



**Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission**  
**[www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission)**

**Regular Meeting**

**Minutes**

**Wednesday, August 12, 2009**

The Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, August 12, 2009, 301 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Austin, TX, City Hall, Room 1101.

Please go to [www.ci.austin.tx.us/telcommission/schedule.htm](http://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 – June 10, 2009 – 6:39 p.m.**

Commission members in attendance:

Chip Rosenthal  
Wendell Ramsey  
Kedron Touvell  
Lemuel Williams Jr.  
Randall Kolb  
Melvin White  
Bianca Taulman

City staff in attendance:

Rondella Hawkins  
Sheena Harden  
Jane Reina  
Terry Dyke

**2. Adoption of agenda.**

**The agenda was adopted by consent of the Commission.**

**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.

1. Ruth Epstein – Require City contractors such as PACT under contract to follow the same requirements as public organizations.

#### 4. Approval of minutes – June 10, 2009 Commission regular meeting.

**The minutes from the regular meeting of June 10, 2009 were approved on Commissioner Ramsey's motion; Commissioner William's second on a 7-0-0 vote.**

#### 5. Invited Presentations

- a. Presentation on Provision of Broadband Services by Texas Municipalities (Clarence West, Attorney at Law) (wp7)

Mr. Clarence West, Attorney at Law and expert on utility regulation in Texas, gave a presentation on provision of broadband services by Texas municipalities.

#### 6. Staff Briefings

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

Rondella Hawkins, Manager, City of Austin Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs, reported that the Texas Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (TATOA) just wrapped up their annual conference in Houston August 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. At this conference they had an overview of what is happening at the FCC and Congress as they work with the new administration. There is a lot of activity dealing with broadband at the federal level. The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA), of which Ms. Hawkins is Boardmember, is making visits on the Hill with the new FCC Commissioners and new FCC Chair. This is an opportunity for local government to be heard advocating on behalf of consumers and broadband.

The Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) is receiving a lot of interest. The due date for the first round of this grant applications is August 14, 2009.

Gene Crick is putting together a grant application for the Texas Connected Communities Broadband Stimulus Initiative which will include Austin Free Net. The goal of this project is to improve local services and reduce the cost of providing free public broadband access and training.

- b. Public Access Television update. (wp1)

##### Citizen Communication

1. Gary Johnson expressed concern about communications and schedule commitments made by access studio management. He also stated that channelAustin's website is not current.
2. Gloria Morales requested an RFP be issued for new management of the public access studios. The channelAustin contract states there will be two managers but now that Garry Wilkerson has resigned there is only one. She also stated that her free speech was violated at the studios.
3. Sueann Campbell gave an overview of the background on the producer's council. She stated the Telecom staff and Telecom Commission have not addressed the concerns of the public over poor access management.

4. Ruth Epstein stated she has been effected by polices at the access station. Programming is not on the web. The building has strange hours for a public facility. Her video taper has been denied access to the public access studios. These things infringe on her civil rights.

Ms. Hawkins reported that the BDS network at the public access studios is now operational. The RF (video) network is complete. The mini and micro control rooms are complete. The master control and central equipment rack is complete. All three studios are fully operational. Sound panels in all three studios are projected to be installed by mid-September. Synergy is due to upgrade on-air server later this month.

She also reported that Denver Open Media will partner with channelAustin to pursue Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) funding.

The City will ask channelAustin to have up-to-date information on their website regarding the schedule of work being done at the facilities.

Commissioner Rosenthal wants to make sure channelAustin is communicating clearly to their producer community on the status of live shows, fall series and program guides.

The Commission and staff would like to be copied on all material / information distributed to the producers by channelAustin.

- c. Presentation on City of Austin's 1995 Request for Strategic Partners: the vision of a city-wide public broadband telecommunications network that never materialized. (Terry Dyke and Rondella Hawkins, TARA) (wp6,9)

Terry Dyke, Research Analyst Senior with the City of Austin presented this item. This item was requested from there being a renewed interest in the idea of cities providing telecommunications infrastructure. At this time this is just background information. In the future, this commission could come forward with a recommendation to Council.

