

**URBANA PUBLIC TELEVISION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

DATE: December 10, 2010
12:00 p.m.

PLACE: Urbana City Council Chambers
400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Barbara Gladney Durl Kruse Peter Folk
Carol Inskip Chris Fuller Marie Polk

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dana Mancuso

STAFF PRESENT: Jason Liggett, Jake Schumacher

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Peter Folk called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Chair Folk called the roll, and there was a quorum. Dana Mancuso had notified staff she would not be able to attend. There are two vacant seats, and Chair Folk made a pitch to the viewing audience to apply for the vacant positions.

III. MODIFICATIONS TO AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the September 10, 2010 meeting were approved unanimously without discussion. Chair Folk noted the change of laws regarding approval of minutes.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr.Schumacher noted a viewer complaint concerning the regularly-scheduled local program *On Da Move*, and correspondence from two viewers concerning the program schedules that appear on the website and on the cable tv guide. Mr. Schumacher outlined steps that staff had taken to investigate and resolve the problems with the timeliness of the program schedules in question. Chair Folk asked further about the resolution of the content complaint, and Mr. Liggett outlined the past protocols regarding content complaints. The show in question violated no laws and no UPTV policies or procedures, airing with an adult content disclaimer and in the safe harbor period.

VI. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Schumacher noted that local production took up the bulk of staff time, and mentioned some

of the local programs new to the air since the previous Commission meeting: a weekly calendar of events co-produced by the Independent Media Center and UPTV; a weekly film review program hosted by Chike Coleman; a new church service broadcast on Sunday mornings from Harvest Church; a new series of poetry and spoken art performances called "Speak Cafe" produced by Aaron Ammons; new concert recordings of the Piper's Hut Concert Series, recorded by a UPTV volunteer in HD at the IMC, with whom UPTV is working to strengthen our partnership; new public affairs programs from member-producer Mary Lee Henderson; a four-minute PSA for the Refugee Center, and longer-format PSAs from the Peace Corps. New shows in the works include Donna Jones's new talk show, a new reality show, and new high-school basketball games. Mr. Schumacher noted that the annual membership meeting will be held in mid-December, and he hopes the meeting will help build esprit and allow producers to meet each other. A new series produced in conjunction with the UBA will premiere sometime in the near future, focusing on Urbana businesses. Our Saturday intern Bryan Burt will be leaving and the position has been approved for re-hire. Discussions with Parkland College concerning student interns have also occurred. Mr. Liggett has been working on equipment maintenance and repair, and new equipment will include an audio limiter. Mr. Schumacher presented some of the promotional material for UPTV programs that has appeared on the City website, on the Smile Politely website, and been sent to the other media outlets in Champaign/Urbana, as well as new promotional spots for local productions, with one goal being to unify the station's personality and presence. Holiday greeting spots from producers and city staff are in the works. Staff has been working on varying the look of various programs by creative use of the studio facilities and incorporating as much remote recording as practical. Use of the bulletin board slides has decreased intentionally with the addition of more actual programs during those previously-unfilled times. Attempts have been made to regularize times for meeting broadcasts, and improve prime-time viewing. Free Speech TV will end their financial support for the Dish Network subscription that enables UPTV to broadcast "Democracy Now!" and UPTV will absorb that cost. The possibility of news and sports and weather headlines being added to the bulletin board was mentioned. New national programming during the past quarter included live election coverage, live coverage of Washington political rallies, a full day of veteran-oriented programs on Veteran's day, the addition of the high-profile public affairs weekly "White House Chronicle", much international programming from Link TV, programs on aging, unemployment, literature, and a Saturday midnight sci-fi creature feature. Commissioner Fuller asked about spring high school sports, and Mr. Liggett talked about some possibilities and asked for further suggestions. Mr. Schumacher suggested viewers who might be interested in a sports announcing career could volunteer as commentators. He also noted that UPTV had opened discussions with WEIU concerning the possibility of airing Panther sports on UPTV. Chair Folk asked about the time commitment that commentating would involve. Commissioner Fuller asked about the possibility of covering the Youth Football League games. Mr. Liggett and Mr. Schumacher indicated their eagerness to pursue local sports programming in general. Commissioner Gladney asked for more details on possible weather broadcasts.

