

**URBANA PUBLIC TELEVISION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Date: June 8, 2018

Place: Urbana City Council Chambers
400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL

Members Present: Peter Folk; Andrew Wadsworth; Dale Sinder; Chris Fuller

Staff Present: Jason Liggett; Jake Schumacher; Sanford Hess

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Folk called the meeting to order at 12:06 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Attendance was noted. A quorum was present. Commissioners Polk and Inskeep had notified the Clerk that they might not make it to the meeting.

III. MODIFICATIONS TO AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as it stood.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the March 9, 2018 meeting were unanimously approved. Chair Folk commented on the impressive detail contained in the minutes and complimented the Clerk on their composition.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence directly to the Commission the past quarter. Correspondence to the Station Manager was included in the Commission packets and pertained to Unfinished Business, and the Manager suggested it be dealt with there, and the Chair agreed.

VI. STAFF REPORT

Jake reported that Mark Schultz will hopefully receive his appointment to the Commission before its next meeting as the representative from the Urbana Park District.

UPTV is very pleased to welcome back Volo Broadband as a continuing underwriter of the Total Information Weather

broadcasts seen several times daily on UPTV, and appreciates their support.

UPTV won three awards at the Best of the Midwest Media Fest: Joey Wright and the Urbana High Broadcast team won for the Fall Sports Preview; Jacob Bernard won (again) for his video of Los Guapos performing on WEFT Sessions, and Jason won (again) for his video profiling Urbana firefighter Rhonda Foster. After Jason wrote a press release and a feature story about the awards on the City's website, local television station WCIA picked up the story and did a feature on Joey Wright on the 10 O'clock News.

Jason attended the Media Fest conference and was a presenter for a workshop centered on working with schools in sports programs. He also toured several very active PEG stations and production facilities while in the area in Wisconsin, and posted pictures of those facilities on UPTV's Facebook page. Subsequent to the WCIA coverage, the News-Gazette did a video feature piece on their website concerning Jason's work with CU Mentoring, which is still available for viewing.

Jake and Jason met with representatives of Comcast and CGTV in an attempt to identify and solve the repeated problems with the correct updating of both stations' on-screen program schedules. The remediation is ongoing.

Volunteer member productions: Paul Mueth produced four concert programs recorded at the IMC; "Dr. Dr." Ray Morales continues to provide productions remotely for his series The Show; and Karen Aram produced two programs concerning local political activism.

Staff productions included the City Administrator Candidate Forum and the continuing monthly series It's All About U and Art Now!. Jason collaborated with Preston James and several Urbana students on a long-format feature about police traffic stops and the recommended response from citizens. Preston has received requests for him to present and discuss this video elsewhere in Illinois.

Jason has recorded multiple editions of the new information series "Mark in the Park" in collaboration with Mark Schultz of the Urbana Park District. We have also, at the request of Mayor Marlin, begun recording and broadcasting the monthly meetings of the Housing Authority of Champaign County.

We have been working with Eric Enger of Community Choices, who brought in several people to record a program called "Sports Monthly." There were short features on The Boneyard Celebration, including a bilingual promotional spot in English and Spanish, more of which Jake would like to see UPTV do. There were features about Think Urbana, the Food Truck Rally, two on Arbor Day commemorative activities, Bike to Work Day, Artists of the

Corridor, the Leal School Olympics, the rain-barrel sale, and Solar UC. We recorded and broadcast the walk-out ceremony for Fire Chief Nightlinger, and some Urbana Police Department pinning ceremonies. Jason also recorded videos for internal Urbana employee training and information purposes, including ones on Productive Work Environments and the upcoming new City budget.

We are recording and airing the annual commencement programs for both the Middle and High schools. We are broadcasting the annual Busey Economic Seminar.

During the quarterly Free Speech TV fund drives, when some of our regular programs cannot be shown due to their fundraising content, we ran a series of Learning Spanish programs provided by Middle Tennessee State University, which proved to be very popular and have remained on the air at new times and days by request. Currently we are airing a series produced by the United States Army in the 1940s and 50s called The Big Picture, many episodes of which featured detailed accounts of aspects of the Korean War, which is of particular current interest.

Jason is in preparation for UPTV's annual broadcast of the Champaign County Freedom Celebration Fourth of July parade.

