

MT. HOOD CABLE REGULATORY COMMISSION  
MetroEast Community Media, Studio A  
October 19, 2015 Meeting Minutes -- **APPROVED**

## **SUMMARY MINUTES**

MINUTES AS APPROVED AT THE DECEMBER 21, 2015 MHCRC MEETING.

Call to Order: 6:34pm

- Welcome John Branam, Portland Representative.
- Roll Call

Commissioners present: Carol Studenmund (Chair); Scott Harden; Norm Thomas; Rich Goheen; Mike Bennett; John Branam.

Commissioners Absent: Sue Dicile; Leif Hansen.

Staff: Mary Beth Henry, Director; Ben Walters, Legal Counsel; Julie Omelchuck, Program Manager; Rebecca Gibbons, Program Coordinator.

- Agenda Review: A revised agenda was distributed.
- Disclosures: Harden disclosed communicating with Marc Farrar, Comcast, about service issues at his home.
- Public Comment: none.

### **Consent Agenda**

- C1. September 21, 2015 Meeting Minutes
- C2. September 21, 2015 Work Session Minutes

**MOTION:** Bennett moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Harden seconded.

**VOTE:** 6-0 passed.

### **Regular Agenda**

\*R1. TechSmart Initiative Grant Agreement: Portland Public Schools Project Plan  
Omelchuck said staff is pleased to bring forward the final grant contract and project plan for Portland Public Schools (PPS) under the TechSmart Initiative. Omelchuck said staff and PPS team members have worked diligently for two years to develop the project plan. Omelchuck said this is a monumental moment in the course of the TechSmart Initiative having developed project plans with four of the six school districts and awarding, by far, the largest grant award. Omelchuck said the Grant Committee vetted the initial draft of the PPS project plan and brought a near final draft to the full Commission for review and discussion at the September work session. Following Commission input, staff edited the plan to include specific strategies (see

pages 10 and 13 of the draft included in the meeting packet) to address the racial achievement gap. Omelchuck introduced Ewan Brawley, Senior Director for Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment at PPS.

Brawley thanked the Commission on behalf of Superintendent Smith and the team that worked on the project plan. Brawley said the project plan supports the District's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading priority. Brawley said the Commission's partnership came at a pivotal moment to assist the District to investigate transformative curriculum that benefits all children. Brawley said closing the achievement gap is a priority. Brawley said the project plan has the support of Superintendent Smith and PPS Board Executive Committee.

In response to a question from Thomas about the type of devices used, Omelchuck said the project is focused on investigating and piloting different technology and digital curriculum. Omelchuck said the plan calls for scaling what works.

Bennett requested that staff and the PPS project team report back to the Commission semi-annually on the successes and challenges along the way. Thomas concurred.

Branam said he appreciates the grant focusing on the long standing racial achievement gap. Branam said technology can be an effective tool, but changing teaching and learning practices is key.

In response to a question from Harden about the number of English Language Learner students impacted by the grant, Brawley said it would depend on which schools are selected to participate. Omelchuck said the process for selecting the pilot schools includes looking at the student cohorts that need assistance.

Branam volunteer to assist, if needed, in the process to develop criteria for selecting pilot schools. Omelchuck said staff welcomes the input.

In response to a question from Goheen about the roll out to all schools in the district, Brawley said he didn't know the costs or specific details at this point, but confirmed there is a sustainability component inherent to the implementation and success of the program.

**MOTION:** Goheen moved to approve the TechSmart Initiative Grant Agreement with Portland Public Schools. Thomas seconded.

**DISCUSSION:** none.

**VOTE:** 6-0 passed

## R2. MHCRC Year-End Financial Report – Unaudited (Information Only)

Omelchuck said the Year-End Financial Report is an unaudited report prepared by staff as information only for the Commission. Omelchuck introduced Janice Hammond Getten, City of Portland Senior Financial Analyst.

Hammond Getten gave an overview of the report:

- The MHCRC collected about \$8.6 million in franchise fees.

- The MHCRC collected about \$5.1 million in PEG/I-Net fee revenues; a 2.8% increase from the previous fiscal year.
- The MHCRC oversaw the disbursement of \$1.8 million in operational dollars and \$1.5 million in capital support to PCM and MetroEast.
- The MHCRC granted \$3.1 million through the Community Grants program.

Revenues and expenditures were depicted in narrative and graph format in the report.

In response to a question from Branam about subscribership projection modelling, Henry said staff has had discussions with Jurisdiction staff about the flattening of revenues. Henry said subscribership in the Portland metro area is a moving target so far. Henry said that while there has been a decrease in subscribers, revenues have increased slightly due to service rate increase. Omelchuck said PCM and MetroEast are aware of the trends and that grant funds awarded into the community represent funds collected to date. Henry said staff is tracking trade press and FCC proceedings that could impact revenues. Henry said factors that impact revenues come from many directions, therefore the future is difficult to model.

