



October 2009

Administrative / Organizational

- Sue Pollender's Board status? Sue has brought up resigning. She should be asked for confirmation from George and then the board can vote on whether or not to accept the nomination
 - * with her resignation, the Board would be reduced to 10. Since we always have at least some members missing from each meeting, I do not see a problem carrying out the year with an even number. There has discussion about reducing the size of the board for next year anyway
- Annual Report to be submitted hopefully next week (to Comcast, Public Service Board, and Dept of Public Service), however this is dependent on our ability to generate a report from our master control system (more on that below, under "Equipment")

Strategic Planning

- 69 people have completed the survey to date; 26 were done by paper at the Chili Cook-off. Thank you George!
- we had said that we would keep the survey open through the end of October, but I am considering extending it through the first 2 weeks of November, since I think we could get more paper surveys completed
- out of the 69 surveys now completed, 68 have said that "Yes", LPCTV provides a valuable service in the community
- other results have so far indicated that we have some work to do - only half of the respondents know what channel numbers we are on and some of the comments indicate that there are still some people out there that haven't heard of us...but most have and so far 2/3 of the respondents have a grasp on the services we offer.
- our next workshop will be Thursday from 6 - 7, immediately following the bd meeting - we will work on Mission, Goals, & Vision, which we had scheduled for last month but never got to it.

Armory Project

- at this point, I have been told that we will be soon asked by the Town of Ludlow for some sort of letter of financial commitment to the space - and we now know that, as it stands, without any outside funding from grants, etc., the bond amount will be \$337,000 for the garage. Our rent estimate is based on that bond amount and our proposed share of the bldg. (the figure everyone seems to be using is 1/3 for LPCTV)...I was told that would be \$865 per month, plus utilities
 - * I think it is critical that LPCTV, BRGN, & the Town partner on grant applications for some of this funding so that the total burden on all 3 entities, and ultimately the taxpayers, is lessened; however, according to Town Mgr. Frank Heald's timeline for the project, there may not be enough time and we may not have a choice other than to accept the monthly rent terms
 - * I have been asking Frank Heald and others about looking into energy efficiency in terms of HVAC and solar panels - there is a lot of grant money out there right now - state and federal funds - for exactly these types of projects. In fact, the VT Clean Energy Development Fund Board announced last week the awarding of \$3.1 mil in grant money for projects across the state. Another grant round will close in the Spring, and it has a smaller revolving grant program for municipal-specific projects. The more we explore renewables and energy efficiency and the more we take advantage of current available funding sources, the better off for everyone. Not only does it help make more financial sense but
 - * As we discussed last month, there are also some design considerations that would make the building more appealing to all interested parties -
 1. more daylight is needed (which = energy savings), which can be achieved with new / larger windows or skylights
 2. and it would be extremely helpful to have some additional available space, esp. if we are only getting 1/3 of the total space (which, with the shared "common area" / entryway), leaves us with under 2000 sq feet, which we have all along marked as our absolute minimum. There are a couple of ideas that were generated by our architect, Claudio, that interested both LPCTV & BRGN
 - * So far everything that has been discussed is relatively vague - design, partitioning, breakout, zoning, and type of HVAC system, electrical - and each of these will have a huge impact on the operational costs of the building...I personally feel that before we sign any letter of financial commitment it only makes sense to have something in writing from the Town detailing what will be provided and to what extent. Until we know those details it is not possible to know what the costs will be, which makes budgeting difficult. we will need to consider the cost of utilities, etc. heavily when determining the affordability of the building - given today's financial situation, we would need the total monthly costs for everything to be a maximum of \$1000
- I was recently a guest on Ralph & Leo's show, to discuss our involvement in this project. You can tune in online or on channel 8 this week

Finances / Budget

- I was able to get the Okemo Valley Self Storage people to discount us on a unit. We will be moving into a 10x10 (from a 10x15) on Nov 1, and will be paying \$60 per month (which is discounted from \$85)
 - * we currently pay \$108 / mo for the 10x15, which means we will be cutting \$48 / mo from our budget beginning 11/1
- the request for capital funding from Comcast will be submitted after the Annual Report, so that they have that for reference
 - * capital funding request will be based on this year's projected revenues for Comcast as well as our projected revenues
 - * the amount we request is subject to our demonstrated ability to generate an equal amount of revenue on our own (

