

Rochester Government Channel

April 20, 2016 Meeting

Members Present:

City Councilor Tom Willis, Chair
Rick Healey - Resident Volunteer

Absent:

James Graham - Resident Volunteer

Others Present:

Celeste Plaia, Government Channel Coordinator
Dennis Schafer, MIS Supervisor
Norm Sanborn Sr., American Legion and Rochester Veteran's Council

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at **5:30 PM**.

II. Approval of minutes March 24 2016 meeting

A **MOTION** was made by Rick Healey to accept the minutes of the March 24, 2016 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Willis. The **MOTION CARRIED** unanimous voice vote.

III. Public Input

Norm Sanborn Sr. was present to address the letter that was sent to the City Manager's office regarding the Veteran's Council's desire for the Government Channel to produce and carry their program that was once produced at Metrocast. Chair Willis asked about the program content, the coordination and frequency of the show. Mr Sanborn gave a description of the program: an informational program for Veterans that included topics of interest, local history of Veterans, veterans services, special events. They also had "On the Road" shows that included a trip to Pease for the Pease Greeters events and the annual air show. They taped a show about every three or four weeks. He described how the service from Metrocast decreased to the point where they could no longer accommodate their on the road shows or even get into the studio on a regular basis, which was long before the current closure of the studio. He stated they had quite a large following and also brought DVDs of their shows to the local retirement homes.

Councilor Willis explained that we were at a cross roads with how to fill the void that Metrocast left, and how to fill the void for non-government entities. Norm Sanborn Sr. stated that they are a committee of the Mayor. Government Coordinator gave some history of how they started to work with the Veterans Council on shows once the service from Metrocast ceased. Policy wise, it was not a stretch to accommodate as the Government Channel does play programming related to County, State and National Government. Time wise, the Coordinator could not accommodate a monthly show, but did a couple of “specials” which included the local Veterans visit to the State Veterans cemetery and a tour of the State’s Veterans Home.

The group discussed different scenarios in which the coordinator could help, perhaps with setting up field equipment, but also noted that as more organizations come with requests, how do we accommodate, especially with the lack of a studio. Also discussed was the possibility of the coordinator training someone to use the Government Channel equipment or even coordinating with the school department. Coordinator will also following up with the school system to see if they will continue or expand their video program with the CTE Renovation and Norm Sanborn Sr noted that he would look into all their resources to see how they could help out with the production. It was the general consensus that the Government Channel should try to accommodate the Veterans Chair Willis also noted that with out a studio available to the public perhaps this can help set up some structure to see if we can accommodate the public in the future.

IV. Franchise Committee Update

Dennis Schafer gave some background on the preliminary discussions re. the Franchise Renewal and the committee. Dennis stated that he was involved with several past franchise negotiations, and the suggested candidates for the committee was based on the make up of past teams. Suggested list from City staff included: Dennis Schafer, MIS Supervisor, Celeste Plaia, Government Channel Coordinator, David A. Yasenchock, Chief Technology Officer of Rochester Schools, Michael Hopkins, Superintendent of Rochester Schools, John LaRochelle, Rochester resident, (and suggested Chair) Councilor Don Hamann, Megan Rohrbacher, Rochester resident and Assist Director at Wolfeboro Community Television, and Attorney Terrence O’Rourke. Committee discussed possibly the need for outside Attorney firm considering the specialty of the subject area. Tom Willis made a **MOTION** to send staff’s recommendation of candidates to Mayor for approval or appointment if needed. Motion was Second by Rick Healey. The **MOTION CARRIED** unanimous voice vote.

V. Continued Discussion: Program Policy - underwriting

Committee discussed that the Veterans request, and possible future requests may lead to looking at the programming policy of the Government Channel. Coordinator asked specifically as a follow up on last discussion concerning “underwriting” (in last meeting consensus was to allow programing that acknowledges underwriting”) and wanted to clarify direction on changing verbiage on programming policy. Coordinator

showed some examples from other media centers. Coordinator will present final draft for the wording at next meeting. Coordinator asked Councilor Willis, being new to the committee, would he like to continue to examine the entire Rochester Government Channel Programming Policy draft and continue edits in other areas, as the past Government Channel Committee had already approved it go to Council. Both Rick Healey and Tom Willis agreed that after underwriter changes are made, document can go to Council for approval by June. Rick Healy also stated with Metocast no longer in service for production, we can amend the document if something come up in the future.

VI. DVD and file retention

During the March 2016 RGC meeting, Councilor Willis asked coordinator to discuss retention of media of meetings with the City Clerk and to perhaps come up with a time definition of retention. Coordinator stated she spoke with Dennis Safer, regarding the pros and cons and practicality of keeping digital files of meetings for more than three years. Coordinator explained that while we might state a time frame we might keep files, several factors could change availability; technology changes, storage costs, downloading and duplicating process, our contracts with our vendors, cost, especially if in the future we should start using high definition files. Coordinator also stated that the City Clerks office does not have a retention policy for the DVDs, and if the Government Channel would like one in place City Clerk Kelly Walters would like the discussion to go to the retention committee, as this is also a legal issue. Rick Healey recalled that this is why retention policy was not set in the Government Channel Committee, as the Minutes are the legal record of meetings, and, with technology changing so fast, it was difficult to put a definitive time limit.

Councilor Willis would like to see what the retention committee would find, and made a **MOTION** to suggest to the retention committee that digital files of Public meetings should be kept for three years. Rick Healy said this would also be of education benefit to new Council members, and second the motion. **The MOTION CARRIED unanimous voice vote.**

VII. Other

Councilor Willis brought up Councilor Varney's question of what would it take to start live streaming our meetings over the internet.

Coordinator stated that she has looked into the vender that they currently use for the video server on site and the archive Video on Demand. Coordinator gave a very loose estimate cost through our current vender - an upfront cost of an encoder for about \$3,400.00 and a yearly subscription service of about \$3,000.00. This included some "branding", the ability to embed the link in our city website (so users would not have to leave the city website to watch the stream) technical support, etc. Most video server companies for broadcast offer similar options as well. Coordinator also stated there were other methods - many 3rd party companies out there doing live streaming - which

all require an encoder to purchase, and a monty or yearly subscription service. The costs can vary from much less money - to more than \$3,000.00, but you also see a variety in service, user friendliness, and dependability. Coordinator stated that she did not include this in the upcoming FY17 budget, as she has not had many requests, and, is disappointed in the low numbers of the Video on Demand service. On the high end City Council is getting 25 - 30 hits per month. Coordinator has worked with City Manger's office to create press releases, the Police and other Departments for Facebook exposure, and would like to continue to do PR for the Government Channel to increase awareness this service exists. Rick Healy also suggested using radio, and Coordinator agreed siting they are starting to work more with local radio. Coordinator will continue to explore live streaming options and report more specific price ranges.

VII. Adjournment

Tom Willis move to Adjorn, Rick Healey Second. The meeting adjourned at approx. 7:15 PM. Next meeting will be May 25th at 5:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Celeste Plaia
Government Channel Coordinator