

PRESENT: Supervisor Broderick, Councilmembers Ceretto, Geiben and Morreale; Attorney Catalano; Finance Officer Blazick, and 2 residents

EXCUSED: Councilman Bax

Geiben introduced Cable Commission Chairman James Abbondanza.

Abbondanza distributed a packet containing a short history, the granting of the Time Warner Franchise, an explert of Section 5 of the agreement regarding the PEG, a list of recommended equipment and cost of the live stream support. Today's meeting is to discuss Section 5-EAS and PEG / 5.2 B. Read into the record.

*B. PEG Capital Support – Within 45 days after the effective date, Grantee will provide to the Grantor a one-time advance in the amount of \$9,210.00 to purchase equipment reasonably comparable to that listed in Exhibit A. Such equipment will be used by the Grantor for the production of PEG access programming, and/or any other local educational or governmental access use, including but not limited to the training of local students who participate in a school sponsored internship for producing programming for carriage on the PEG access channels. Said advance will be repaid in fifteen (15) equal yearly installments of \$614.00, without interest applied, said repayment, deducted from the last franchise fee payment for each calendar year made to the Grantor by the Grantee.*

This more or less stipulates the responsibility of the Town. The Town has received the funding, and it has been deposited.

Broderick said Catalano is concerned with the Town's liability for those individuals filming.

Abbondanza spoke of the Niagara Falls High School Media Production Program. They have been operating since 2004. They have done hospital information shows, the Housing Authority, the Lewiston Chamber of Commerce, City of Niagara Falls Council meetings and School district meetings. In regards to liability, in the 13 years they have been operating, there has not been a single incident. They do not walk around with the cameras, they are meant to be in a fix position.

Students are carefully supervised, as would any student that participates in Lewiston's program. Abbondanza feels, other than the standard liability involved in a teacher taking out a number of students, and potentially something happening. Here it is a two student - one supervisor association.

As far as airing, Lockport Cable and Niagara Falls High School will air at the Towns request; it can be streamed on the Town's website, or on a Facebook account. The Town will be in complete control of the content, when it goes out and how it goes out etc...

In searching statistics and data, Abbondanza found the following: Municipalities Streaming Meetings = 4,300,000 hits; Students Streaming Municipal Meetings = 6,230,000 hits.

The Town needs to keep in mind; there are rules and regulations by which this will operate. There will be policies/statements as to where and when the video will be done, who will be involved, and so on. Abbondanza said someone looking to be elected or someone wanting to show themselves on television is not allowed.

During the last ten-years of preparing this proposal, many individuals have shown some interest and want this to happen. There is no reason this should not be done.

If Attorney Catalano was present, Abbondanza said he could address the specific issues in terms of liability. One can't move forward in this world without potential for liability.

Ceretto pointed out, the way Catalano understands this, is there needs to be a curriculum.

Abbondanza drafted the original MOU with NCCC, but Lewiston-Porter was never completed.

Geiben said when he entered the picture and started to work with Abbondanza, they focused on NCCC, thinking it was the best place to mentor the program. It was basically stonewalled. The discussion turned to other ways. Catalano was so concerned about liability that it got bogged down again.

Geiben suggests the Town purchase the equipment. Start with the Town Board meetings and Work Sessions and see how it moves along and see if a school would be interested.

The Town can duplicate Niagara Falls High. Knowing public education as Geiben does, there may be some union issues. That would have to come through the District.

If the Town partnered with St. Peters that may not be the case. The Town can purchase equipment, get students involved and see if they would be willing to have a curriculum program or a club.

As far as the progress with the PEG, the Town can take baby steps to get to the point of the whole picture of doing what Dr. Abbondanza sees.

It is thought the Clerk would control the equipment. If something goes wrong with the equipment or the meeting, just shut it down. We should be able to get the Town Boards work out to the public.

Broderick said Lockport's equipment is mounted. A switch is turned on, all else is done by LCTV.

Geiben would like to see young people involved; but can't wait another year. The cost of equipment is rising as the Town works on this.

The last ten-years of Abbondanza's tenure at NCCC; he was Assistant to the Associate Dean for the Distant Learning Program. He is very much aware of the technology, how it works; the curriculum the Board is talking about is already formed. He knows how to train, what to train, and what process is involved. Abbondanza would like to see young people become involved, and is willing to Supervisor until this is organized and set up.