Jake and Jason met with new City Administrator Carol Mitten to introduce her to the mechanics and dynamics of UPTV and the many ways in which it serves the City of Urbana, both its government and its residents.

Jake pointed out that UPTV is exploring ways to reach new viewers with social media, and handed it over to Jason to speak more about that.

Jason reported that our most popular Facebook post ever was a video livestream of the Urbana High School commencement ceremony for the class of 2018 on Memorial Day weekend; it reached 3,000 people, with 1400 video views and 181 reactions. We have begun using Facebook Live for Urbana High School sports events, as well as such events as Chief Nightlinger's walk-out and the Arbor Day ceremonies. We are hearing many positive comments from people who can watch these events live on their phones or computers. Jason has figured out a way to take the audio feed from the PA for these events, which provides a much better listening quality than many other Facebook Live presentations.

Our second most popular Facebook post was our Facebook Live streaming of the City Administrator Candidate Forum, with 804 video views, and the post reached over 1,500 people.

We intend to continue to use Facebook Live due to its popularity, and because more and more people are viewing video in different ways that conventional cable broadcasting.

Our most popular tweet was a clip of the very first broadcast of Joey Wright, when he was a 7th grader at Urbana Middle School. It was not only popular but embarrassing to Joey and to Jason! ☺

Our most popular YouTube video was the afore-mentioned "Perspective: Insights of a Traffic Stop," produced by UPTV in collaboration with Preston James, the Urbana Police Department and three Urbana High School students.

UPTV has also switched vendors for its streaming service. The new vendor not only is more compatible with mobile viewing devices and most browsers, but also gives UPTV a 24/7 livestream channel on Roku and AppleTV devices, available to all users as "Urbana Public TV." It has been well-received, and greatly reduced the amount of time Jason has had to devote to "tech support" for frustrated UPTV viewers. Chair Folk asked if it was also available for FireTV; Jason thought not, but will check.

A clips reel of highlights from the last quarter was shown.

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The discussion was continued as to how programs on UPTV are identified and if additional information on the sources of those programs needs to be presented. Jake explained the current use of slides prior to and after each program not produced by the City of Urbana, providing the text of those slides from the Policy and Procedures, as well as the Cablecast Broadcast Request form that member sponsors fill out. Also included in Commissioner packets were communications on the topic from the City's Legal Division and from the president of the Alliance for Community Media, UPTV's trade organization.

Jake presented his thoughts on the matter. It seems from his research that the information concerning the identity of which member or member organization sponsors any given program is already available as a matter of public record. He read from an e-mail from Mayor Marlin in which she strongly opposed the anonymous sponsorship of third-party programs. Jake's major concern is that whatever changes are made to the current system of identification are ones that do not inordinately increase the amount of staff time

needed to implement them. In that light, following a correspondence with Chair Folk on the issue, he proposed a disclaimer slide to run before and after programs, that would be generic in that it would not need to be redone for every new program and every new member. It would first of all identify the program as not being a City of Urbana production and not necessarily reflecting the City's viewpoints in any way, and secondly indicate that more information about the program and its sponsor are available, perhaps on a page on UPTV's website. That page could also contain a link to the actual producer of the outside program, which would allow the public to contact the producer with any comments they might have about it. This would be less production work, and less disruptive to the on-air program flow on the live channel. Jake has discussed this with his supervisor and with some of the UPTV member producers, and thinks this might satisfy everyone.

Chair Folk pointed out that a potential drawback to that solution would be the possibility that UPTV or the City of Urbana might become accidentally linked, through such search engines as Google, with unsavory groups or political stances, such as the recent discovery that the California Republican party became briefly linked with Nazism. Other than that, he liked the proposal for its efficiency and the clear availability of the information.

Commissioner Wadsworth pointed out that a "no-bot-search" device could be placed on the page that might forestall such a problem. He asked if the local sponsor's contact information, such as an e-mail address, would be provided; Jake responded that he would recommend providing only the name. That is the only information that would be provided under a Freedom of Information Act request, and he is concerned about opening up members to possible harassment if personal information is provided. Chair Folk said he would also be comfortable with not providing that complete list but letting viewers know that information about the program sponsor was available on request from UPTV, which would require them to expend a little more energy to pursue the information.

