

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
July 3, 2008
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 6:31 p.m. Also present were directors David Cross and Bob Morrison and SMCTV Station Manager Alan Sutterfield.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4. Approval of December 20, 2007 minutes.

ACTION: Motion to approve by Mr. Cross, seconded by Mr. Morrison. Motion passed 3-0.

5. New Business

a. INFORMATION ONLY: DIVCA and FCC updates

Mr. Sutterfield informed the board that 2007 was a bad year for public access television, that 2008 was a holding pattern, and that the outlook for 2009 was uncertain. He reported that Comcast Cable has gone on record that it supports PEG and will operate without a state franchise until the end of its local franchise agreements in those areas of California where it has existing agreements. Comcast has also said it will not move PEG channels from their basic service tier, as other video suppliers were attempting to do. At the annual SCAN-NATO

conference Mr. Sutterfield stated that non-traditional funding sources were discussed, as some PEG centers that will be losing some or all of their funding under DIVCA (Digital Infrastructure and Video Cable Act), and that partnerships of smaller communities could make PEG centers viable in some rural areas. Mr. Cross asked if DIVCA will be impacting SMCTV and Mr. Sutterfield indicated there was no impact yet, as no additional video suppliers have yet begun providing services in Santa Maria. Bob Morrison asked if money could be raised by allowing advertising on PEG channels, and Mr. Sutterfield replied that while traditional advertising in the form of 30 and 60 second commercials would not be allowed, perhaps corporate programming could be sold placement for a fee in unused timeslots. Mr. Sutterfield reported that the FCC is attempting to trump state and local franchise agreements with federal franchise agreements, but is being challenged in federal court. These would be implemented only in states without existing state-wide franchise agreements.

b. INFORMATION ONLY: PEG Ordinance Adopted

Mr. Sutterfield informed the board that in March 2008, the Santa Maria City Council amended Title 4 of the municipal code. This was done because under DIVCA, some rights and responsibilities are retained by local government. The amendment of Title 4 reinforces those rights and responsibilities in the event that new video service providers begin marketing their services in Santa Maria. Mr. van de Kamp mentioned that as of April 2008, Verizon had requested state franchises in nearby communities, but not yet in Santa Maria.

c. INFORMATION ONLY: City of Lompoc payments

Mr. Sutterfield informed the board that the City of Lompoc had been sharing SMCTV's playback equipment since 2004, when they paid 50% of the \$168,555 cost of that equipment. Lompoc recently decided to purchase their own playback equipment and requested SMCTV reimburse them for their half-interest. After depreciation this amounted to \$28,893. Santa Maria city staff, under the guidance of Chairman van de Kamp negotiated a repayment schedule of \$702 per month, over 43 months, to be paid quarterly. Mr. Morrison asked why Lompoc was in need of its own playback equipment. Mr. Sutterfield said he was told that Lompoc wanted more control of their playback operations and wanted to purchase upgrades. Mr. van de Kamp stated that the 3.5 year repayment schedule at 4.5% interest would ease the burden of repaying Lompoc. Mr. Morrison congratulated the city for negotiating a favorable interest rate. Mr. Cross inquired if there were any other areas where SMCTV might be required to reimburse Lompoc, but Mr. Sutterfield stated that the two operations were now totally separate, with the exception of sharing some programming.

d. ACTION: Proposed amendments to Policies and Procedures

Mr. Sutterfield proposed two changes to the SMCTV Policies and Procedures. The first proposed change was that the \$25 membership fee be required of all new members, rather than having an option to volunteer 3 hours on another member's production as an in-lieu payment. He indicated that some new members did not have enough production skills to be helpful on the production of programs. But after a year, those production skills should be in-place, so members who were renewing their memberships would still be allowed to make in-lieu payments of 3 volunteer hours. The second proposed amendment addressed high-demand timeslots (6-11 pm) on the public channel 25. It was proposed that program producers who reside outside of Santa Maria/Orcutt be limited to 1 high-demand timeslot per week, rather than the current 2 allowed. This would free-up desirable timeslots for new producers. If less than a 5% inventory of high-demand timeslots remained, then all program producers would be limited to one rather than two high-demand timeslots. Mr. Cross inquired about how the other Policies and Procedures were working, and Mr. Sutterfield stated the SMCTV membership was aware that the P & P's can be changed to meet current conditions and that they are designed to share the resources available. Mr. Morrison inquired about the requirements to retain timeslots and was told by Mr. Sutterfield that the expectation is that a new program would be submitted every 30 days. Mr. Morrison inquired about the availability of timeslots overall, and Mr. Sutterfield stated that there is still an ample inventory of timeslots available in late-night, early morning and afternoons.

Motion to approve was made by Mr. Cross and seconded by Mr. Morrison.
Motion passed 3-0.

6. Report from SMCTV Station Manager

Mr. Sutterfield reported on the number of local nonprofit groups that had taken advantage of SMCTV's services in the past six months. He explained that SMCTV had taken advantage of a clause in the franchise agreement with Comcast Cable to distribute an informational bill-stuffer to the cable subscribers in Santa Maria/Orcutt. Also Mr. Sutterfield outlined the series of staff-produced "We are Santa Maria Community Television" promotional spots, as well as the ongoing placement of a print advertisement in the Santa Maria Times TV section. Also discussed were the status of programs and programming hours, the 6/12/08 membership forum, and the ordering of production-related equipment.

7. Adjournment

Mr. van de Kamp adjourned the meeting at 7:36 PM.

END