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was no participation from the audience.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Franchise Renewal.

Mr. Schumacher noted that the City of Urbana had officially signed off on a new franchise agreement with Comcast, and that it would be appearing on the city website at some point in the near future. Mr. Schumacher noted that UPTV would be losing the 1,200 free promotional spots each year that Comcast had previously given, but that there was some possibility of informally receiving the use of avails that Comcast had not sold. Commissioner Gladney also mentioned the loss of the mailer inserts as a promotional tool. The proposed fifth channel was included in the Comcast agreement. Mr. Liggett noted that Councilman Bowersox had announced that he would like to see a 501C3 formed to administer a fifth channel, but no action had been taken thus far. Commissioner Kruse asked who it was that was to actually initiate action on the fifth channel, and a number of other questions as to the process involved in beginning and operating a new channel. He suggested that UPTV staff, Urbana city administrators and a Cable Commission representative could meet to begin discussion of these issues. But he also stated that he thought it was most appropriate to wait until Champaign had concluded and finalized its cable franchise agreement, to avoid problems down the road. Commissioner Gladney suggested an agenda item for the next Champaign-Urbana Cable and Telecommunications to initiate conversations between the two cities about the new channel. Mr. Liggett stated he had no answers to any of the questions that had been posed, and Mr. Schumacher concurred.

B. Open Media Project Update

Mr. Liggett briefly recapped UPTV's history with the OMP. A third-party to host the Drupal website has been approved, and Kevin Reynen (formerly with the OMP) is being contracted to administer the site. The site is currently not functional, and re-directs to the city website.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Equipment Purchases

Rack mount equipment, adapters, a flash drive and some cabling were added, and an audio limiter was the major purchase this quarter. Planned future purchases include a fiber-to-video converter for the School Board meeting broadcasts, and a raided hard drive for video storage. There is about \$30,000 in the budget for equipment purchases this fiscal year, with contributions from both Comcast and ATT.

B. Conference and Symposium Report

Mr. Liggett reported on his attendance at the Alliance for Community Media Central States

Regional Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan, September 23-25. He made a number of contacts with vendors, producers, and staff from other PEG stations in the Midwest. Presentations included “user-generated content” and how social media can serve public access television. Mr. Liggett began the UPTV YouTube channel inspired by this presentation. There was also a presentation on fund-raising opportunities. Mr. Liggett also talked about participating on a panel at the eBlack Symposium in town concerning community media and the new broadband program, and the “public media camp” put on by Illinois Public Media. Chair Folk and Mr. Schumacher talked about the blending of legacy media and new media and how that fusion can better serve the entire community.

C. Peg Fee Report

Commissioner Kruse asked what PEG fee money is spent on if not used solely for capital: is it accruing? Being used for fiber projects? Is any of the 5% franchise fee (as opposed to the 2% PEG fee) available for support of UPTV? Comptroller Eldredge had not yet responded concerning this question. Commissioner Kruse noted that this would be very significant in establishing the fifth channel, and that the City needs to share their plans as regards those funds. Chair Folk seconded Commissioner Kruse's reiterated request for this information.

D. Membership Meeting and Open House Dec. 18 12:30pm

Mr. Schumacher briefly outlined the planned meeting and invited both UPTV members and the public to attend.

X. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Gladney has compiled a short history of UPTV. Mr. Schumacher suggested it would be helpful to set an official “birthday” for UPTV.

XI. SET THE NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting date was set for March 11th, 2011 at 12:00 p.m. in the Urbana City Council Chambers. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 1:10 p.m.