

## GATCom regular meeting (Government Access Television Access Commission)

Minutes for 03/26/2019

Present: Aldon Hynes, Theresa Bahner, Tobenna Nwangwu

Absent: Richard Krueger

Also present: Pua Ford (coordinator & clerk)

1. **Call to Order** – Hynes called the meeting to order at 7:15pm.

### 2. Approve Minutes

*Motion to approve the minutes of December 12, 2018 (Hynes/Bahner)*

*Discussion:* The December meeting was held primarily to approve a department budget proposal for 2019-2020. Bahner was not present at that meeting, but had read the minutes.

*Vote to approve unanimous.*

*Motion approved.*

### 3. Business

- a. Activity and financial updates: The commission had no questions regarding the coordinator reports.
- b. Budget 2019-2020: At the 3/21/19 Board of Finance meeting, \$1,000 was reduced from the budget line for camera and production personnel (1135-00-52100 General Professional Services).
- c. Requests to WGATV – services and collaborations
  1. Bahner had received emails from Chuck Pyne, asking for the commission to have WGATV produce an informational program from state Senator Logan.
  2. Mr. Pyne's request in various communications is to have WGATV either record an introduction to the Republican Party's candidate for First Selectman or sponsor a debate before the upcoming 5/06/19 town elections.
  3. Ford has been talking with Mary Dean of the Amity and Woodbridge Historical Society about producing short documentaries about the Thomas Darling House and associated events.
  4. During public comment at the 3/18/19 Woodbridge Board of Education meeting, a speaker mentioned the names of a former student and parents to support her arguments. The board chair gave a note to our camera operator, asking that the names not be included in the playback of the recording.
- d. State and federal policy activity: *Covered in the coordinator's reports.*

### 4. Business

- a. Recommendations regarding requests to WGATV
  1. Pursuant to the Policies of this commission, particularly III.A.2(b)(1), WGATV welcomes recordings of programs and events sponsored by our elected officials. We have recorded events co-sponsored by Sen. Logan and Rep. Klarides when we learn

of them ahead of time and have personnel available to do the work. At the most recent event, no personnel were free that evening to record. Too often, we only learn of these events at the last minute.

Ford had earlier suggested that an informational program was better suited for the Comcast Seymour studio. It could easily be distributed to most of the Naugatuck Valley towns in District 17 and Bethany, and the recording would be available for playback on WGATV for Woodbridge and Citizens TV for Hamden. Ford recently updated her certification for use of the Seymour studio. Use of the equipment by volunteers is free, as is traditional with public access operations.

2. WGATV does not sponsor debates, but in past years has recorded them in collaboration with the Amity League of Women Voters and the Beecher Road School PTO. If the request involves a special program around one candidate, the Policies have a specific prohibition:

### III. A. (c) Production and Distribution Prohibitions

Programs which contain, in whole or in part, any of the following subject matter will not be produced or distributed....

- 2) Political Campaigning: WGATV will not be used for political campaigning by individuals or organizations seeking public office or legislation. Neither will the channel be used for the solicitation of funds for political purposes.

*Note: During the three (3) month period preceding an election, programs which feature elected officials who are candidates for re-election will not be produced or distributed. This will not preclude their participation in public meetings or special forums of public debate.*

Ford will draft a reply to Mr. Pyne regarding the above requests and show it to commission members before sending.

3. Ford continues discussion with the historical society and will try to recruit students for a project.
4. Commission Policies include:

### V. EDITORIAL RIGHTS

WGATV is an operating entity of the Town of Woodbridge and, as such, reserves the right to identify any material as unsuitable for production or distribution, as determined by the Commission.

Those present discussed the request from the WBOE chair. General consensus was that the material (a few seconds in a 3+ hour recording) was unsuitable for distribution, with privacy of a minor and family as the criterion in question. Those present discussed the best way to obscure or remove that material without calling undue attention to its absence, and a suitable method was identified and agreed upon.

- b. Discuss whether this commission should continue: Ford said that considering the business at this meeting, she was more comfortable working under a body with representation from both major parties. In other towns where a governmental access department operates directly under the chief elected official, there are instances of

political use of the TV channel. Hynes believes that this commission, like Zoning Board of Appeals, can schedule monthly meetings but only meet when there is business that requires attention. This could make it easier to recruit volunteers for the commission. The position vacated by Nancy Polk is still empty.

- c. Discuss FCC docket MB 05-311: *Included in the coordinator's report.*
- d. Next CAC grant proposal: Ford is investigating whether our programs on our YouTube channel can be downloaded with the closed captions intact. If not, an encoder that might make closed captions on Cablevision and Frontier TV might cost about \$5,000.

There is rumor of "hidden wifi" in the Center Gym, used by the registrars during elections. Hynes suggested that Ford needs to find a "secret SSID." If this is not available to other town departments like ours, or is confined to the closed state network, then cost of installing an ethernet drop in the Center Gym should be included in the next grant proposal.

- 5. *Motion to adjourn at 8:17pm (Bahner/2d Nwangwu)*  
*Approval unanimous; meeting adjourned.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Pua Ford

**Next scheduled meetings:**

**Tuesday, April 23, 2019**

**Tuesday, May 28, 2019**

***Note:** The April date follows the 4/22/19 budget hearing, and the May date follows Memorial Day. If there is no business to discuss, the meetings may be cancelled. This commission requires a quorum of at least three members.*