable Facilitator Contract Renewal

Mr. O’Keefe said that the current contract for the CF will expire on June 30, 2011 and will need to be renewed by the Board of Selectmen (“BOS”). The entire committee believed that the contract should be renewed and that recognition should be made of Mr. McIntosh’s excellent performance and it should be noted that the CF has contributed numerous unbilled hours to the Town. Mr. McIntosh commented to the CUC that he spends many hours performing mundane function in the AC such checking equipment in and out, filing forms and other office functions that take away from his time to develop access TV in Hudson. Mr. O’Keefe provided a handout that showed that Hudson and Litchfield are the only communities in the geographic area around Hudson that have part time CFs. Discussion was held concerning the use of the ABLE program to train people to work in the AC. However, the restrictions of this program do not make it feasible to implement this program in Hudson. Mr. Cote that made the following motion:

MOTION: Mr. O’Keefe proposes to the BOS that the contract for the CF be extended to 130 hours per month.

Mr. Kroner seconded the motion. There is sufficient funds in the CUC budget to cover this expense in FY 2012. The motion passed with six in favor. Mr. Coutu and Mr. Bernard abstained.

Mr. Coutu raised a point of order on the issue of whether it was appropriate to discuss this contract in a public meeting or should it be done in a non-public meeting. Mr. O’Keefe said that since this was a contract, it was his opinion that it could be discussed in public. Mr. Coutu was not sure this was accurate and said he would seek a legal opinion on the matter.

At this point, Mr. McIntosh left the meeting.

Mr. Coutu suggested that a part time person be hired to free up Mr. McIntosh and use his time to develop access TV in Hudson. Following a discussion of using a part time person, Mr. Kroner made the following motion:

MOTION: That the CUC should hire a part time individual at the current camera operator's rate of \$11.00 for 20 hours per week for 52 weeks to perform routine functions in the AC and be known as the Production Assistant.

Mr. Blau seconded the motion. The motion passed with six votes in favor and with abstentions by Mr. Coutu and Mr. Bernard.

Mr. McIntosh returned to the meeting and there was a discussion of how to present this proposal to the BOS. Mr. McIntosh said that he has been documenting his total hours worked, but is only billing for the contracted time of 100 hours. This data could be used to justify 130 hours per month.

D. Wireless Microphone System Replacement

Mr. O'Keefe said that changes by the FCC in selling certain bandwidths has made the use of our wireless system illegal and it will need to be replaced. The microphones are used for large meetings such as the deliberative sessions. He also suggested that we add an additional microphone for 9 units of which only 8 can be used at the same time. He presented a cost estimate of replacing the current microphones and their related equipment for \$4,266.84. The estimate was obtained from B&H Photo-Video from the Internet. He will also research other estimates online. Mr. Cote then made the following:

MOTION: That Mr. O'Keefe be authorized to spend an amount not to exceed \$4,300.00 for the purchase of nine microphones and their related equipment.

Mr. Bernard seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

7. Other Business and Remarks by Committee Members

Mr. Coutu stated that he has received many complaints about the quality of the School Board meeting on Channel 21. He said that it is reflecting poorly on the HCTV. The CUC and CF discussed the situation and expressed its regret that it did not have input into the system and its design. There are major problems with the audio systems and the use of one camera.

Mr. Cote suggested that people have complaints they should be invited to the AC to see the progress that HCTV is making.

Mr. McIntosh talked about his attendance at the Eastern Regional Media Conference in Connecticut. He has completed a comprehensive report of the meetings and ideas and comments that he received. He obtained brochures and materials from many vendors. From this material and his discussions at the meeting, he may explore the possible purchase of new equipment for HCTV.

Mr. O'Keefe said that the Hudson Republican Committee will be doing a show at the AC in the near future and hope to have it as a regular production.

He also said that he and Mr. McIntosh are trying to work with Hudson schools and they are slowly making progress.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Cote moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Bernard. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:24 P.M.

Submitted by Harry A. Schibanoff, Recorder/Clerk
May 27, 2011