



April 2010

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### **Administrative / Organizational**

- VAN Annual Meeting is Friday May 7<sup>th</sup>. All are invited. I sent out the agenda via email. This year's meeting is at FACT in Bellows Falls. This is a good opportunity to tour the facility (FACT is about 2500 sq feet, similar in size to what we are designing, and has a smaller operating budget than LPCTV). Longtime FACT board member (and former LPCTV consultant) Suzanne Groenewold has offered to give us a tour and answer any questions anytime we can get a few of us down there...if not at the VAN meeting, then we should do this another time in the near future.
- Comcast has looked into the Ludlow Town Hall live feed and determined that the feed is working, but that it does not work with the new (used) modulator we recently purchased. That modulator has a single fixed channel, and is not a channel that is supported by Comcast; they have loaned us an agile modulator for now, so we can go back to live broadcasts from Town Hall
- Just as an update, I made requested an estimate from Comcast back in February, re: cost of moving our fiber feed from the school to the Armory garage. I just heard today from one of the techs that the request is in motion. It sounds like there will be a cost but no word yet on how much.
- A capital funding request from Comcast will be filed sometime in May. We just need Christina Degraff-Murphy to confirm for us the totals from last year's gross cable subscriber revenues for Ludlow, Plymouth, & Cavendish (not Mount Holly)

### **Strategic Planning**

- We have drifted away from the strategic planning process - we do need to get this back on track; it will prove to be important to our fundraising efforts as well as serve as a guide for the organization.
- I have a plan to get us back on track: As mentioned in my March report, I propose doing the Mission, Vision, & Goals as our next discussion / workshop...I had proposed doing this in April but we never discussed it at the last meeting. I encourage us to pick a 1 - 2 month period (summer?) where we can take 1 day per week or 1 day every other week for approx. 2 hours each. I think this plan will help us keep on track, staying committed and engaged. We can discuss.
- We may be able to get some assistance from the Coolidge Foundation, which recently completed a very comprehensive strategic plan

### **Armory Project**

- 5 bids were opened by the Ludlow Selectboard at a special April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. The bids for the total project ranged from \$1.1-\$1.58 mil (if you would like to watch the video, you can see it on our website)
- Bid is scheduled to be selected at this coming Monday's Selectboard meeting - a committee was formed by the Selectboard to review the bids. They had just 2 weeks to do so... LPCTV's input was not sought. We were told back in the Fall that we would be involved in a building committee and would be working closely with the Town but that has not yet happened.
- I have been trying to keep our construction budget under \$200K, which seemed reasonable considering the approx. \$129,500 from the bid that the Town would be using on our portion of the building (covering HVAC, lighting, electric, roofing, & the main partition). The budget we are currently using is \$163,000 for our own renovations. Adding the 2 figures (163000+129500) equals \$292,500 for the project. Divide that by 2315 sq feet (our approximate portion of the space) and you get \$126 per sq foot. However, a couple of people have mentioned to us that we should budget much more. For instance, Bryarly Lehman, the consultant / project manager on the Ludlow (Mass) Community TV facility, suggested using \$2-300 per square foot bc of the technical specificity of a modern TV studio's needs. In comparison, that space, which is only 1400 sq ft, ran a total bill of \$534K! It's not the best comparison to make, for reasons I will mention at the meeting, but it does have some relevance.
- The Buildings & Grounds Cmte needs to meet to develop the existing renovation budget & get more specific, esp re: equipment & furniture

### **Fundraising & Outreach**

- I followed up with the Okemo, re: rejection letter, and was told that most likely it was in response to Sharon's inquiry with Diane Mueller about LPCTV being a recipient of an Okemo fundraiser.
- I have spoken with a professional freelance fundraiser about helping me research for larger national grants, and then write the grants. Her name is Kelly Grattan - lives in Philadelphia, but has ties to Ludlow. Her family owns North Fork Bagel Company. She has a PhD in non profit mgmt. I have spoken with her a few times and she is definitely on the ball. Her rate for us would be \$75 / hour and, once she has all of the background info from us (Articles of Inc., intro statement, mission, vision, goals) a grant application will take her no more than 3 hours of work. I am considering using her for 2 grant applications.
- I did check with Kelly Stettner (Black River Action Team), per Claudio's recommendation. As suspected, she has no time to do any consultation or contract work but volunteered to keep an eye out for grants for us and write letters of support

- I have a meeting with Sara Stowell next week about helping us with smaller grants. She does some freelance grantwriting and would be willing to take 1 or 2 on
- I attended the VT Arts Council grant workshop on April 5<sup>th</sup>. It covered some general ground, re: grant seeking from the Arts Council but did not cover the Cultural Facilities grant (for which we will be applying). That grant is very specific and they will be holding a specific workshop for that closer to the October deadline
- Michelle has developed a list of possible grant opportunities, all with approaching deadlines. She is preparing to write an application to the Windham Foundation for us.
- We should be hearing back from the VT Community Foundation in May, re: our \$8500 application
- Several of us met with Tom Appel of New England Management, re: fundraising management & grantwriting. He is very capable and can manage any number of projects related to construction & renovation. His firm is currently acting as the project manager for the Springfield Area Parent Child Center, and has assisted them with raising \$2 mil for their new construction project. He would be willing to manage our grantwriting efforts for \$85 / hour. We will discuss this on the Fundraising Cmte level and report back
- The Fundraising Cmte is meeting on Tuesday and will have a report for the Board at the Wednesday meeting
- I met with the VT Journal, re: a regular weekly column for LPCTV. Beginning next week, the paper is going to full-size and will include a "Programming Highlights" section from us. I will also include some other news briefs from LPCTV
- I am still working to try to find a news entity or organization that would be willing to act as "Executive Producer" of a regional news show. There are several interested people involved with access TV who would be willing to contribute, but we need someone to oversee it. I did ask the VT Journal reporter (Marilyn) back in March and at the time she was interested, but in my meeting with them last week I was told they didn't have the time. Any ideas would be great.
- I met with the Coolidge Memorial Foundation today. They recently hired a new Executive Director – I met with her & the board President. We discussed how we might partner together. Their recently completed strategic plan includes an objective to embrace electronic communications for education, publicity, & outreach. Obviously, we can help with that. I was impressed by their forward thinking and enthused by their interest in using media. In terms of how we can service them with video production, I followed the usual approach. When meeting with non profits & other groups, we offer them 2 models: 1 in which we provide the equipment & training to volunteers of theirs, and the other, in which they hire us to shoot & edit a professional video. We did not take action on anything yet but I told them we would make an effort to have a presence at their August 7<sup>th</sup> event, Plymouth Old Home Days, during which they will be dedicating the newly completed Museum & Education Center (I just took a tour today....nice project!)

## **Professional Development**

- NAB Show: it was a great experience. Ann Marie was a great support. I split my time between the (huge) trade show floor, educational workshops, keynotes, and networking. In terms of the trade show, where I priced out equipment - my focus for LPCTV was on archiving, and solid state recording (to replace videotape). Ann Marie was able to get me a press pass, which enabled me to get into everything at no cost. Between the flight, hotel, & trade show meals, the total cost to LPCTV was just under \$1000. I took care of some of the expenses myself.
- Michelle attended Video Educators of New England conference with BRHS Media Studies teacher John Bannon
- Michelle & John are also planning to attend a youth video production workshop the "Youth Media Live Studio Production", Sat. June 5<sup>th</sup> at the Sanctuary for Independent Media in Troy, NY. It is a media education non profit supported by the NY Council on the Arts. This would be a good partnership for us to build, as we assist in the curriculum development of the media studies program. They are enthusiastic about our involvement.