



Director Report December 2018

Production, Programming, & Training

- Over the past month, we televised 183 different programs on our channels, 80 of which were locally-produced. 114 of the 183 were “first-run” shows, while the remaining 69 were repeats. In addition, we televised 36 different “interstitials”, such as underwriter thank yous, PSAs, and promotional videos.
- New local productions have included: a Black River High School basketball game (covered by volunteer Natasha Fortin, who will be recoding many of the games this season), BRHS holiday concert, a skateboarding documentary (Sk8 VT, produced by our former Production Coordinator, Adam Sayre), the weekly church services (Ludlow Baptist, Calvary Baptist, & St. James Methodist), Springfield Community Chorus holiday concert, the new Chamber Update show, a FOLA promo, Cavendish Library promo, and 10 government meetings.
- In late November, we updated our master control / automation software. The new version provides video-on-demand tracking first the first time, right in the software. I am comparing that data against what is tracked on our website through Google Analytics. We haven’t been on the newly-updated system for a long-enough period to properly reconcile between the two data sets, but I can just report the most-watched videos on our website during this time have been, in order: Plymouth Selectboard 11/19, Ludlow Memories-Black River Sports (1960s – 80s), & Cavendish Selectboard 11/19
- We have also completed, or nearing completion, editing videos for the VT Humanities Council / Mt. Holly Library, the UVM Archaeology Dept. / State of VT Archaeologist, & Ludlow Rotary Club.
- This week we are covering / will cover holiday concerts at Black River, Chester-Andover Elementary, & Mt. Holly School. We will also be covering annual FOLA Christmas show this Friday
- Vincent launched the new after school program in Mt. Holly back in October. After he leaves us (his last day is this Friday), Eric will take over the program – I will help him get situated in that role

Fundraising

- We were awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Marro Memorial Trust Fund for the 3rd and final phase of the building project.
- Our building project revenue has been under review recently. There was some question as to how much should be allocated towards the “building fund” from the money market account. We have also reconciled the budgeted funds vs the “cash-in-hand”. What we know is this: the total raised through grants for Phase 3 is now \$45,000; all but \$25,000 of that is in the money market account. The \$25,000 from the “Building Communities Grant” (State of VT Buildings & General Services) will be paid as a matching grant. In other words, it is committed but not “in hand”. We had \$20,000 remaining from the building fund in 2013, which is also in the money market account. The question we considered was how much of that amount should be used for Phase 3 vs a reserve fund. We also budgeted \$9,600 from the Derby proceeds over the last 2 years towards the Phase 3 building fund; those funds have not been transferred into the money market. During the recent special Board meeting and a follow-up meeting bt. Fra & I, it was determined that, all of this information was reviewed. The recommendation for the Board is to allocate no more than \$60,000 from these funds, for immediate use, towards the completion of the Phase 3 renovations. As noted previously, our extension that was granted by the State of VT Dept. of Buildings & General Services gives us until March 31st to complete the work. My hope is that we can continue to raise funds during this period. We must implement

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a plan for this.

- Town appropriations: we have put in our annual requests for support from the Town budgets in Ludlow, Plymouth, Cavendish, & Mount Holly. As I do every year, I presented in front of the Cavendish Selectboard.
- Julie proposed a plan for membership solicitations for us to consider, building from a conversation at our October meeting – we should take this up and begin to execute it.

Equipment & Building

- Phase 3 estimate: in 2015, after some work completed by our Building Committee, we received a cost estimate for the 3rd & final phase of the building project from Wright Construction. The estimate steered us in the direction to develop a plan to raise a total of \$175,000. The new estimate that we have received, from an independent consultant (more on that below) has led us to believe that the budget for the remainder of the build-out should be significantly less. The more recent “bid” that we received from Wright Construction, a few months ago, is in line with this thinking.
- When we first started the Phase 3 effort, 3 years ago, we knew we had \$20,000 to work with, remaining from the Phase 2 building fund. Since that time, we have been preparing ourselves to develop a revised budget and financing plan. And, over the past 2 years, I have been working on fundraising through grant writing efforts. To date, we have raised \$45,000 through grants. The largest of these, the \$25,000 “Building Communities” grant (from the State of Vermont Buildings & General Services) must be used by March 31, 2019. So, it is necessary that we execute a plan for a build-out now. This led us to the decision to solicit an updated cost estimate. Tom Barden, who runs a construction management & estimating business, provided an estimate recently. From the details he provided, we know we can expect approximately \$85,00 for the remainder of the build-out (Phase 3), plus contingencies and bonding. I am will be proposing a new project budget, to pave the way for a financing plan to be adopted by the Board.
- The reality of the situation, as mentioned above (under “Fundraising”) is that we do not have all of the funds “in hand” to pursue the entirety of the Phase 3 build-out today, but we need to move forward with what we have so that we can meet the March 31st deadline.
- New digital signage server (aka “bulletin board”): it is now online. We have a separate server for our Ed. & Gov channel, meaning we now have 2 bulletin boards – 1 for each channel, and can start to use them independently
- New web streaming server(s)- we now have the equipment and should be online with our first of 2 streaming servers within the next couple of weeks. We will start by streaming our Ed. & Gov. channel live 24/7, and will then (at a later date) implement a separate streaming server, for the Public / Community channel.
- New NAS- our network attached storage (“NAS”) device, which we use for all file back-ups and shared files, has been in need of replacement. We have purchased and will soon be installing that replacement unit.
- New cameras & tripods: we have 2 new portable “field” cameras for production work, with a third (used) camera on its way. We also have 2 new tripods.
- We are waiting on the insurance appraisal for the claim we were going to file for the broken camera (from the damage sustained in April). The camera has been at Panasonic’s repair shop – once Sharon has the information from the insurance adjuster, we will then need to make a decision, to either repair the camera or replace it. The cost of the estimate that I received from Panasonic over the Summer was close to the approximate current value of the camera, so I suspect that we will be replacing it.

Administrative / Organizational

- Eric Chatterjee, our new Production & Digital Media Coordinator, started this week. He will come to the Board meeting so I can introduce him to you.
- The FCC filing deadline for “reply comments” to the proposed rule change is 11:59 PM this Friday. If you have not already done so, please consider filing a reply comment (I distributed instructions recently via email), and please share with your contacts. While it is expected that the rule change will be adopted, it is still important that the comments expressing your concerns are received and entered into the proceedings. The expectation

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is that, should the rule change be approved, there will be an appeal. This means that there will very well be a delay in the implementation of the new rules. It is still unknown to what effect any new changes will have to our funding, but we should be prepared.

- VAN Summit: Fra, Eric, and myself attended the VAN Summit in Rutland on Wednesday, to participate in strategic thinking and “big picture” agenda items addressing funding changes, marketing on a statewide level, & collaboration, among other topics. There is a lot of momentum, collectively, to evolve and position ourselves to deliver wide-scale valuable services in a 21st century media landscape.