



Mt. Hood Cable Regulatory Commission

Serving Multnomah County and the Cities of Fairview, Gresham, Portland, Troutdale & Wood Village

MT. HOOD CABLE REGULATORY COMMISSION

Hybrid – virtual or MetroEast – Gresham, OR

March 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes – [APPROVED](#)

SUMMARY MINUTES

Call to Order 6:32 PM

Roll Call

Present: Chair Studenmund; Vice Chair Dennerline; Commissioner Wagner (6:37 p.m.); Commissioner Harden; Commissioner Goodlow (6:54 p.m.); Commissioner DeGraw

Absent: Commissioner Roche; Commissioner Thomas

Staff: Eric Engstrom; Andrew Speer; Michael Wong; Rebecca Gibbons; Rana DeBey

- Agenda Review: none.
- Disclosures: none.
- Public Comment (non-agenda items): none.
- Community Media Center Updates: see regular agenda.
- Franchisee Activity Reports
 - Comcast: Tim Goodman, Comcast reported on second quarter events planned including: Internet Essentials promotional events; supporting Junior Achievement BizTown; site visits and creating enhanced Lyft Zones (“wi-fi on steroids”); sponsoring Dress for Success Foundation; Reynolds Middle School clean-up; supporting a Girls Inc event and the Be Great Ball Gala for Boys and Girls Clubs; Portland Community Foundation Gala; APANO celebration; School House Supplies inaugural event; Portland Pride Parade; Latino Network; NAYA book drive; Self Enhancement Inc. foundation event; Hacienda CDC; and Project Genesis, an upgrade of the network (10G).

***CONSENT AGENDA – NO DISCUSSION**

All items listed below may be enacted by one motion and approved as consent agenda items. Any item may be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately if a member of the Commission so requests.

C1. January 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes

C2. February 4, 2023 Retreat Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Harden moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Dennerline seconded.





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VOTE: 5-0 passed (Commissioner Goodlow had not yet arrived)

REGULAR AGENDA

R1. TechSmart Initiative for Student Success – Making Meaning Report (Information Only)

DeBey introduced Kristi Manseth, VP Research at Pacific Research & Evaluation (PRE), the MHCRC evaluation consultant hired to conduct evaluation of grant impact throughout the initiative. As a wrap-up to the initiative, staff and PRE produced a Making Meaning report designed to share learnings and impact with the grant participants and the greater community.

Manseth, referring to a PowerPoint presentation, shared a brief introduction and the background of the initiative and its two primary goals. Six districts were funded with nine total projects. Many types of devices provided, as well as many, many software applications, particularly of necessity during COVID.

TechSmart funding allowed districts to take risks – opportunities to try new technology, strategies, and teacher professional development formats, etc. TechSmart is at the forefront of digital equity – helping districts focus on internet deserts and to work on solutions. Student-centered learning is highlighted when technology is used to its full potential. The initiative produced many successes and ideas to replicate.

Full evaluation of the initiative's impact was impacted by the COVID pandemic. When COVID hit, all students became technology students, thereby removing the compare group and all state testing, which produced achievement data, was stopped.

Discussion

In response to a question from Commissioner Harden regarding pre-COVID data from Reynolds, Manseth said she would provide the data to staff to share with the Commission.

In response to a question about what's next for the TechSmart Program, Gibbons said that because the Commission's ability to continue funding TechSmart was restricted in 2019 under federal law, the Commission had to stop the initiative short of its original funding goal of \$18 million. Gibbons said staff will continue to share successes and lessons learned in different forums in hopes that it will have lasting impact and encourage others to support learning transformation in schools through the use of technology.

Rebecca Burrell, Open Signal said that it is difficult to show results in the educational setting, however the PRE report does a great job with what's available to present clear data. Burrell said she knows how hard it is to work with student data and said the report is a bold effort with great (miraculous!) results.

Manseth thanked the Commission for designing and pursuing the initiative and the support from the Commission and staff to help PRE to be a part of the project and be fully invested in telling the story.

R2. Community Media Centers Annual Activity Reports (Information Only)



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Rebecca Burrell, Director of Strategy, Open Signal shared a presentation of some of the highlights from 2022 and said Open Signal is figuring out its post-COVID reality. Burrell said the cohort program provided 1000 hours of 1:1 training and the Teach to Learn program provided 100 hours of media training. 145 volunteers were trained. More than 50% of students were BIPOC. Lots of training, films produced by students, community events. In regard to the operating budget, Burrell said they are trying to reconcile historic funding deficit. Burrell explained that baseline funding held steady or declined several years ago and has not recovered. Burrell said Open Signal is committed to providing living wages to staff.

Discussion

In response to a question from Commissioner Harden regarding budget deficit, Burrell said Open Signal continues to pursue funding options but said the funding they receive from the City just covers production services for government meetings and cable broadcast, and doesn't cover the cost of the digital education services Open Signal provides to the community.

