

AUSTIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 11, 2005
<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission/>

MINUTES

1. Call to order.

Commission Chair Wendell Ramsey called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. Commissioners in attendance were Wendell Ramsey, Chad Williams, Deborah Hill, Stephen Martin, Jim Howerton, and Chip Rosenthal. Commissioner John Green was absent. Staff in attendance was Rondella Hawkins, Sheena Harden and Jane Reina

2. Adoption of agenda.

Motion to adopt the agenda was made by Commissioner Hill; seconded by Commissioner Williams. Vote 6-0. (Commissioner Green absent)

3. Citizen communications. (3 minutes to speak)

There were no citizens signed up for communication.

4. Approval of minutes from the April 13, 2005 Commission regular meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes from the April 13, 2005 Commission regular meeting was made by Commissioner Williams; seconded by Commissioner Howerton. Vote 6-0. (Commissioner Green absent)

5. Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs Office Report

Rondella Hawkins, Manager of Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs, reported that there has been a pre-proposal conference for the public access management RFP and the deadline is June 10th for the responses.

Ms. Hawkins also stated she attended a community media forum where a community media center was discussed. There will be monthly gathering to discuss this.

June 1st is the deadline of the ACTV interim management contract to manage channel 15. Ms. Hawkins will be talking with ACTV to hold the contract over for another month. Austin Music Partners is scheduled to launch channel 15 on July 1st.

6. Discussion and possible action of the following:

- a. Recent developments relating to telecommunications and cable regulatory issues at the state and federal level.

Ms. Hawkins reported on the status of HB 3179, 789 and SB 408. She also prepared a financial impact study and if HB 3179 passes the City would lose \$1.4 millions dollars annually in compensations. See www.tatoa.org for other legislative updates.

- b. FY 2006 budget recommendations. (workplan item 2)

Motion to accept the FY 2006 budget recommendations as follows:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Grant for Technology Opportunities (GTOPs) was established to provide money to Austin organizations and citizens' groups for projects focusing on digital opportunities and bridging the digital divide.

WHEREAS, the City Council approved \$90,000 for the 2005 GTOPS program; and

WHEREAS, the GTOPS has provided multiple community organizations opportunities to develop and enhance technology based programs around the city; and

WHEREAS, the GTOPS program receives positive attention and participation by a variety of Austin's community service groups that provide technology offerings throughout Austin; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Telecommunications Commission recommends that the City Council approve the funding required to offer the GTOPS program to potential applicants for the year 2006;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE AUSTIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION:

To recommend that the Austin City Council approve \$100,000 towards the Grant for Technology Opportunities (GTOPs) to be applied to approved applicants during the 2006 grant awards period.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Broadband Over Power Lines (BPL) is a promising new technology that may be used to deliver high speed Internet access to facilities on the Austin Energy grid; and

WHEREAS, additional data are required to evaluate its suitability in the City of Austin;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE AUSTIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION:

To recommend that the Austin City Council should commit the financial resources necessary to conduct a BPL pilot project through Communications and Technology Management (CTM).

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, archiving city owned public material is of vital importance to retain the city's history; and

WHEREAS, these materials currently exist in various formats and should be consistent for the archiving process; and

WHEREAS, this process is already underway at the Austin History Center;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE AUSTIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION:

To recommend that the Austin City Council should clearly identify the archiving process for city owned materials on the Austin Music Network, Channel 6 and Austin Access Television and commit appropriate funding to continue this ongoing work.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is committed to using technology to make government information and services more accessible to its citizens and businesses; and

WHEREAS, the Telecommunications Commission is committed to providing policy recommendations regarding emerging and converging technologies in the City of Austin; and

WHEREAS, technology and communications issues are important to the citizens of Austin;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE AUSTIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION:

To recommend that the Austin City Council approve \$4000.00 to reestablish television coverage of the Austin Telecommunications Commission regular meetings on Channel 6.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, emerging technologies such as wireless communications, open source software and digital media are increasingly important forces of social, cultural, and economic improvement for the people of Austin; and

WHEREAS, these technologies often proliferate by grass roots support, advocated by savvy "early adopters", rather than promoted by formal product marketing; and

WHEREAS, segments of our community that could most benefit from these new technologies are often unaware of their value and how they may be employed; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has an interest in increasing knowledge of and access to these technologies;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE AUSTIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION:

To recommend that the Austin City Council issue a request for proposal for the management of an "Emerging Technologies Community Workshop Series".

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that objective of the workshops will be to deliver practical information on emerging and converging technologies to interested community members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a two-year contract should be issued, in an amount of up to \$20,000, for the management of two workshops a year, for a total of four workshops.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the contract awardee will provide additional funds and in-kind contributions in a matching amount.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the contract should be open to bid by non-profit and not-for-profit organizations with an established interest in technology and the Austin community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the contract awardee will include community members, organizations, and local businesses in the planning of the events.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the contract awardee will conduct extensive outreach to ensure information on these new technologies is provided to new segments of our community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the contract awardee will report monthly to the Telecommunications Commission during the first year of the contract and quarterly thereafter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that workshop topics will be subject to review and approval by the Telecommunications Commission.

Was made by Commissioner Ramsey; seconded by Commissioner Williams. Vote 6-0. (Commissioner Green absent)

c. Commission meeting schedule.

Motion to cancel the Austin Telecommunications Commission's July regular meeting was made by Commissioner Ramsey; seconded by Commissioner Martin. Vote 4-0. (Commissioner Green absent. Commissioner Williams off the dais. Commissioner Rosenthal abstained)

7. Update reports on networking relationships with other boards/commissions and groups, citywide and ATC information items.

Sheena Harden, Program Coordinator, reported that the 2005 GTOPs press conference is scheduled for May 10, 2005 at City Hall. She also presented drafts of the 2001-2003 GTOPs annual reports.

The Commission will have a task force to review GTOPs 2006. Commissioners Rosenthal and Martin will sit on this task force and invite 2 from the GTOPs review committee and 2 from the community to also sit on the task force.

8. Council Committee for Telecommunications Infrastructure report. (Ramsey)

Commissioner Ramsey reported to the Committee that the Commission had been given monthly updates on legislation (www.capitol.state.tx.us will take you to the house and senate bills). In May the Commission will finalize their budget recommendations to Council which include increasing GTOPs funding, CTM's broadband over power lines pilot project, funding for the airing of the Commission meetings on Channel 6 and funding for community information events. He also reminded them of the GTOPs press conference. The Committee asked that the Commission provide Channel 6 with URLs that they would like posted on the TV screen during presentations.

9. Future agenda items for the Austin Telecommunications Commission regular meeting scheduled for June 8, 2005.

Speakers/Topics. (Ramsey)

Commissioner Rosenthal is in contact with Sue Soy at the Austin Public Library to give a presentation on archiving.

Commissioner Green is in contact with Baylor professors to give a presentation.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.