

FY2021 ANNUAL REPORT
July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021



Okemo Valley TV is an independent, nonprofit community access television station and education center. Formally identified by the State and federal telecommunications regulators as “PEG Access” (“PEG” stands for Public, Educational, & Government), we directly serve several local Towns with media and information services, including Ludlow, Plymouth, Cavendish, Mount Holly, Andover, and Reading. In 2021, we celebrated our 20th anniversary; since 2001, we have a lot of changes, both in our own organizational growth, as well as the tools and technology that we use. We have increasingly broadened our mission to be a media resource for the wider region. Okemo Valley TV among a robust network of 24 community TV stations and media centers operating in the State, represented by the Vermont Access Network, our membership and advocacy organization.

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We operate two cable TV channels, which are both on Comcast and VTel. One is a Public / Community access channel (Comcast ch. 1076 & VTel ch. 166); In the Spring of 2021, we began streaming this channel live 24/7, so that those without cable TV could “tune in” to watch the channel live. The other TV channel is Educational / Government access – ch. 1086 on Comcast & ch. 167 on VTel). Live streaming of the Education / Gov/ channel will soon be launched – a late Winter 2022 date is planned. Both TV channels feature local programming, news, information, & community announcements. That programming is also available to watch on demand on our website (okemovalley.tv). For those with Roku or Apple TV streaming devices, Okemo Valley TV programming is now also available via the Cablecast Screenwave app (which can be downloaded for free on these devices).

During FY21, we presented 1,889 new programs. Of those, 981 were locally-produced, amounting to 670 program hours. This is an increase of more than 50% over the previous year. One of these key services is our “gavel-to-gavel” coverage of local government meetings. In total, during FY21, we recorded and televised 202 local government meetings (including municipal and school board meetings). This represents a 25% increase in local meeting coverage over the previous year. Some of these meetings were fully in-person and others were in a “hybrid” format, with both in-person and remote participants. As this format is in increasing demand, we are doing more & more of them; it is a service that is in increasing demand.

We did more with live remote production FY2021– that is, broadcasting (and streaming) live from remote locations. One of the larger projects we took on was the live streaming of Green Mountain Union HS basketball games. All home games, up through the playoffs were streamed live. Many were also televised live, and all were recorded & archived; thanks to Norm Merrill for volunteering to operate the camera at the games.

FY21 was spent exercising precautions due to COVID-19. For much of the year, our facility was open but with reduced hours and only one staff member working on site at a time, with others working remotely. We hosted our first in-person event in June, at the Annual Meeting, which was held outside. The meeting included the presentation of awards to community producers of programming. These were Wendy Regier (“Outstanding Achievement”), Norm Merrill (“Producer of the Year”), Kata Welch (“Youth Producer”), and Ludlow Rotary Club (“Community Service”).

Our revenues for FY2021 totaled \$236,478 and the total expenses were \$21,225. The primary funding comes from “PEG Fees” collected paid by the cable TV operators, which is a regulatory mandate (in a typical year, this amounts to over 90% of our budget) In the Fall of 2020, we – along with all of the other PEG / community access stations in Vermont – received \$18,660 in COVID Relief Funds, earmarked by the VT Legislature, for the purposes of offsetting increased expenses and staffing shortages. We are grateful the support of the Towns of Ludlow, Cavendish, Plymouth, & Mount Holly, who provided budget appropriations, totaling \$4,250 in revenue. Thanks also to Marylou Scofield, Esq. and VT Properties / William Raemis Real Estate for underwriting support in FY21. Lastly, thank you to all of the community members who have supported us through membership. Memberships & underwriting comprised \$2,325 of total revenue.