Seth Ring, MetroEast, shared a presentation and reported that MetroEast's Board had a complete turn-over in the past year. Ring said the new Board is more representative of the community. Ring provided updates on services provided including: Mobile Media Innovation Grant; POW Girls; iPad-based video programming to schools; digital inclusion trainings with Rosewood Initiative; and almost 1700 new programs last year and 1500 hours of original programming.

Ring said MetroEast's budget is also experiencing opting budget reductions that are not sustainable for the organization. MetroEast's expected expenses total \$1.3M, however the primary source of revenue, the MHCRC operating funds through franchise fees, is expected to be about \$700k. Ring said they fill in the gap by capitalizing some wages; through grants and sponsorships; and earned income. Ring said MetroEast has a rainy-day (investment) fund, but this is likely the last year they'll be able to use it. If we can't make enough income, we'll then need to turn back on services.

Discussion

In response to a question from Commissioner Dennerline about MetroEast decision to narrow its service population focus and its impact on revenue, Ring said MetroEast has seen a positive impact as result of this decision in terms of participation in programs and has been able to get more grants by narrowing the focus.

Commissioner DeGraw shared commiseration with non-profits for finding money for operations. DeGraw said wages are not keeping up with cost of living, particularly when wages start too low. DeGraw said she appreciates that the staff and community media centers are starting this conversation about pay equity with the Commission and the Jurisdictions. DeGraw thanked Burrell and Ring for being so frank in their presentations and said that she and the Commission can acknowledge this issue.

R3. Applying for the Community Technology Grants Video

Rana shared a video produced by MetroEast Community Media for the Commission to tell interested applicants about the Community Technology Grants Program.

*R4. Community Technology Grant Agreements: 2023 Cycle





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Rana provided an overview of grants and shared background. In January the Commission approved 18 pre-applications to apply for funding. Staff collaborated with applicants based on commissioners' input from that meeting to work on the full applications. Two organizations have since withdrawn from consideration (Race Talks and Lower Boom Foundation). Staff has reached agreement and asks the Commission to approve the following five grants. Rana provided an overview of each.

MOTION: Vice Chair Dennerline moved to approve the Community Technology Grant Agreement with CymaSpace for a total of \$206,083. Commissioner Harden seconded.

VOTE: 6-0 passed

MOTION: Commissioner Harden moved to approve the Community Technology Grant Agreement with the Northwest Children's Theater & School for a total of \$161,056. Vice Chair Dennerline seconded.

VOTE: 6-0 passed

MOTION: Commissioner DeGraw moved to approve the Community Technology Grant Agreement with the Outside the Frame for a total of \$77,000. Commissioner Goodlow seconded.

VOTE: 6-0 passed

MOTION: Commissioner DeGraw moved to approve the Community Technology Grant Agreement with Wisdom of the Elders for a total of \$77,176. Commissioner Goodlow seconded.

VOTE: 6-0 passed

MOTION: Commissioner Wagner moved to approve the Community Technology Grant Agreement with Wonderfolk for a total of \$35,852. Commissioner Goodlow seconded.

VOTE: 6-0 passed

*R5. MHCRC Strategic Planning Process – Scope of Work and Direction to Staff

Eric reminded commissioners about the work at the retreat and moving forward on the strategic planning process and next steps. Specifics are in the draft scope shared in past communications.

MOTION: Commissioner Goodlow moved to approve the draft scope of work, including project goals and outcomes, for the Commission's Strategic Planning process and direct staff to embark on the procurement process to hire consulting services. Commissioner DeGraw seconded.

VOTE: 6-0 passed

- Staff Updates





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- Comcast / Ziplly Cable Franchise Renewal (Rebecca). Next steps will be to bring Andrew up to speed. Additionally, we recently were approached by Astound for a cable franchise agreement in Portland, which we may bring forward in the coming months.
 - MHCRC Goals & Objectives (draft) (Rebecca). Staff made some adjustments as noted in the packet based on discussion at the retreat. Please review, think about the workplan, and let staff know if there are any adjustments you'd like to make or prioritize.
 - Community Media Center Grant Agreement Renewals (Rana). We have continued to work with the negotiation teams at OpenSignal and MetroEast on new multi-year contracts with the commission. We look forward to bringing these for Commission approval at the May meeting.
 - I-Net End Fund (Rebecca). Included in the packet is the end fund report. No expenditures out of the fund last year. Still about \$4M remains available. We'd love to spend it down for/in the community and have relayed this to Comcast.
 - MHCRC FY23-24 Budget Process (Michael). Michael reviewed the timeline for preparing the presenting the MHCRC Budget.
- Committee Reports
 - Open Signal Board (DeGraw): Onboarded two new board members.
 - No other specific committee updates.
 - New Business; Commissioner Open Comment: None
 - Public Comment: None

Adjourned: 9:06 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Ocken