#### Staff Activity Reports and Updates

- FCC: Henry said Chair Studenmund is scheduled to participate on an FCC panel on closed captioning in Washington, DC.
- TechSmart Initiative: Omelchuck said staff is working with the staff at Centennial and Gresham Barlow school districts on project plans.

Goheen reported that he, Studenmund, Thomas and Harden attended a Reynolds School Board meeting to present a \$1.3 million dollar check to commemorate the recent grant award.

Goheen said he would like the Grant Committee and the Commission to begin thinking about future funding patterns as it relates to funding personnel capital costs. Goheen said he wonders about how the grant funding support for personnel costs during the project helps or hinders the districts to fund the personnel needed long term.

Branam said that there are lots of opportunities for the districts to save money around traditional curricula adoption and shift the savings to personnel to fill the gap.

Branam said he agrees that the districts may need more help to think creatively around how to shift costs. Branam said the MHCRC grant funding represents the best potential for our students that he's seen because the funding supports deep changes in teaching and learning practices. Branam suggested that MHCRC and staff engaging with City Club and others to share with the broader community the lessons learned from the TechSmart Initiative.

Studenmund directed the Grant Committee to continue the discussion further.

- Digital Equity Action Plan: Henry said the City of Portland Office for Community Technology and Multnomah County Library partnered to develop a digital equity action plan for the county. Henry said the plan is developing through a series of workshops that involve non-profit and business community members. Henry said the first of the three workshops garnered 46 attendees representing 30 organizations. Henry said City Club is holding a Friday Forum on digital equity and participates in

the digital equity action plan are invited to participate. Henry said the second workshop is scheduled for Nov 6. Henry said the plan will include goals, objectives and strategies for digital inclusion.

- I-Net End-Fund: Gibbons said that under a franchise side letter agreement, Comcast retained the funds remaining in the I-Net Fund at the conclusion of the prior cable franchise. Gibbons said that under the renewed franchise, the MHCRC collects and administers all PEG/I-Net funds received. The I-Net fund retained by Comcast is now referred to as the I-Net End Fund. Gibbons said the 2015 starting balance for the I-Net End Fund was about \$4.1 million. Gibbons said that these funds may be used to offset construction costs of line extensions that exceed the Standard Installation formula. Gibbons said two small business in Portland contacted staff because the service installation quotes they received from Comcast weren't affordable. Through conversations with Comcast, Gibbons said staff developed a process for approve sites such as this for service installations paid for out of the I-Net End Fund. Gibbons said the 1<sup>st</sup> site was constructed this summer at a cost of \$90,000 (the high cost is due mostly to permitting and undergrounding costs in the Portland downtown core). Gibbons said a second site in under construction and is expected to cost about \$75,000.
- Other: none.

#### Committee Reports

- Finance Committee: The Committee is scheduled to meet to review audit findings in early December.
- Grant Committee: none.
- PCM Board Appointee: Studenmund said the PCM Board approved a plan to replenish capital funds by February 2017.
- MetroEast Board Appointee: Thomas said the Board is scheduled to meet on Wednesday.

#### New Business; Commissioner Open Comment

Studenmund asked Commissioners to be aware that the December meeting is the Monday of Christmas week. Studenmund asked Commissioners to let staff know if they have a conflict.

#### Franchisee Activity Report

- Comcast: Tim Goodman, Comcast Director of Government Affairs, showcased the Xfinity My Account app that allows subscribers to take a picture of their credit card to pay their bill. Goodman said Comcast is also offering American Sign Language tutorials on how to turn closed captioning on and off. Goodman said the X1 box is available in Spanish.  
Studenmund asked if the tutorials are captioned for people that are hard of hearing. Goodman said he would check and report back to the Commission.
- CenturyLink: Stewart, CenturyLink, said community of Maywood Park has approached CenturyLink about a franchise agreement.

Henry said she met with a Maywood Park Councilman, who expressed interest in Maywood joining the Commission.

#### PEG Provider Activity Report

- MetroEast Community Media: Brading said MetroEast received a clean financial audit for the year. Brading thanked Sandy Montgomery, MetroEast staff, for her good work maintaining the books. Brading highlighted several MetroEast events such as PSA day for non-profits and holiday showcase. Brading said MetroEast is the recipient of a series of grants with Multnomah Bar Foundation to produce civic engagement programming. Brading said MetroEast is engaged in a process to translate the programming into Spanish.
- Portland Community Media: Manley said PCM executive director search process garnered 48 applications. Manley said the application are currently undergoing search committee review. Manley said PCM received a clean financial audit for the year. Manley highlight PCM activities including workshops focused on animation, documentary production and internet basics. Manley said staff is supporting the community by hosting gatherings such as one that was attended by 70 independent women filmmakers. Manley said she has been focused on working with staff and the Board to be able to do a great hand off to the new director in January. Goheen said he is grateful that Manley is leading PCM in this transition.

Public Comment: none.

Adjourn: 7:51 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Gibbons  
Program Coordinator