

MRVTV MEETING MINUTES

Date and Time: Thursday, 1-27-2022 @ 6:00pm

Present: Lisa Loomis, Rob Williams, Genny Knight, Ilse Sigmund (via Proxy/Liz), Ian Sweet, Ned Farquhar,
Tony Italiano, Rob Perry, Liz Levey, Dan Eckstein (via Proxy/Liz), Roger Nishi

Location: via ZOOM Video call.

Welcome/Additions, changes to Agenda

- Lisa opened the meeting @ 6:03pm
 - Genny Knight was welcomed as our newest Board Member!
 - Genny has lived in the Valley almost all her life. She has been a public school teacher and librarian in a number of VT school systems in Vermont, including Lamoille, Spaulding, Warren, and now Harwood. Genny's work as an educator has intersected with public access TV at various times. Genny is also a parent of Harwood student(s) and has lots of family in the area too. She is looking forward to serving on the MRVTV Board.

Rob made motion to accept Genny Knight as our newest Board Member. Ian seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- no changes to agenda
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Public Forum

No public present

Approval of minutes of the SEPT 16, 2021 board meeting

Liz made a motion to accept the minutes as written, John seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Ron abstained as he was absent at the last meeting

DIRECTOR's REPORT (please see report to get all the details)

Since last Board Meeting:

- Community Day: We netted \$855 and had 177 views for the livestream when we drew the raffle.
- "Watch Live" (MR-Free-TV): we started on July 1 and have had nearly 2200 page views since then. (Top shows: July 4th Parade, Troy Wunderle (Circus Smircus), Harwood Winter Concert, Community Day). We have a couple concerts coming up in the Spring.
- We get funds from Harwood to do this. They produce it themselves, and MRVTV makes available on TV and online
- Municipal Funds have been collected (\$9900)
- WebCam Covered Bridge: still gets loyal and broad following. Over 2 million views in 2021.

Staffing

- Camera Operators can be hard to find but we do have: Ella Glow – Harwood Senior, David Eric – Montpelier freelancer, Tiffany Boyd-has offices in Waitsfield, Sam Burns – Warren – not available of late, Bryce Douglas – Waterbury – busy of late.

Newsletter

- Open rate (40%) is better than in the recent past.

- Click throughs to website are also strong.

MRVTV.COM activity

- Live webcams (6393 views) Livestream (2188 views), Recent Programs (1158 views), Live Broadcast (119 views)
- Top Categories: Local Govt. Meetings, School Board Meetings, Local School Events, Community Events
- We did about \$600-700 revenue in dubbing – best year in a long time.

YOUTUBE

- Subscribers up 11%
- Covered Bridge: 2,198,532 views in 2021 alone.
 - Ned F asked is we could write a article about the people that watch the covered bridge webcam from well outside the MRV. Board agreed and thought posting a message (banner?) on the webcam stream asking for their stories (How did you find us? Why do you watch?) might yield contacts we could interview.
- Lisa's Candidate's forum was very popular. She will probably do another this year.
 - *Lisa will coordinate with Tony to host this again this year.*

FINANCIALS

2021 Review

- Currently 2021 is a running a slight deficit
- Rent does not include the tax allocation payment from the property manager. They send a misdated bill. Rob asked for corrected bill and that has not been received.
- Memberships looks high because 2020 VAN payment was amortized into 2021. We decided to take all the expense in the paid period so 2021 shows part of 2020 and the full 2021 dues. 2022 will include only the 2022 dues.

Liz asked about the HD Hardware payback plan and Rob said he would refresh the memory and make recommendation.

2022 Budget

- Budgeting cable grant by -5% in 2022.
- based on declining cable grant, the current budget for 2022 shows a loss of \$2743. It's likely possible to trim a bit and add some fundraising to cover this, though the State money would solve this gap.
- Lisa pointed out that Budget Committee neglected to plan for any COL raises in the 2022 budget and this should be remedied.

Rob W made a motion to accept the proposed 2022 budget on the condition that salaries are reviewed and adjusted upward to account for cost-of-living. The additional payroll will be presented for board electronic vote no later than Feb 15th. John D seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

■ *Liz and Lisa will review COL and make a recommendation on increases to the Board.*

TELVUE

- Tony alerted Board to pay attention to when the Telvue Bill will come due.

- According to Jan 2020 mtg notes on 2019 fiscal the Telvue bill was paid in 2019. It comes up for renewal every 4 years, so 2023 is the next renewal date.
- In 2019, Telvue proposed charging \$20K, and Keith talked them down to \$14K arguing that he would move it all to Youtube if they didn't reduce the fee.

■ *Rob and Budget Committee will make a big NOTE for next year's (2023) budget*

HD payback:

- After some discussion we agreed, we DO need to pay ourselves back. (HD payback payments stopped in 2019 when we began running at a deficit).
- Approximately \$20K still left to move form Capital to Cash Reserves.
- Tony reminded the Board how critical and successful the HD upgrade has been. We could not provide the services we do today had we not upgraded.

■ *Liz, Lisa, and Rob P, to research, and report back to the Board for further action.*

Community Outreach

- Rob P presented at the rotary (Zoom) and did a great job. The Board thanked him for keeping community connections alive.
 - Neil F. is the Treasurer of Rotary and in the future could orchestrate video of Rotary Speakers. Right now, they are still running these on ZOOM, and Tony can help capture the part of the Rotary ZOOM where speaker is featured. Tony also willing to train and help camera operators.

