



Director Report July 2019

Administrative / Organizational

- Welcome Wendy Regier & Don Richardson to the Board.
- During the re-organization meeting on July 22nd, the Board will elect its officers and assign committees for the year. Board members should review the descriptions for each on our site – okemovalley.tv/about/board-directors. The Officers are President, Vice President, Treasurer, & Secretary. The only committee that we are “on the hook” for having (as per By Laws) is the Nominating & Elections Committee. In addition, we have also had committees for Finance, Buildings & Grounds, Personnel, Fundraising, and Marketing. I suggest combining Fundraising & Marketing, to limit the overall number of committees, and since there is a lot of overlap between them.
- PEG Access Study Committee: Over the past several months, the Vermont Access Network (VAN), our statewide membership & advocacy organization, has had a legislative work group (on which I’ve been played a small role). It has been tasked with raising awareness of the various funding threats affecting PEG Access TV / “community media” in the legislature and asking for helping finding solutions, through possible alternative revenue streams. It was able to successfully lobby for a legislative study committee, which is currently underway. (The formation of the study committee was tacked onto the Broadband Bill, passed at the end of the legislative session in May). The study committee is meeting 6 times in between the sessions . The 2nd one is taking place this Friday, July 18, at the State House. The committee is comprised of legislators and other stakeholders, including our own representative, Lauren-Glenn Davitian, Executive Director of CCTV / Center for Media & Democracy in Burlington. At the study committee’s conclusion later this year, it will prepare a recommendation for the legislature to address in the coming session. The hopeful outcome will be the establishment of new revenue stream(s) to support
- FCC Rule Changes- As has been widely reported, the FCC has proposed rule changes to cable franchise fees and how they are calculated. The proposed changes are expected to have a negative impact on PEG Access television budgets across the country. Action will be taken on this at the next FCC meeting, on August 1st. The agenda for that meeting was published last week, along with an amended version of the proposed rule changes. The consensus seems to be that the impact will not be as dire as previously thought. Moreover, we have regulatory protections in place here in Vermont that will make PEG operations here safer than in other parts of the country. More information on this to come.
- Comcast vs Vermont – For the past 5 years, Comcast and the State of Vermont has been entangled in litigation concerning Comcast’s appeal of some of the stipulations the Public Utility Commission put into the company’s Certificate of Public Good renewal, some of which involves PEG Access. The Vermont Access Network has had party status in this legal case, which made it to the US District Court. There is news to share with you all, which must be discussed in Executive Session.
- Regional Collaborations- In June, I met with VAN colleagues around Southern VT to discuss, among other things, ways we might be able to collaborate more and increase efficiencies, collectively. A lot of good ideas came out of this, and we are continuing the meet-ups with a peer-to-peer workshop for all staff at GNAT (Sunderland / Manchester area) next month. The topic will be tips & tricks for program scheduling workflow.
- As we begin the new fiscal year, we are gearing up for some changes. In light of the 10% budget cut in the new year’s budget, on top of the 7% shortfall we experienced last year, some cuts are being made to personnel & operations. Starting in the near future, Fred will be spending less time on program scheduling and picking up some of the production work, recording meetings & community events, and editing.

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Production, Programming, & Training

- We provided coverage of 4 of the July 4th events at the Coolidge State Historic Site on Plymouth Notch. The events were sponsored by the Coolidge Presidential Foundation. Ed recorded them for us.
- Aside from that, it's been a light month, production-wise, especially since several of the local government boards take the month off. We are, however, starting our regular coverage of the Ludlow Cemetery Commission this month. The first meeting is next Wednesday, and we will be covering them every month from here on out.
- The studio is back in business, but is only seeing sporadic use this Summer. We need to beat the drum and get more people aware of the resource
- Wendy Regier began volunteering on a weekly basis this month. She is working on our program archives, going through old program and discarding ones we don't need to keep, and transferring from DVDs and VHS tapes to digital. This is a project that has been needed but we never get to it, so having Wendy working on it is very helpful.

Building & Grounds

- I'm looking to get back to the painting. It would be helpful to organize a painting party or 2. The needs are: door frames, window trim, the master control room, 1 of the walls in the lobby, and 2nd coats in a couple of places.
- Bill Marcinkowski has worked with us 2 days in the last month. He has been helping me make & run cables, conduit, & AV junction boxes for the new rooms

Fundraising

- Grant- We have been awarded a \$500 grant from the All State Foundation, thanks to Sharon Bixby. So, thanks, Sharon!
- Underwriting- Sharon also helped us secure our first underwriter for the year- Ludlow Fire Department. They contributed \$750. This is a great kick-start to launching a new underwriting campaign.

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