



## AUSTIN COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

### REGULAR MEETING

#### MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2008

The Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, May 14, 2008, 301 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Austin, Texas, City Hall, Room 1101.

**1. Chair Chip Rosenthal called the commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.**

Commission Members in Attendance:

Chip Rosenthal, Chair  
John Green, Vice-Chair  
Wendell Ramsey  
Chad Williams  
Jim Howerton  
Arthur Sampson  
Kedron Touvell  
Lemuel Williams, Jr.

**2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA.**

The agenda was adopted on a unanimous vote of the Commission.

**3. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS: GENERAL**

Nick Papatonis – reported that one of Public Access Community Television’s (PACT) employees that works with one of PACT’s children’s program is a webmaster and content provider for 3 internet porn websites and associates with Nazis hate groups. PACT is not helping producers with disabilities.

Gloria Morales – PACT is not very professional. PACT is not helping producers with disabilities.

SueAnn Campbell – PACT is not helping producers with disabilities. Stated she was for PACT becoming the new management for public access but PACT turned on the producers with new and more policies and procedures. Now producers are afraid of being in violation due to these new policies and procedures.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the regular meeting of April 9, 2008 were approved on Commissioner Chad William's motion, Commissioner John Green second on an 8-0-0 vote.

**5. INVITED PRESENTATIONS**

- a. Austin Free-Net update. (Dale Thompson) (wp5)

Dale Thompson, Financial Manager and Acting Executive Director, Austin Free-Net (AFN) presented a PowerPoint on the current activities of AFN.

- b. Results on the University of Texas, Radio-TV-Film class satisfaction survey on Austin Free-Net classes. (Professor Craig Watkins, UT Austin, RTF Department) (wp5)

Professor Craig Watkins, University of Texas, Radio, Television and Film Department gave an overview of his independent class satisfaction survey on Austin Free-Net's computer classes.

Commissioner Rosenthal requested a copy of Professor Watkins; PowerPoint presentation to share with the City Council.

**6. STAFF BRIEFINGS**

- a. Legislative and Regulatory Update (wp7)

Rondella Hawkins, Manager, City of Austin, Office of Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs (TARA) gave the status of Senate Bill 5 Lawsuit by the Texas Cable & Telecommunications Association.

- b. Access TV equipment list to be purchased with Time Warner Cable capital equipment funds provided in their cable franchise. (wp1)

Ms. Hawkins presented the Commission with PACT, Channel 6 and the Communications & Technology Management Office's (CTM) expenditure plan for the remaining estimated \$1,350,000 million in Time Warner equipment funds. TARA will submit a final, comprehensive list with specific model numbers and design specifications to Time Warner so they can, in turn; solicit bids for the extensive access TV equipment package.

SueAnn Campbell – Happy with equipment list PACT provided the City but would like to see more laptops and new phone system for call in shows.

- c. Access facility update. (wp1)

Ms. Hawkins reported that the City is currently evaluating proposals for the roof and exterior waterproofing of the public access facilities and are working toward a new HVAC.

SueAnn Campbell – The producers did not see the equipment list and would like to see new call in phone system and DSR 80 and DSR 40 decks replaced because it eats tapes.

David Kobierowski – Wants to see PACT work with the producers on the equipment list.

- d. Potential impact to the cable access operating funds resulting from customer transfer to state-issued video/cable TV franchise holders. (wp7)

Ms. Hawkins stated currently through Time Warner's franchise we get operating funds for public access TV through the .35 cent per subscriber assessment. We currently have 2 state issued cable franchises, Grande Communications & AT&T. Over the next 3 years we will be monitoring TWC's revenue but we do have some fund balance in the access fund that will cover the annual contract amount should we see any reduction in TWC revenue for PEG. Under their state franchise Grande's .35 cents per subscriber is now restricted to capital. We will get 1%, restricted to capital, when TWC franchise expires in 2011 and all the cable TV providers in Austin have a state franchise.

- e. Report on Time Warner Cable (TWC) franchise fee audit.

Ms. Hawkins presented a PowerPoint that gave a brief overview of the TWC franchise fee audit.

## 7. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Grant for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOPs) report. (Sheena Harden) (wp2)

Sheena Harden, City of Austin, Program Coordinator, presented the Commission with the 2006 GTOPs Annual Report and gave status of current GTOPs contracts.