## 7. Old Business

- a. Discussion and possible action on recommendations from GTOPs Task Force. (Williams)(wp2)

### **Recommendations from GTOP's Task Force are as follows:**

**1. 2010 Awards Limits** - Limit awards to \$10,000.

#### **2. Application Kits Review**

##### **a. grant application**

- o Written questions from reviewers will be due to staff by December 23, 2009.
- o Responses from applicants will be due January 11, 2010.
- o Add dates to the calendar included in the application.
- o Add information to the application to indicate that the contact person must be available to respond within three (3) business days.
- o Applicants should provide a backup contact
- o Move question #9 (organization description) to position #1 in the application

**b. review board application-** 2010 application will be downloadable and made easier to use.

### **3. Review Board - instructions**

- Add information to the orientation presentation and materials outlining staff's role in the GTOPs process.
- Add a slide to discuss the desire of the commission for the review committee to reach consensus.
- Language changes and corrections to the orientation materials were discussed and passed.

### **4. Marketing & PR**

- Create a separate task force to oversee the Marketing and PR of the GTOPs 10th anniversary.
- Propose to staff to allocate the necessary resources.

**The recommendations to the 2010 Grant for Technologies Opportunities Program (GTOPs) from the GTOPs Task Force were accepted by the Commission on a 6-0-0 vote. (Commissioner Kolb off the dais.)**

Sheena Harden, Program Coordinator with the City of Austin announced that 2010 will be the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of GTOPs and would like to do some marketing and PR to promote this accomplishment. Commissioner Taulman will coordinate the other Commissioner to help in the anniversary activities.

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

The DTV Transition completed on June 12, 2009. The task force was dissolved.

- c. Community Media Future Funding Task Force update. (Rosenthal) (wp1)

Commissioner Rosenthal report that the task force has not met since June. At this task force's last meeting they identified information they wanted to collect from community media centers around the country.

- d. Discussion and possible action on the African American Resource Commission request to work with Time Warner Cable on adding TV One to their cable line-up. (Ramsey)(wp9)

Commissioner Ramsey would like the commission's input for a potential resolution of support asking Time Warner Cable (TWC) to discuss and consider ways to add TV One to their broadcasting family, on the standard tier, in order to expand the cultural based options of programming accessible to the TWC viewers.

The Time Warner TV One Task Force was created with Commissioner's Ramsey and White on this task force.

## **8. New Business**

- a. Action to be taken on Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission Officers election for September 2009 through August 2010 term.

Chip Rosenthal was elected Chair of the Austin Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission for the term of September 2009 through August 2010 on a 7-0-0 vote of the Commission.

Kedron Touvell was elected Vice-Chair of the Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission for the term of September 2009 through August 2010 on a 7-0-0 vote of the Commission.

- b. Discussion on Commission procedures for invited speakers and back-up materials. (Rosenthal)

Commissioner Rosenthal will come forward at the next meeting with a draft documented procedures of the Commission's paperless initiative for discussion and possible action. These procedures will also include invited speaker procedures. Commissioners Touvell, Kolb will also work on the draft procedures.

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

Commissioner Touvell stated Council Member Morrison wants to hear more from this Commission in the future at their Council Sub-Committee on Emerging Technology and Telecommunications.

He also stated the City is moving forward on a new Request for Proposal (RFP) for the City Website Redesign.

Commissioner Rosenthal will give the Council Sub-Committee on Emerging Technology a Commission update at their September meeting.

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

- o Community Media Future Funding Task Force update. (Rosenthal) (wp1)
- o Grant for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOPs) Outreach Task Force update (Williams)(wp2)
- o GTOPs quarterly update (Sheena Harden)(wp2)
- o Austin Free-Net (AFN) update. (Dale Thompson)(wp5)
- o Time Warner TV One Task Force update (Ramsey)(wp9)
- o Discussion and possible action on Public Access Community Television (PACT) aka channelAustin's last 2 year contract extension option to be effective October 1, 2009.(Rondella Hawkins)(wp1)

#### **10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.