



Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission
www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission

Regular Meeting

Minutes
Wednesday, March 11, 2009

The Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, March 11, 2009, 301 W. 2nd Street, Austin, TX, City Hall, Room 1101.

Please go to www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission/schedule.htm for backup material associated with this agenda.

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, Texas, Phone (512) 974-7480.

1. Call to order – March 11, 2009 – 6:38 p.m.

Commission members in attendance:

Chip Rosenthal
Jim Howerton
Wendell Ramsey
Arthur Sampson
Kedron Touvell
Randall Kolb

Commission members absent:

Lemuel Williams Jr.

City staff in attendance:

Rondella Hawkins
Jane Reina

2. Adoption of agenda.

The agenda was adopted on a 5-0-0 vote of the Commission. (Commissioner Howerton arrived late. Commissioner Williams absent)

3. Citizen Communication: General

The first 10 speakers signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will each be allowed a three-minute allotment to address their concerns regarding items not posted on the agenda.

Nick Papatonis made allegations that Public Access Community TV (PACT) (aka channelAustin) was discriminating by firing all of their African-American employees and that he has gotten the City involved in this matter. He also made allegations that the TARA manager was not doing her job and that PACT was scamming funds from producers by fining them for violations. He has started his own internet channel called Austin Access TV.

Babs Warren reported she volunteered time to the Producers Council Elections and that a citizen on the public access studio property during the elections was harassing her and Ms. Warren wants the Commission to look into this.

Mary Krenic reported she volunteered time to the Producers Council Elections and that members and friends of channelAustin were harassing Ms. Warren during the elections. They felt not welcome.

Sue Ann Campbell reported that PACT management says anyone can talk to them regarding things that happen at the studios but on the other side problems can be ignored. She presented a grievance to the Commission that was given to her by a person who was treated very rudely by PACT management.

4. Approval of minutes – February 11, 2009 Commission regular meeting.

The minutes from the regular meeting of February 11, 2009 were approved on Commissioner Howerton's motion; Commissioner Touvell's second on a 5-1-0 vote. Commissioners voting aye were: Chip Rosenthal, Jim Howerton, Wendell Ramsey, Kedron Touvell and Randall Kolb. Commissioners voting nay were: Arthur Sampson. Commissioner Lemuel Williams absent.

5. Invited Presentations

- a. Presentation on KEYE-TV DTV transition experience. (wp4,9)

This item was postponed.

- b. Presentation on the City of Austin's Emerging Technology Program. (Jim Butler)(wp5,9)

Jim Butler, Creative Industries Manager with the City of Austin's Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services Department, reported that as part of its overall mission the City of Austin is committed to pursuing economic development policies that enhance local prosperity. Emerging technology is an important piece of that equation that builds on Austin's competitive advantages. The City is in a position to more directly influence the future of the local economy in part through its economic development policies, including those focused on emerging technology. Examples of emerging technology sectors include, but are not limited to: Digital Media; Wireless; Clean Energy; Biotechnology and Life Sciences; Nanotechnology; and Early-stage commercialization in other technology sectors.

- c. Presentation on the City of Austin's Small Business Development Program. (Vicky Valdez)(wp5,9)

This item was postponed.

6. Staff Briefings

a. Legislative, Regulatory and Policy update.(wp7)

Rondella Hawkins, Manager, City of Austin, Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs, reported that state level is still in session and no related telecommunication bills filed. At the federal level President Obama named **Julius Genachowski** as FCC Chairman.

There is a lot of activity on the federal level regarding the economic stimulus funds allocated for broadband stimulus. There is going to be a grant program administered by the National Telecommunications Information Administration and Department of Agriculture. These funds will be available to colleges, libraries, and non profits.

b. Public Access Television update.(wp1)

Citizen Communications:

Nick Papatonis stated PACT producers are being harassed by the executive director of PACT and nothing is being done at the city about it. He has started his own internet access TV called Austin Access Television.

Rondella Hawkins reported:

Met with Building Services and PACT staff 02/24/2009.

- Estimates it will be 60 calendar days to "substantial completion" of roof and envelope; about 10 days more for cleanup.
- (Contract had been put on hold due to funding issues; some delays also due to AE solar panel assessment)
- Expects that contractor can start work April 1. Waterproofers will be first on the job.
- Does not expect that any closures will be necessary
- Expects minimal disruption and will ensure that contractor schedules noisy activities for off-hours

Pre-conference scheduled for 3/18/09 March 18, to be held at PACT facility: PACT staff, TARA, Building Services, (CTM?) and contractor.

- Contractor presents construction schedule/timeline
- Contractor given a tour of the facility and diagrams

Regarding the grievance report given to the Commission they ask that the results of the grievance be included on the report.

c. Grant for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOPs) report.(wp2)

Rondella Hawkins read into record a report from Sheena Harden, City of Austin, Program Coordinator, which stated the TARA office was notified March 11th that the 2009 GTOPs awards were approved by the City Manager. TARA office will now precede with the awardees contracts.

Sheena Harden has authored a GTOPs Grant Manual as an attachment to the GTOPs grant contracts.

A press conference to publicly announce the 2009 grants has been scheduled for March 31, 2009 at 2:30 p.m. at City Hall's News Conference Room.

7. Old Business

- a. Discussion and possible action on this commission going "paperless", and using electronic delivery for documents and backup materials. (Rosenthal)(wp8)

Three goals to support the going paperless program.

- Cost reduction
- Green benefits
- Open Government improvement

All agenda backup material will be placed on the commission's website at www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission/schedule.htm unless the material is in a draft status or is proprietary. All proprietary and draft material will be emailed to the Commission. Any Commissioner wanting paper copies will let staff know prior to the meeting. Paper copies of the agenda only will still be provided to public and the Commission at the meeting.

- b. DTV Transition Task Force update. (Touvell) (wp4,6)

Commissioner Rosenthal reported that the DTV Transition was postponed until June 12, 2009 and additional funds were allocated for convertor box coupons. Some stations were given the option to elect to do the transition in February so KEYE went with the original February date, the local PBS station will be transitioning in March and the rest of the Austin stations are transitioning June 12th.

- c. Access Television Funding Task Force update (Rosenthal) (wp1)

The Access Television Funding Task Force consists of Commissioners Rosenthal, Howerton and Kolb. They will also involve City Staff, which includes Rondella Hawkins and Terry Dyke and channelAustin which will include Linda Litowsky and Sal Waters. Their goal for the next month is meet and began developing the scope of work.

8. New Business

Update reports on networking relationships with other boards/commissions and groups, citywide and Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission (ACT&TC) information items.

Commissioner Rosenthal reported that he, Commissioner Howerton, Kolb and Ramsey were given a tour of the public access studios a few weeks ago.

9. Discussion of agenda items for ACT&TC future meetings.

- Presentation on KEYE-TV DTV transition experience. (Dusty Grandberry)(wp4,9)
- Presentation on the City of Austin's Small Business Development Program. (Vicky Valdez)(wp5,9)
- DTV Transition Task Force update. (Touvell) (wp4,6)
- Access Television Funding Task Force update (Rosenthal) (wp1)

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

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