Equipment

- over the summer, I noticed that there was a potential tape head problem in our Panasonic DVX video camera...it was no longer recording to tape. This is the camera we purchased 2 yrs ago as our main "in-house" (staff) field camera. It is most often used for shooting meetings & events, in which cases it records to hard drive rather than tape. It was puzzling that it could already have developed tape head problems with so few hours on them (2000 hours is about average for this type of camera, and this particular camera has less than 100 hrs on the tape heads). Unfortunately, though, the camera was recently diagnosed by Custom TV in Natick, MA as needing new heads, the cost of which is equal to the camera's value at this point.
 - * adding insult to injury is the fact that the camera is out of warranty
 - * we will continue using the camera but will only be able to do so with recording to hard drive
- In possibly worse news, the company who provides our master control system, MaestroVision, has changed its technical support requirements. We have been paying them \$1325 annually to service, support, and update our system. That level of support is now just for troubleshooting. If we want full support, the amount we need to pay is \$8710 - we cannot afford this upgrade. The main benefit to this level of support is that it covers the replacement of hardware, but still, we cannot afford to budget this every year
 - * the real problem is that there are 2 outstanding issues that have been left unresolved with our system - these were both supposed to be fixed under our current tech support contract
 - * 1 of these problems is with the exporting of data, which I use for reporting purposes and record keeping, and which is currently holding up my progress on our Annual Report.
 - * I am in negotiations with MaestroVision to resolve our outstanding issues, and I do not plan to ask the board to consider upgrading
 - * We purchased our master control system Since Jan 2006, going on 4 yrs. Most computers & hardware these days should be replaced by 5yrs, meaning we should be considering our next step -and this, by far, is the most expensive equipment need that we have. In Jan 2006 it cost us \$28,800 and then \$1325 annually since for tech support. I will explore more financially sustainable options for the future and keeping the board updated. Whatever the case, I imagine this will be the driver for our 2nd (and final) capital fund request from Comcast (probably for FY 11-12)
- St. James Methodist Church purchased one of our smaller camcorders, a Canon Optura, last week for \$300.
 - * the money will be used towards a new small hard drive camcorder for those wanting a very basic "point & shoot" camera (total will approx. be \$500 for this), which we will be purchasing sometime in the next month

Fundraising & Outreach

- we had a presence at 3 big events during Columbus Day weekend - Chili Cook-off, Cider Fest, and Streetscapes Hoedown. Thanks to George, Bridgid, Sharon, & Emma for their help & cooperation.
 - * I updated our video for Chili Cook-off - it is currently airing on channel 8, and will be used in subsequent yrs as a promo - also on website
 - * Sharon shot video at Hoedown & Emma shot at Cider Fest - we will be editing this week & next
- we have a lot more printed surveys to get out in the community. Let's talk about a strategy at the meeting
- I have a scheduled meeting with the Coolidge Foundation Board about collaboration & partnerships
- I will be meeting with the Ludlow Ambulance Squad to discuss how we can be of service - they have a new AmeriCorps VISTA who will be using video as part of her job
- Fundraising & Finance Cmte should meet ASAP - need to discuss budgets & fundraising ideas for move to Armory Bldg.
 - * also need help getting some grants off of the ground
- depending on my availability, I may be going to a FREE grant workshop being held by the Forest Service in Middlebury on Monday & Tuesday of next week - this is a great opportunity for someone from our board & Fundraising Cmte to come along...I am hoping someone from the Town & BRGN will go also, since there are many opportunities for grants in the Armory project (provided there is enough time taken)- This is a brief description of the workshops: *"designed for any non-profit organization seeking funding for town or community projects or programs. Besides town office employees, this would include people working in fire & rescue, libraries, schools, arts organizations, & individuals who seek financial help with their projects or businesses. The ideal situation is that each town or non-profit organization send a team of 2+ persons."*