

## **PROPOSED ACTION PLAN – BAY 3-TV**

For the past 25 years the County of Bay, City of Bay City and the Bay City Public Schools have cooperated to provide Education and Government news to the cable television customers in the Bay County area under the name BAY-3-TV. Now the need has arisen to adapt the structure to meet the needs of this community in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Rebranding of the new structure will be done.

Every community in the United States that is served by one or more cable TV companies has the right to collect a cable television franchise fee according to the Cable Communications Act of 1984, Section 662, from those cable companies to fund a Public Access Television cable TV channel. In addition, if desired by the municipality, the cable television companies must make Public Educational and Government Access (PEGA) channels available for the public access entity to distribute the local programming.

### **USE OF FRANCHISE FEES**

Monies from cable television franchise fees are paid to government for use of right-of-way, use of public property, hopefully allowing other general fund monies to be used to operate the facilities, employ staff, develop curriculum, operate training workshops, schedule, maintain equipment, manage the cablecast of shows and publish promotional material to build station viewership. Funding and operating budgets vary significantly with the municipality's finances.

Now, with technological advances, budgetary constraints of the original partners and growing needs for local communication, a new structure and method of producing and delivering local programming is needed. The County of Bay is taking the lead to restructure and improve community television to reach more homes and people in the Bay County area.

### **FINANCIAL HISTORY/BACKGROUND**

When partnering with Bay City Public Schools, Bay County paid \$42,000 as our yearly financial contribution - \$21,500 in January; \$21,500 in July.

Bay County Library System was billed for \$5,000 contribution each year as an Affiliate. However, BCPS failed to bill the Library System for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 even though they continued with the same programming services. BCPS is currently billing for this outstanding balance of \$10,000.

Cities and municipalities impose a Public Education and Government Channels (PEG) Fee that is collected by Charter. This fee is used to support the PEG access channels. All monies collected by Charter are passed through to the local municipality. As managing partner, Bay County will receive PEG fees of approximately \$1,800/yearly from Charter Communications. Governmental access channels are used for programming by organs of local government. The monies collected by this fee are used in support of these channels including equipment, training, airtime, etc. PEG fees are approximately .02 per household.

Franchise Fees. Franchise fees are paid directly to the municipality for the fiber that passes through the municipality in an amount not to exceed 5% of the revenues receiving from providing cable service. At this time, no portion of collected fees is turned over for programming. (See the following list for a partial breakdown).

#### Townships

Mt. Forest - No Charter Cable  
Merritt - No Charter Cable  
Kawkawlin - \$48,000  
Hampton - \$148,000  
Monitor - \$148,000  
Williams - \$60,000  
Frankenlust - \$48,000  
Bangor - \$52,000  
Fraser - \$400  
Beaver - \$16,000  
Portsmouth - \$30,000  
Pinconning - \$2,000

#### Cities

Auburn - \$28,000  
Essexville - \$55,000  
Pinconning - \$5,000  
Bay City - \$430,000

#### **UPGRADE TO PUBLIC ACCESS TV RECOMMENDED**

The main method of producing and delivering this news and information will be by Bay County employees, supplemented where possible by the use of community-minded volunteers to be trained to record programs and be assisted by paid staff to edit and post those programs for public consumption.

#### **ADVISORY BOARD**

An Advisory Board will be established to guide and direct the operation of communication services to be delivered to local communities via existing cable television channels plus SOCIAL MEDIA (i.e., YouTube). One Advisory Board membership will be allocated to each participating unit of government.

#### **TRAINING TO BE OFFERED**

With a base office in the Bay County Building, we propose to offer training and loan cameras to responsible parties who either are employed by their local governmental units or have volunteered to

be Communication Ambassadors for their communities. Students and young people in general, especially those in video instructional classes at local high schools, will be encouraged to take training and become Communication Ambassadors. Training includes studio and camcorder operation.

#### **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Under the Public Access TV concept, opportunities to communicate to the public will be offered to organizations such as the Bay-Arenac Intermediate School District, the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Bay City, Inc., Bay Future, Inc., Bay County Historical Society, Bay County Library System, Rotary, Lions, Optimist and other service clubs,

We have already been in discussion with Bay County area school booster clubs to once again provide broadcasting of local athletic events. A pilot football game is being discussed between a local team and well-known broadcasters.

We have discussed providing services to area community groups like the S-O-S (Save Our Shoreline), Civil War Roundtable, Bay County Genealogical Society, etc.

#### **PARTNERSHIP LEVELS**

Partnership levels for local municipalities (cities & townships) and Affiliate Member levels will be recommended and referred to the Board of Commissioners for approval. That arrangement will be reviewed during the budget process each year as the system grows and matures.

#### **PROGRAMMING CHARGES**

It is recommended the amount of local programming each participating unit shall receive is calculated using the base price of \$100 per hour. In other words, a governmental unit or school district contributing at the \$5,000 level will receive 50 hours of on-site videotaping of their choice and viewable programming posted on Charter Cablevision or YouTube. Unused funds will carry over to the next year.

Commercial sponsorships will be offered for high school football and basketball at the cost of \$300 per game. Sponsorship of community events such as the Fireworks Festival and the St. Patrick's Day Parade will be \$500 per sponsor with unlimited on-air mentions or sponsor-furnished commercial advertising spots inserted into the footage. The programs produced will be available on websites of the participating local governments as well as the Bay County website.

## VIEWERS

It is the goal of the Advisory Committee to explore other opportunities for increased coverage for outlying areas of Bay County such as AT&T U-verse, etc.

## STAFF AND BUDGET

In reviewing the budget maintained by the BCPS, the following yearly budget is recommended for operation of our governmental & educational access channel:

### Salary

Full Time PB05	17.92 X 2080 =	37,273.60
Fringes	15.95%	5,945.14
Health (single)		<u>5,181.12</u>
TOTAL		48,399.86

Equipment Repair & Maintenance:	1,500
Office Supplies:	500
New Equipment	2,000
Cellphone	600
Local Travel Mileage	500

### REVENUE

PEG Fees	1,800
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POTENTIAL REVENUE: Revenue from filming and programming services provided upon request to municipalities and public sector entities. Fee schedule for services is being developed and will be submitted for Board approval. Sponsor revenue from athletic event filming and announcing is being proposed.

At this time, we are proposing time be allocated to Bay 3 TV programming, promotion, scheduling, editing, etc., and assisting in social media responsibilities (Facebook, Website, E-news, etc.). We believe this will provide an advantage of having someone work on social media responsibilities in order to effectively and efficiently promote Bay County and the services we provide to our community.