

Santa Maria Community Television
Minutes
SMCTV Board of Directors

Mark van de Kamp – Chair
Bob Morrison – Director
David Cross – Director

Alan Sutterfield – Clerk of the Board

Meeting
December 20, 2007
6:30 PM
Santa Maria City Council Chambers
110 E. Cook Street
805-925-9176

1. Call meeting to order

The meeting was called to order by SMCTV Board Chair Mark van de Kamp at 6:30 p.m. Also present were director David Cross. Director Bob Morrison was absent. The Board Chair stated that a quorum was present under city guidelines. Also present was SMCTV Station Manager Alan Sutterfield.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4. Approval of June 28, 2007 minutes.

ACTION: Motion to approve by David Cross, seconded Mark van de Kamp. Motion passed
2-0.

5. New Business

a. INFORMATION ONLY: Comcast P.E.G. fees now listed separately on cable bills

Station Manager Alan Sutterfield informed the board that PEG fees are now listed as a separate item on Comcast Cable subscriber's monthly billing statements and that some subscribers might think this is a new fee, when in fact it is just reported separately from the City of Santa Maria's franchise fee. It is listed as P.E.G.

access support at \$1.32 per month, per subscriber. Mr. Sutterfield stated that he had inquired of Comcast Cable why they began listing the fee separately but had not yet received a reply.

Mr. Cross asked when the fee had begun to be listed separately and was informed it was October of 2007. Mr. van de Kamp stated he had received two inquiries from the public asking if the P.E.G. fee was a new item.

b. INFORMATION ONLY: DIVCA and FCC updates

Mr. Sutterfield informed the board that DIVCA is the Digital Infrastructure and Video Competition Act, a result of Assembly Bill 2987, which became law in January 2007, impacts video programming supplied via a cable or telephone wire, rather than a wireless system and that AT&T and Verizon are entering into competition with cable TV suppliers under DIVCA state issued franchise agreements. He stated that Verizon was most likely to be the new competitor in Santa Maria, as Verizon is the current telephone service provider and can use its existing phone lines and that Comcast must continue to meet their P.E. G. obligations under DIVCA, though a new competitor would have to contribute a pro-rata share of that support. Mr. Sutterfield recommended that the City of Santa Maria, prior to a new competitor entering the market, pass an ordinance to reinforce P.E.G. support requirements for video program suppliers. Mr. Sutterfield informed the board that some video service providers in some parts of the country are trying to move P.E.G. channels off the basic tier of service to higher numbered digital tiers, often requiring several steps to access the channels which are delivered in a less than broadcast quality signal. Mr. Sutterfield informed the board that the Federal Communications Commission had recently passed administrative rules that might trigger a national franchise structure that would override DIVCA provide for no P.E.G. fees. He stated that the rules are being challenged in the courts and in Congress. Mr. van de Kamp inquired if the FCC decision was on a 3-2 vote and Mr. Sutterfield confirmed that it was, and that large media companies are behind the changes proposed by Chairman Kevin Martin, despite overwhelming opposition from the public. Mr. Cross asked for clarification on the recourse options for P.E.G. and Mr. van de Kamp inquired about the length of the terms for the FCC members.

c. INFORMATION ONLY: Program playback issues resolved

Mr. Sutterfield informed the board that SMCTV programs defaulting to black, a problem dating back to August of 2007 had been resolved by the staff and vendors. Mr. Cross asked if the vendor guaranteed that these problems would not reoccur and was informed that no guarantee was forthcoming, but the vendor had provided a deep discount for extended warrantee over the coming year.

d. ACTION: Proposed amendments to Policies and Procedures

Mr. Sutterfield informed the board that the first proposed change allows SMCTV community program series producers to submit a repeat program every six months or for every six programs submitted. He stated that this has been an informal policy and mirrors policies of TapTV Lompoc, and provides flexibility for program series producers who may not be able to produce a new program every 30 days. The second change allows a program or series to be submitted for playback by one community producer only.

This would limit any given program to the current 3 allowable cablecasts per week.

Mr. Cross made a motion to approve the revisions. Mr. van de Kamp seconded the motion. Motion passed 2-0.

6. Report from SMCTV Station Manager

Mr. Sutterfield reported on the number of local nonprofit agencies that had taken advantage of SMCTV resources in the last 6 months. He also reported that at the most recent SMCTV membership forum, members agreed to volunteer to crew studio tapings in support of nonprofit groups who would otherwise lack the resources to make a program. Mr. Sutterfield stated that in September of 2007 a twice-a-week advertisement had been running adjacent to the TV guide section of the Santa Maria Times, intended to educate Santa Maria residents of SMCTV's mission and channel placement. He also informed the board that SMCTV's Sunday afternoon Spanish language block had expanded from 2.5 hours to 4 hours, that overall program hours had increased modestly over the past 6 months, and that the programmable Comcast cable radio service was now used as a music background for community bulletin boards. Mr van de Kamp asked about the impact of expanded evening hours at SMCTV's media center and Mr. Sutterfield indicated that the new evening hours had resolved potential studio reservation conflicts for Friday evenings.

7. Adjournment

Mr. van de Kamp adjourned the meeting at 7:46 PM.

END