

Groton Cable Advisory Committee
via Internet Conference

Meeting Minutes for: 9/12/24

In Attendance:

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Cable Committee Members: John Macleod, Janet Sheffield & Neil Colicchio

Other:

Program Director - Ashley Doucette

Called to Order At: 4:35 PM

Meeting Minutes:

Janet made a motion to approve the minutes of July 25th, 2024. Neil seconded. It passed by vote of 3-0.

John made a motion to approve the minutes of August 8th, 2024. Janet seconded. It passed by vote of 3-0.

General Updates:

- Two new shows have started taping at the studio and there are some other shows in the initial stages of creation.
- We have a new volunteer who is interested in helping us with productions and has even expressed specific interest in covering the Prescott Community Center's Open Mic Nights.
- The Groton Business Association's monthly meeting for October will be held at the studio. It is likely that the dinner portion of the evening will have to take place upstairs in the school's front commons due to space limitations. A tour and interactive elements will be setup in the studio.
- Franchise Renewal progress with Charter has stalled. We are currently waiting on a response from the point of contact.
- After sending the formal request letter to Verizon for our new HD channel, technicians have been scheduled to come in next week to start laying the groundwork for the infrastructure. We should have the HD channel in place within a few weeks time.

Discussion - Closed Captioning & Funding

Janet and Eric had sent forward notes on the draft letter reviewed at the August 8th meeting. Those notes were implemented but the letter was not sent as a grant opportunity arose at the beginning of September and Ashley believed it would be worth applying to see if funds could be sourced by that method before seeking further assistance.

The grant opportunity was for \$2,000 - \$10,000. The full \$10,000 was applied for but it was made clear in the application that any amount, even partial funding, would help us offset the cost while we seek other funding opportunities.

A decision will be made at the end of December.

Through some conversation with Cablecast during this application process, we were given a free trial of their closed captioning system. The time saved compared to our current "by request" method of captioning was significant and the process was much easier to navigate.

And a side-by-side comparison of the same meeting (the Select Board meeting of July 15th, 2024) showed similar accuracy results - though that will be further helped by Cablecast's ability to add a Groton specific vocabulary that the system can utilize to recognize names/places/topics/ etc.

The captions were tested successfully on our Verizon channels, on our online reflection, and from the Cablecast app. The captions did not work on our Charter channels as the convertors that we utilize to operate them strip the captions as the feed passes through.

A survey for thegrotonchannel.org is still a work in progress.

Discussion - Grotonfest

Grotonfest is coming up on Saturday, September 28th.

Our booth location should be the same or similar to last year as we purchased the additional access to electricity (\$115 total booth cost).

We plan to setup the booth similarly to how we did last year, with a TV to showcase our shows and programs from the cablecast app, a computer to showcase our website and online platforms, cameras, marketing materials, and pens to giveaway.

The stock of pens is still sufficient.

Discussion - Channel Info Handout

We have channel information handout cards that we giveaway at events and which we keep in our camera bags to provide when interact with residents out in the field. We do not currently have enough stock of these cards to make it through the day at Grotonfest.

Ashley designed a new card (as some of the information on the previous version is now outdated). The design was reviewed by the committee.

None of the committee members in attendance had any notes for changes to the design.

As Eric was not in attendance, Ashley will touch base with him to make sure that any notes he may have can be implemented before printing.

The cost for the double-sided, glossy cards from Staples are as follows:

- 100 for \$44.00
- 250 for \$64.99
- 500 for \$109.99

As we will be receiving and HD channel soon and an additional channel number will need to be added to the design, Ashley's recommendation was to purchase 250 cards to ensure we have enough to make it through the upcoming event and so that we can save some funds for the purchase of more once the new channel number has been designated.

VOTE: Janet made a motion for the purchase of 250 double-sided cards at the cost of \$65. John seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

PURCHASE REQUEST: 24TB Expansion Drive - Price Increase

As the 24TB expansion drive that Ashley proposed to the committee at the August 8th, 2024 meeting has been out of stock since requesting the purchase, the drive will now need to be sourced from another retailer at an additional cost.

In order to cover the additional cost, Ashley requested an extra \$100 for the purchase.

VOTE: Janet made a motion to approve an extra \$100 for the purchase of the Seagate 24TB drive - bringing the total budget up to \$615 - Neil seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Next Meeting is planned for Wednesday, October 9th at 4:30 PM and is currently planned to be held on Zoom.

A meeting was also planned for Thursday, October 24th for the purpose of holding a Public Hearing on the Charter/Spectrum Franchise License Renewal - dependent upon receiving a draft license from Charter/Spectrum.

Meeting Adjourned at: 5:56 PM