

Minutes of the Hudson Cable Utility Committee (“CUC”) Meeting Tuesday October 8, 2008

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** Chairman O’Keefe called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.
- 2. ATTENDANCE:** Present: Michael O’Keefe, Rupert Cote, Selectman Roger Coutu, Stewart Kroner and Harry Schibanoff. Absent: Brenda Levesque. Jake Nazarian, the Cable Facilitator joined the meeting at approximately 7:20 pm. Leo Bernard of 3 Bungalow Avenue was also in attendance.
- 3. PUBLIC INPUT:** None.
- 4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**
The minutes of the last meeting of September 16, 2008 were reviewed by the CUC. There were no changes or corrections. Motion was made by Mr. Cote to accept the minutes and seconded by Mr. Knoner. The acceptance of the minutes was voted unanimously.
- 5. OLD BUSINESS:** None
- 6. NEW BUSINESS:**

A. FY10 Budget Discussions

Mr. O’Keefe handed out the proposed budget. He explained the budget process to the committee. He said that our budget is different from other Town committees in that we have our own source of revenue from the franchise fee paid by the cable subscribers in Hudson. This fee is paid to the Town on a quarterly basis and the FY10 revenue is estimated by multiplying the last quarter fees available by four, thus annualizing the total amount. This method of budget estimation has worked in the past. The last quarter franchise fee revenue was \$48,520.00 which annualizes to \$194,080.00. Mr. O’Keefe then reviewed the line items that have changed from the previous budget. There were increases in legal fees for FY10 due to possibly of higher legal costs caused by the renewal the Town’s franchise agreement in 2011 with Comcast. Postage and Gas were increased to reflect higher rates and costs. Other Professional Services were raised due to an anticipated increase in programming, staff and compensation.

The major change in the FY10 Budget is the absence of a contribution to the CUC Capital Reserve and a line item increase for Small Equipment, which would include the establishment of a production studio in Hudson. The CUC has decided to find leased property that could be used for the production of television programming. Mr. O’Keefe and Mr. Nazarian have begun looking for a location but have no leads at this time. Mr. Nazarian also prepared a comprehensive budget for a studio that has an estimated cost approximately \$211,882.00. Mr. O’Keefe said that this budget could be reduced to a level of \$179,358 and also some equipment could be purchased at a later time.

The CUC then spent considerable time discussing a leased production studio. Mr. Nazarian talked about issues of electricity and lighting and the need for high ceilings. Mr. Cote asked about the size of the building and Mr. Nazarian said that he would like to see a building of at least a 40 X 40 foot area with 10 and preferably 12-foot ceilings. Mr. Coutu questioned if the CUC had the money to establish and operate a production studio due to high construction and start up costs. He was also questioned the cost of leasing space and the terms and the ability of the CUC to continue to pay leased and occupancy costs. Mr. Nazarian was of the opinion that neither would be a major problem in light of the current economic environment.

Many items of concern were expressed by all committee members, which included lighting, location, security, heat and other costs. Mr. Nazarian suggested he would like to see the location be near the high school, for better access by students. Mr. O’Keefe emphasized that this is a project for the future and does not need to be resolved today. He is only trying to show that the committee will be changing its budget in FY10. Mr. Cote and Mr. Knoner concurred.

Mr. O’Keefe said that he has requested two new budget items in the CUC budget for rent and utilities. He expects this request to be approved by the Town Treasurer and he will allocate \$30,000.00 between the two categories. He asked for a motion, which Mr. Cote offered as:

MOTION: The recommended budget presented by the Chairman with the addition of two line items for rent and utilities for a total amount of \$30,000 and a reduction in the Small Equipment line item by \$30,000 be presented to the Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen. (“BOS”) Mr. Knoner seconded the motion.

There was no further discussion and motion passed unanimously.

B. Equipment Purchase Request

Mr. O’Keefe had anticipated that he would have a request for new equipment for this meeting but was unable to prepare the information. He asked that this agenda item be tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Nazarian requested that he be allowed to purchase two hard drives and additional lighting with a total cost of approximately \$2,700.00. Mr. Schibanoff stated that Mr. Nazarian should prepare a proposal before the CUC votes on these items. He felt some documentation was necessary. Mr. Cote concurred.

7. OTHER BUSINESS/ REMARKS:

Mr. Nazarian said that he believes he will need to devote more time than 10 hours a week. The CUC discussed how this would be done and Mr. O’Keefe said that the CUC would have to make a recommendation to the Town Administrator who would then need BOS approval.

Mr. Schibanoff asked Mr. Nazarian to summarize what he had done as the new cable facilitator. Mr. Nazarian gave a comprehensive summary of his activities, which included: Starting classes to train individuals to use the cameras for their own productions. He has held three classes to date. He has begun to inventory HCTV equipment and figuring out how things work. The inventory is about 50% complete. He has worked with Mr. O'Keefe on the new studio location and estimated its potential costs.

Mr. Cote was impressed with these accomplishments and asked that Mr. Nazarian continue to inform the CUC of his activities. He will send a report to each committee member prior to each meeting.

Mr. Nazarian asked about receiving sponsorships from town businesses to supplement production costs. He has been approached by three businesses to sponsor sporting events in town. The committee discussed how this could be done and decided to look at the procedures used by other towns. Mr. Schibanoff and Mr. O'Keefe said it would require a change of our current policy and that it would then need to receive the approval of the BOS. Mr. Nazarian also asked if we could do advertising and was told that it would not be permitted in public access TV.

Mr. Coutu asked why the recess time is still being shown on re-runs of town meetings. He has received several complaints about this situation. Mr. O'Keefe and Mr. Nazarian explained the difficulties of doing this deletion because of HDTV's use of DVDs. They will investigate how other towns solve this problem. Mr. Nazarian also suggested that we use public service announcements ("PSA's") in this time period as a solution. He hopes to have a few PSA's in the near future.

Mr. Coutu would also like the programming to be published in the local newspaper. Mr. Nazarian said he would work on doing that.

Mr. Coutu also introduced the results of a recent BOS meeting where the position of Camera Operator Coordinator was discussed. The BOS had various questions and they have been answered. Mr. O'Keefe is working on a job description and hopes to present it at the next BOS meeting for approval.

Mr. Coutu also asked the speed of the Bulletin Board be slowed down to make it easier to read and suggested a larger font on some of the items.

Mr. Bernard said that we had 20 shows in September and October and currently have 14 scheduled for November.

Mr. Cote congratulated Mr. Nazarian for his performance to date.

Mr. O'Keefe hopes to introduce the live streaming of town meetings so that non-cable citizens can watch them on their computers.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Cote moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Schibanoff. The meeting adjourned at 9:06 P.M.

Submitted by Harry A. Schibanoff, Clerk
October 14, 2008

PUBLIC NOTICE

CABLE UTILITY COMMITTEE

October 8, 2008 - 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall, 12 School Street, Hudson, NH 03051
Board of Selectmen Meeting Room

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Attendance**
- 3. Public Input**
- 4. Approval of Minutes**
 - a) September 16, 2008 Cable Utility Committee Meeting Minutes**
- 5. Old Business**
- 6. New Business**
 - a) FY10 Budget Discussions**
 - b) Equipment Purchase Request**
- 7. Other Business/Remarks by Committee Members**
- 8. Adjournment**

Posted: October 7, 2008