

**Cable Television Committee
Minutes
November 27, 2001**

The November meeting was held at 7:30 PM on 11/27/01 at the Town Hall. In attendance were Jeff Winston, Peggy Fredrickson, Hal Barnett, and Marty Greenstein as well as Mark M. of the Hudson studio and James Siket, our new public access coordinator.

James has been with AT&T almost for a year and has previous experience in Needham and Natick. For those not in tune, the coordinator that we interviewed last meeting, Sarah, chose to stay at her previous assignment rather than start over in Sudbury.

James and Mark gave us a tour and demonstration of the new Town Hall video system. It features three wall-mounted cameras, microphones for the five positions at the head table, and a microphone for the audience to use. There is the capability to also hook in additional microphones if needed. There are two ceiling speakers that can amplify the input from these mikes or the output of other sound sources. We will soon see the installation of a screen for a video projection TV to allow "PowerPoint"-type presentations directly from a computer. These will also be routed into the video mixer and transmitted to a TV monitor (on a cart) that will allow the people at the head table to see the presentations without having to turn away from the audience.

The video equipment is in a separately locked new room carved out of the women's rest room in the back of the hall. The rest room is now of reduced size but still theoretically functional. In it is a video mixer/special effects control board and a control board for the cameras. There is also a sound mixer and special electronics that deaden the other microphones when a speaker is sensed at one of them. Black and white monitors show the output of each camera and a color monitor displays what is being written to a S-Video cassette video recorder. The system looks entirely easy to operate since the cameras can be programmed with position and zoom presets that allow single button repositioning. Each camera can have up to eight presets. The cameras are auto-focus/auto white balance making them even easier to use. A window has been installed to allow the video operator to look directly into the meeting room and, perhaps more importantly, signal assistants on the outside.

There is room for several people (more than three) to comfortably be in the control room at the same time. However, only one person is needed to operate the equipment. Soon it will be possible to cablecast live from the Hall but that is not quite set up yet. AT&T policy will not allow live cablecast without one of their people present, however.

ATTb currently has the key to the control room but we expect that others will have it in the near future.

The amended license, taking into account the delays AT&T has had putting in the new system, was approved by the Selectmen last Monday. Cablevision had installed in the other four towns feeding off of the Hudson headend fiber to the neighborhood networks and is providing improved video quality and more stations to them previous to turning the systems over to ATTb. ATTb has not yet put high speed Internet service into these towns, however. We expect that AT&T may begin working on the Sudbury system as soon as in January.

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We expect to have roughly \$8000 turned over to us by AT&T in the New Year. We must decide whether to keep it in the capital budget (which means AT&T physically has it) or whether we should take the money for the Town. The money is restricted to cable related use regardless of this decision.

AT&T has been slow turning over to us various technical reports on the operational performance of the cable system. We have informally warned them that they are in violation of the license and we hope and expect that these late reports will be sent to us soon. AT&T has sent us their 2001 report of actual studio spending and their projected 2002 budget. They underspent this year's \$50,000 budget by \$9,000. This shortfall will add to the amount available for 2002. However, even without this infusion, AT&T expects to underspend once again, this time by \$3000. Moreover, the committee was in agreement that the numbers were probably not accurate and Jeff Winston has taken the action to informally discuss the matter with AT&T. We believe that in reality the spending shortfall was slightly understated due to the use of estimates rather than actual spending.

This is the last scheduled meeting for this year. The committee wishes to commend Michael Pincus for his major assistance towards the effort to make the Town Hall equipment a reality. We hope to entice the Town Committees to use the Town Hall for their meetings and will begin a publicity campaign in January.

The next meeting will be second week in January at the Fire House (we are camera shy ☺).

Respectfully Submitted,

Marty Greenstein