**Commissioners Lemuel Williams, Commissioner Chip Rosenthal, Commissioner Chad Williams and Commissioner Kedron Touvell to serve as members of the GTOPs Task Force was approved on Commissioner Wendell Ramsey's motion, Commissioner Chad Williams' second on an 8-0-0 vote.**

**Continuing this Commission meeting past 10:00 p.m. was approved on Commissioner Lemuel Williams' motion, Commissioner Wendell Ramsey's second on a 6-2-0 vote. Those voting aye were: Commissioners Chip Rosenthal, John Green, Wendell Ramsey, Chad Williams, Kedron Touvell and Lemuel Williams, Jr. Those voting nay were: Commissioners Jim Howerton and Arthur Sampson.**

- b. Discussion and possible action on Time Warner Cable's move of Channel 44-weather radar to the digital tier.

**Resolution directing the Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission Chair to contact Time Warner Cable expressing concern about the public safety impact of removing weather radar from channel 44 and request reinstatement of weather radar service to the**

**standard cable service tier was approved on Commissioner Jim Howerton motion, Commissioner Chad Williams' second on a 8-0-0 vote.**

Commissioner Rosenthal will work with Steven Broberg and report back to the Commission on Time Warner's response.

Steven Broberg, Director of Communication Resources for Travis County – Stated the moving of the weather radar channel to the digital tier of service is a legitimate law enforcement issue. He stated we could consider the idea of asking for another PEG channel for the weather radar. Law enforcement would like to be included on the request from the Commission to restore the weather radar to the standard tier of service.

SueAnn Campbell – Elderly people use this channel frequently because they use the bus system.

Nick Papatonis – The moving of the weather radar channel to the digital tier of service is putting Central Texas in danger.

- c. City Website Re-design Task Force update. (Rosenthal) (wp5)

Tabled

- d. Community Forum Task Force update. (Touvell) (wp4)

Commissioner Touvell reported that this task force will meet in two weeks to discuss and decide the remaining community forum meeting dates and discuss public relation plans to get this info out to the public.

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Discussion and possible action on expenditure plan for Time Warner Cable equipment funds.

**The Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission adopted endorsement of the expenditure plan for the Time Warner Cable's capital equipment funds proposed by the Office of Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs, and developed in conjunction with public access management, Channel 6 management, and Communications and Technology Management was approved on Commissioner Chad Williams' motion, Commissioner Wendell Ramsey's second on an 8-0-0 vote.**

- b. Discussion and possible action on 2008-09 budget priorities resolutions. (wp8)

Commissioner Rosenthal stated that this commission has already passed a resolution calling for a Technology Ascertainment Survey and should continue carrying this forward to the Emerging Tech Council Committee and City Council. Proposed that GTOPs stays at current level but ask for an intern for TARA in order to manage GTOPs contracts. The Commission will work toward these budget resolutions at their next meeting.

- c. Discussion and possible action on electronic voting machines currently used for county and municipal elections.

Commissioner Touvell stated that Council Member Martinez requested that this Commission investigate the uses of electronic voting machines.

The Commission's consensus was to table this item until Commissioner Rosenthal and Touvell meet with Council Member Martinez to clarify his request.

SueAnn Campbell – This is a very important issue. Feels there are issues with the voting machines. We need paper ballots that can be counted in view of the public.

Karen Renick, Director of Vote Rescue – Has worked with all levels of government regarding the voting machines. Any time you use a machine there is no way of knowing how that machine counts our votes. [www.voterescue.org](http://www.voterescue.org)

- d. Update reports on networking relationships with other boards/commissions and groups, citywide and ACT&TC information items.

Commissioner Rosenthal stated that he asked to be placed on the Emerging Tech Council Committee May agenda to report on access and prepare them on this Commission's recommendations on the budget.

## **9. DISCUSSION OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR ACT&TC FUTURE MEETINGS.**

- Report on SXSW Interactive
- Channel 44 update
- City Website Re-design Task Force update. (Rosenthal) (wp5)
- Community Forum Task Force updates. (Touvell) (wp4)
- Discussion and possible action on 2008-09 budget priorities resolutions. (wp8)
- Discussion and possible action on electronic voting machines currently used for county and municipal elections.
- Staff Briefing:
  - Access facility update. (wp1)
  - Access TV equipment list to be purchased with Time Warner Cable capital equipment funds provided in their cable franchise update. (wp1)

## **10. ADJOURN**

Commission Chair Rosenthal adjourned the meeting at 11:11 p.m. without objection.

*This is a summary of the activities at this meeting. To view the full meeting on DVD please visit the Austin History Center, 810 Guadalupe Street, Austin, TX, Phone 974-7480*