Groton Cable Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes for: 9/17/26

In Attendance:

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Cable Committee Members: Russ Harris, John Macleod, Eric Fischer, Janet Sheffield & Neil Colicchio,

Other:
Program Director - Ashley Doucette

Called to Order At: 4:32 PM

Meeting Minutes:

Janet made a motion to approve the minutes of August 26th, 2026. John seconded. It passed by a vote of 4-0.

General Discussion:

Eric asked to return to the discussion from last meeting regarding the potential of a Groton Channel related story for inclusion in the Groton Herald. Russ stated that it would be better for something new that is going on as opposed to something about what is already known. Some further discussion was had about what form this might take but more conversations will be had about potential topics of interest (online availability, captions, etc.)Russ also talked about how importance of collaboration between the channel and the newspaper.

Ashley answered a question from Eric about where we stood on the process of selling and/or auctioning the older studio computers from 2011 and 2013. Not a lot of progress has been made recently but Ashley hopes that there will be more movement after the Fall Town Meeting.

General Updates:

- Groton has created a new Town Meeting Dashboard for easy access to all information related to Town Meeting. As a part of this, we found a way to link directly to the chapters that we create for our meeting recordings. We were able to provide links to the exact moment the different articles were discussed during Select Board, Planning Board, and other meetings and programs.

- The laptop purchased for captioning has arrived and is ready to be utilized at Town Meeting on October 3rd.

- Fall sports have started up. Soccer and volleyball games are already up on the channel and the first football game is scheduled for tomorrow (9/18/26).

- Captions are working great on both Charter channels now that we've swapped to the new convertors. We've had good feedback on them so far and have been working on making them as accurate as we can.

Discussion - Grotonfest 2026

Grotonfest is coming up on Saturday, September 26th.
Ashley was able to get 200 pens for a total of $309.13 (including $18.19 in tax which will be paid for separately out of the department's gift account - *This amount was incorrectly stated as $15 during this meeting.*)
Packing for the event will take place next week for our typical booth setup and our arrival time for the day of the event is set for 6:30-7:00 AM.

Discussion - Progress on Charter/Spectrum Franchise Renewal

Ashley let the committee know that there has still not been any movement on the franchise renewal. We are still waiting for Charter to review the draft agreement that was sent to them on April 24th, 2026.

Discussion - Update on Streaming Bill

As requested at the last meeting, Ashley provided an update on the status of the streaming bill to modernize funding for cable access.
The end of the formal session was on July 31st. There was a big push prior to the end of the formal session with everyone reaching out to their representatives. There had been attempts to attach the bill to other bigger items but ultimately nothing panned out and our bill was always removed to ensure there was no negative vote attached to it.
There is a general feeling that if the bill was put to the floor for a vote, the bill would likely pass but the issue still remains that nothing goes to the floor unless leadership wants it to go to the floor.
There seems to be a lot of support for the bill but it can't seem to cross the finish line.
Everyone seems to agree that they want to keep us around but there seems to be a lot of disagreement on how to keep us around (where the money should come from).
There is a MassAccess meeting coming up on October 7th where more information should be provided on this topic.

Next Meeting is planned for Thursday, October 22nd at 4:30 PM and is currently planned as hybrid meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at: 5:24 PM