

**Racine Unified Board of Education Communication Committee**

**Wednesday, March 29, 2007**

**12:00 Noon**

**MACTE, Conference Room, 524 Main Street, Suite 202**

**MINUTES**

Present: Don Nielsen (Chairperson), Gretchen Warner, Stephanie Kratochvil, Larry Gregg, and Ann Pissard

Chairperson Don Nielsen called the meeting of the Board of Education Communication Committee to order at 12:05 p.m.

Gretchen Warner reviewed the minutes from the November 1, 2006 and the December 13, 2006 Communication Committee meetings. Motion to approve the minutes by Don, seconded by Gretchen. Motion passed with no objections.

**Chairperson's Report**

- Don Nielsen reported that the Board of Education approved development of a Channel 20 Commission.
- Also approved by the Board was the taping and televising the Board of Education meetings on a nine (9) month trial basis and \$5,000 for expenses (additional equipment, etc...) for this initiative.

**Old Business**

- Referred to New Business

**New Business**

- Larry Gregg suggested that the taping of the Board of Education meetings could be improved if we worked on the sound. Ann and Stephanie agreed to speak with Duke Stork regarding wiring the microphones into the camera for improved sound. If not, we would investigate equipment needed to improve the sound quality of the meetings.
- Don Nielsen asked whether the purchase of a camcorder that records directly to DVD would be of assistance. Larry Gregg suggested recording directly to a hard drive.
- Discussion about other public access channel regulations and rules led to Larry Gregg providing a history of the development of both Channel 20 and Channel 25 (managed by the City). Larry Gregg said he had a copy of the original contract, and will provide it to Communication Committee members and Stephanie for their records.
- The Committee agreed that, going forward, the official name of the commission and references to the channel should be: Educational Access Channel 20 Commission (not public access).
- Stephanie agreed to contact other school districts to get guidelines / policies for their educational channels. Suggested contacts included: Waukesha, West Allis, Green Bay, and Madison.
- The Educational Access Channel 20 Commission will consist of the following members: Don Nielsen, Gretchen Warner, Armin Clobes (until the April election), Larry Gregg, and Stephanie Kratochvil. Ann Pissard will be invited to Commission meetings in an advisory capacity.
- Larry Gregg pointed out that, per the original contract, the private schools do not have access to our educational channel (unless the Board of Education decides to give access) as the original contract states "for public education use."
- Discussion about when to begin taping: before public comments / after public comments. The committee felt that everything should be taped and televised unedited (per FCC regulations). It was suggested that the board consider limiting the time individuals can speak to 3 minutes, and to limit the total time for public comment if possible. The City Common Council meetings only allow 3 minutes per person and 30 minutes total of public comment.
- Discussion regarding the length of time that would be appropriate for taping and then for airing, as Board of Education meetings can get extremely lengthy. Don Nielsen pointed out that Executive Sessions should not be taped.

Motion: The Communication Committee recommends that only the first three (3) hours of the meetings will be taped. Motion by Don Nielsen and seconded by Gretchen Warner. The motion passed unanimously.

- Don Nielsen asked whether certain reports made by staff or others could be edited for use in the future as stand alone productions. Ann reported that she could do that quickly and efficiently if it was specified which reports would be appropriate.
- It was asked whether certain reports could be used for pod casting on the District's Web Site. Stephanie said she would ask Rob Caretta, RUSD's Webmaster.
- Discussion about the impact of AT&T offering cable in the Racine area's impact on the Educational Access Channel. Larry Gregg reported that as of right now AT&T will be required to make both Channel 20 and 25 accessible to its customers.

- Don Nielsen asked the Committee to research and identify any equipment specifically recording and play back equipment and staffing needed to improve the Educational Access Channel 20 programming.
- Ann suggested inviting Mike Palecek to a future meeting to discuss upgrades to equipment needed. The Committee felt that asking Mike to attend would be helpful, and Ann agreed to speak with him.
- Discussion about the Communication Plan and expanding the Communication Committee will be held during the next meeting of the Communication Committee.
- Don Nielsen will ask the board to allow the Communication Committee to expand its membership to include public relations, marketing, communication, web, design, and video professionals as well as parents or other interested persons. Additional staff people such as Ann and Rob Caretta may also be included.
- Gretchen Warner asked that Stephanie provide Communication Committee members the 60 day plan that she is developing for Dr. Hicks. After allowing time for review and feedback from the Board of Education regarding opening the Communication Committee to others, a date will be established for the entire Communication Committee to meet.
- The Communication Committee will begin to work on the Communication Plan based on the staff plan as well as the goals of the Board of Education. Don Nielsen reported that the Board of Education's Communication Plan should be focused on parents, but this could overlap with initiatives that the staff is planning.

The next Educational Access Channel 20 Commission meeting was set for April 19 at 3:00 p.m. Items referenced for the Commission agenda are:

- Guidelines for the Channel
- Equipment Upgrades/Needs
- Staffing Needs

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Kratochvil, Director of Communication