Commissioner Sinder said that in reading through James Simon's comments, which Commissioner Sinder interpreted to say that we could not require a sponsor to identify themselves, he was a little concerned about putting things

out on the website. Jake said that along those same lines, he thought UPTV would need to inform members in the Policy and Procedures about "how we use your information", in the sense of what information about them is gathered, and what we are going to make available to the public, just as any other social media should. As to whether a member could choose not to have their name revealed and still sponsor a program is the crux of the matter as he sees it.

Chair Folk asked if a member sponsor chose not to share their name, and UPTV received a FOIA request to release it, would Jake do so. He replied that it is more likely he would first refer it to the Legal Division. He quoted from an e-mail from the City's FOIA specialist, that in the case of a request, she would recommend releasing the sponsor's name but not their "private information," such as personal phone number and home and e-mail addresses.

Chair Folk said he would be comfortable with any of the proposals suggested this far, but that he favored the one that provided the maximum transparency with the minimum of staff time required.

Asked by Jake for this thoughts, Sanford, without wanting to speak for the Mayor, said that he thought the quote from her which Jake read encapsulated her feelings that this was something the City could do to improve the quality of public discourse, and he thought that anything UPTV could do to move that forward would be good, with the understanding that this is a consensus discussion. He said the administration appreciates the time and thought that has gone into this by the Commission. He clarified the acronym FOIA for viewers. He asked if there would be different identification for programs chosen by UPTV staff and programs sponsored by members.

Jake replied that we do currently run the hate-speech disclaimer in front of potentially controversial programs that he chooses to schedule, although running it in front of such programs as a gardening show seems a bit odd. Sanford replied he didn't think such disclaimers should run all the time, but that there should be something indicating that a particular program was run at the request of a sponsor, as opposed to a third-party program that UPTV chose to run.

Jake said many of the outside programs he chooses to run on the live channel are ones on topics he would prefer to appear on local shows, but for which UPTV does not currently have the resources or volunteers to produce. He would welcome the opportunity to run a slide adjacent to those shows soliciting a local resident who might be interested in producing a program on a similar subject. He similarly liked Peter's proposed wording in that it reached out to the public to encourage their participation in program sponsorship by getting involved with UPTV.

Sanford suggested, "The following program is being sponsored by an Urbana Public Television member", which would differ from a slide identifying other programs. Chair Folk thought it would be good if the disclaimers were as similar as possible; that the word "sponsor" didn't seem appropriate when it is an outside program chosen by UPTV to air. In general the slides should contain the same information and conclude with something to the effect of "for more information on this type of program, or to sponsor your own program...", but as much of it should be the same wording.

Sanford said he thinks, as a member of the city administration, that the City would prefer to distance itself from sponsored content, as opposed to content that is curated by city staff. He proposed two versions of the intro slide: one version would say, "Hope you enjoy this content", if necessary some kind of disclaimer, and whatever you want to add at the bottom about producing your own program, that's the curated slide. The other slide would say, "This program is being run at the request of a UPTV member who is sponsoring its content" plus the remainder of the text. Chair Folk said he liked that wording. Sanford said it should indicate that the City promotes free speech but that it doesn't necessarily support the content. Chair Folk said that a third slide could indicate that the program was produced by a UPTV member (as opposed to an outside program sponsored by a member) and again solicit more viewers to produce their own programs.

Jake said, with the agreement of the Commission, that he would work on the wording of the proposed slides, and present them to the Commission at their next meeting for their comments and hopefully approval.

Commissioner Fuller asked if the same slide would run at both the beginning and the end; Jake agreed that an end slide could be run that would be different and would be the one to solicit more producers. Jake expressed his appreciation to the Commission for their valuable input on this matter.

Chair Folk suggested that the other item of unfinished business, concerning the assumption of some Cable Commission duties by the UPTV Commission, be tabled until the next meeting. The Commission agreed and voted unanimously to do so.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Equipment purchases included a video production switcher at a remarkably good price. Council Chamber production equipment will be included in the next quarter's report.

X. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Fuller announced the Urbana School District's Camp Invention event, to happen in July, and described the nature of the event. Close to two hundred students applied. Jake wanted to comment on the increasing quality of the productions that Production Director Jason Liggett was turning out.

XI. SET THE NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting was announced for September 14, 2018 at 12 noon in the Urbana City Council Chambers. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 1:05 pm.