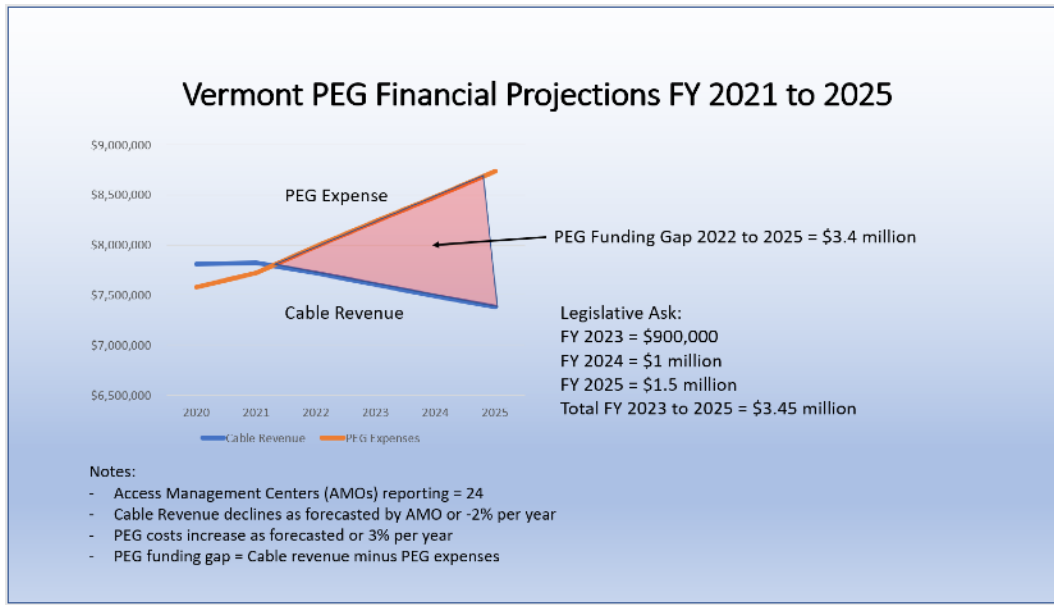
■ *Neil and Tony to coordinate as opportunities present themselves*

Financial Update: P&L 2021 Review and Proposed 2022 Budget

This was addressed during presentation of the Director's report (above)

Legislative Updates

- Rob P has been working with VAN to estimate the total funding gap. This slide summarizes their findings:



- Liz and Lisa (along with others) provided testimony at public hearing on funding which seems to have been helpful as funds are on their way to being fully approved.
- \$300K was approved for VAN by the House and further passage is anticipated in Senate. If passed, MRVTV could receive \$12,500 this year.
- Next year the VAN ask is \$600K and it TBD if it will be approved or how it will be divided.
- Lisa and the Board thanked Rob P for his efforts in this important area.

Program/Technical Update: Tony

- Fewer cameras are going out – but we still have plenty of content. Because of pandemic and zooming, we are being sent a lot of files and not needing to send camera.
- Did a fair amount of live sports streaming – paying fee for Harwood away games.
- Studio – we did 59 shows last year. Not everyone wants to do a Zoom show, but for those who do it is going well. When host of show is in the Studio it works very well.
- Rob W has started a new show, “Peak Flow” a show about health and wellness through breath work, and continues to produce his program Plan VT. Other producers are active - Theater Time with Doug B, and Anna is bringing her show back soon - “The Mend”
- Rob applauded the quality of Tony’s work in the studio.
- Paul Hartshorn came forward and told stories about the old days – Tony is still editing it. Stay tuned.
- The Chamber used us a lot – live talks. Mad River Cares did shows.
- Generally speaking, it has been pretty busy!
- The Board thanked Tony for his efforts and the success he has had in navigating challenges and opportunities during the pandemic.

Waitsfield Cable update- Roger

- Roger was unable to come to meeting. Rob shared the basics, namely that the Cable revenue does continue to go down. Roger and Rob Perry in regular communication regarding cable grant and Roger gave input to establish cable grant budget for 2022.

New Business:

- Working with Harwood
 - How can we connect with students? We have long sought a better pipeline here.
 - John wondered if we could ever get our studio moved to the Harwood building as had been discussed in the past. Although it would be great, this seems unlikely given recent unsuccessful Bond vote for Harwood renovations.
 - Genny Knight offered to work with Tony and others to foster better connections. Various ideas were considered
 - Could we have a camera at Harwood? Tony could train kids, and they could go out and shoot.
 - If we have equipment stored there, we need a solid liaison to oversee it.
 - Who are the likely candidates?
 - Harwood has a video editing staff person, but those classes are not happening right now
 - Maybe Kate Stauss (Journalism) or Jane Regan (History)
 - We should also reach out to Rachel Potts (Internship placement officer). Interns have to log hours away from Harwood, and we have room in the studio. Lisa noted that the Valley Reporter has had great success hosting Harwood student interns.

■ Genny, Tony, Rob to develop contacts at Harwood and look for connections with goal to get cameras in students hands, get students producing and sharing on MRVTV.

Old Business

- Save rent in future with different studio space?

■ *Liz, Lisa, Rob, Tony will meet to review options, if any.*

Adjournment

Ian made a motion to adjourn. Liz Seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Time: 7:31pm