Broderick's fear is if Mr. Abbondanza loses interest, all the equipment will end up in a box in a closet somewhere, and no one will run the program.

Abbondanza has a strong feeling of responsibility for this. He took the College from no course on the internet to #4 out-of 65 units at SUNY. He intends to see it through until there is a successful program, and then hand it over to another Supervisor.

It was Geiben and Broderick's understanding this was already in place. It was thought some sincere dialoged had taken place and there was a commitment from the last Board to move ahead. Bax and Ceretto told Geiben there was very little discussion, if any. There is a Board here that is a little bit uninformed as to the PEG's potential.

Geiben likes the idea of starting with Board meetings. Have the equipment set-up, have the students from St. Peters advice the Board on how to move forward.

The Town needs to create policy & procedure. Abbondanza offers to work with the Board.

When looking at studies and having done research, groups that know they are being televised, usually show more restraint in terms of their process. There are a number of good things that will happen as a result of this, the least of – televising the Board meeting.

The Town and Village are wonderful, with a lot of things happening, and there should be a method and means to present it. There is a business orientation as well as public orientation and this equipment will allow the Town to do both.

Catalano entered the meeting.

Broderick asked Catalano to touch on his concern regarding curriculum. Catalano said this is an internship that needs some a curriculum. Each student needs a recognized internship in order to be in the program, which means there has to be a curriculum authorized by the school.

Abbondanza said the school itself is not likely to create a program or the situation within which the program will stand. For example: Niagara Falls High School has a media course. Quaranto volunteered and supported Abbondanza with this. Abbondanza created at least three curriculums at the College and has no problem doing this for Lewiston.

Geiben asked if equipment could be borrowed to create a sample meeting. Resident Paulette Glasgow offered her equipment.

Abbondanza said it would be beneficial to purchase the equipment. There is enough funding to provide equipment, supervised equipment to record, store and distribute at the Town's command.

Broderick asked Abbondanza, once the project reaches where it needs to be, is there any cost to the Town? Not that Abbondanza can see, LCTV airs for free because the Town is a Time Warner affiliate.

The suggested equipment will take the Town into the next 5 – 7 years without any problem.

Geiben said the Commission is doing its due diligence to do this right, so future Town Board will continue to support it.

Catalano has spoken to LCTV, they have said all the Town needs is a camera in the back and a microphone loud enough, so it can be heard. It is then forwarded to LCTV and aired. Geiben said that is fine for step one, but the Commission is hoping to move forward.

Abbondanza said the purpose of the grant is to create something here at Town Hall and to go out and tape activities for community members to see.

Ceretto asked how it would be delegated to the many schools in the area. Geiben said each school has its own equipment, and any school that has the curriculum can participate.

Blazick understands how the money will work. It is an advance of future revenue received from Franchise Fees. They have advanced the Town approximately \$9,000. They then reduce what they are going to pay the Town by 1/7 of that, over a 15-year period. It is not a grant it is an advance on future monies. This is not a freebie by any means; this is something that will come off future revenues. Abbondanza said the rate is \$614.00/year.

The Cable Commission is asking permission to purchase equipment and simultaneously create a group of individuals who are willing to participate. Again, Abbondanza offers to supervisor.

Geiben said the equipment the Town is looking at is approximately \$5,000, which is under the procurement policy price. Abbondanza said the total amount is \$7,357.00, including streaming service for the first year. The Town doesn't have to take the service until its able to program.

Catalano said yes and no. This is a zero interest loan, technically, from Time Warner, but has to be paid back if the Town goes through the process. If the Town chooses not to, we purchasing our own, then there is no worry about the zero interest loan. Anything over \$2,500 needs a bid, whether oral or written, but a bid is necessary. Abbondanza has three, and will forward to the Board.

Geiben said once the equipment is purchased there needs to be a target date to have policies in place so this can start to be televised.

Abbondanza said the purchasing of the equipment would trigger the process; there will be a time line. If the Board approves the purchase of the equipment, while waiting for delivery, he will move forward with what is required to be done.

Board members are comfortable with this. Board members thanked Mr. Abbondanza for all his efforts. This will be discussed at tonight's Work Session.

Meeting adjourned.

Transcribed and Submitted by,  
Donna R. Garfinkel