

## MGAT MINUTES

Milford Government Access Television Committee Regular Meeting

Tuesday, May 28, 2013, 7:00pm

Parsons Government Complex, Board of Education Learning Center, 70 West River Street, Milford, CT 06460

**Members attending:** Philip Kearney (Chair), Chad Bedell, Barbara Genovese, Paula Patterson, Albert F. May, Jr.

**Staff attending:** Meg Greene (Recording Secretary)

**Absent:** Arney Rogoff (Broadcast Ops Mgr), due to recording a BoE meeting

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Kearney at 7:10pm. He was pleased to note the presence of the entire board.

### Previous meeting minutes

The meeting minutes from April 23, 2013, were approved.

### Public comment

None.

### Chair's Report

**Mr. Kearney** said the internet connection has been ordered for the broadcast room. He noted that the rate was \$29.95 per month, that Cablevision will coordinate installation with Mr. Rogoff, and that billing procedures will be set up via the mayor's office.

He said the GATA budget was approved and included a \$1000 set-aside for access costs. He stated that \$22,750 had been approved for personnel and \$1500 was approved for a laptop to support streaming video.

He noted that Chris Kelly had recorded a meeting and that Mr. Kelly did well, so he'll be used as a backup resource along with Mr. Kearney, when necessary and if possible.

**Mr. Bedell** asked if Soundview Community Media still records Board of Aldermen meetings. **Mr. Kearney** said they do, but the need for this will end when new equipment is installed such that all towns are feeding content directly to ATT U-verse. He noted that the original intent was for Soundview to train local town and city resources in recording techniques; however their role has become more of an intermediary one.

**Ms. Patterson** provided a financial report of funds on hand:

CITY BUDGET	0.00
GATA	\$8997.33
Cablevision	\$891.43

### Broadcast Operations Manager's Report

**Mr. Rogoff's** recording schedule for April contains the following events\*:

1. May 1 - Board of Aldermen (budget hearing)
2. May 1 - Park, Beach & Recreation
3. May 6 - Board of Aldermen
4. May 7 - Planning & Zoning
5. May 13 - Board of Education
6. May 21 - Planning & Zoning
7. May 28 - Board of Education

*\*NOTE: Ms. Greene was directed to obtain this list FROM Mr. Rogoff after the meeting for inclusion in the minutes.*

*PROCEDURAL NOTE:* **Ms. Genovese** stepped away to testify at another meeting, but returned after approximately 20 minutes.

#### Old Business

##### *Revising policy and procedures*

The group reviewed language in the 2009 Policies and 2011 Procedures documents. Proposed revisions are attached in draft form for further consideration. There was discussion of adding a capability to provide emergency information to future broadcasts.

#### New Business

**Mr. Kearney** said he can't attend the June meeting. There was discussion of moving the meeting to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in June at 7:30. Mr. May moved that the meeting be rescheduled to that date and time; **Ms. Genovese** seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

#### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33.

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Greene  
Recording Secretary

**CITY OF MILFORD  
GOVERNMENT ACCESS TELEVISION  
POLICIES**

**I. PREAMBLE**

Milford Government Access Television (MGAT) is an electronic media production and distribution facility that is self-governing.

The primary goal of MGAT is to make local government more accessible to the residents of Milford. Through the production and distribution of programming which covers a broad range of government information, the committee will present how local government operates, what City services are available, how to better utilize City services and how the activities of City government affect the community.

The secondary goal will be to provide City government access to the cable television system (or other electronic media) for such vital uses as training, data transmission and new opportunities for public communications.

**II. OBJECTIVES**

- A. To provide information about programs and services offered to the Milford community by City departments and City-funded agencies;
- B. To expand community awareness of local government and its decision-making process;
- C. To expand the availability of programs and services by transferring some presentations to DVD or other electronic media, and to enhance existing public information materials through cablecast or other electronic media presentations;
- D. To provide emergency information in the event of disaster or widespread service disruption.

**III. PROGRAMMING POLICY**

Government access materials are to meet the same standards of accuracy and objectivity which characterize existing public information materials produced by City departments and agencies.

**A. General Provisions**

**1. Supervising Authority**

MGAT is under the direct supervision of the Milford Government Access Television Committee (the Committee). The Government Access Broadcast Operations Manager is responsible for daily operation and oversight.

**2. Production and Distribution Policies**

MGAT will provide direct, nonpartisan information to the citizens of Milford concerning the operations and deliberations of the City's educational and governmental entities and information of general civic importance to the community.

**a) Priorities**

- 1) Local governmental legislative meetings:
  - Board of Aldermen
  - Board of Education
  - Planning and Zoning Board
- 2) Other local governmental commissions, boards, and committees;
- 3) Display information regarding meeting schedules of local governmental commissions, boards and committees;
- 4) Display information regarding services and programs offered by City departments and City-funded agencies;
- 5) Special programs or City wide events;

3. Production and Distribution Prohibitions

Programs which contain, in whole or in part, any of the following subject matter will not be produced or distributed.

a) Commercial Message or Material

Anything promoting a product or service, with the primary objective of producing a monetary profit for a specific organization or individual, will not be produced or distributed.

Note: This is not to preclude incidental mention of a business or product as part of a program where the primary purpose is to disseminate information of public benefit. Business, individuals and organizations may be acknowledged for assistance in the production of a program or the provision of other means of support.

b) Political Campaigning

MGAT will not be used for political campaigning by individuals or organizations seeking public office or legislation. Neither will the service be used for the solicitation of funds for political purposes.

Note: During the three (3) month period preceding an election, programs which feature elected officials who are candidates for re-election will not be produced or distributed. This will not preclude their participation in public meetings or special forums of public debate. (Please see Policies, Section III.B.4,c.)

c) Religious Material

Program material which would advocate a particular religious belief will not be produced or distributed. Religious organizations or ideals may be mentioned as incidental information as part of a program.

Note: This is not to preclude the appearance of an individual representing a particular religion as part of program which provides general information. This will also not preclude the distribution of announcements of public events which are sponsored or conducted by religious organizations. (Please see Policies, Section III.B.3.)

d) Violation of Law or Regulation

Program material which constitutes libel, slander, violation of trademark or copyright, or which might violate any local state or federal laws, including regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, will not be produced or distributed.

4. Other Subject Matter

The MGAT Committee reserves the right to reject any programming without explanation.

B. PROGRAM PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION PROVISIONS

1. PUBLIC MEETINGS

a) All public meetings of the City's commissions, boards and committees are authorized for electronic media recording and distribution.

b) All public meetings that are recorded will be distributed in their entirety, gavel-to-gavel. Recesses will not be recorded and distributed. Explanatory information identifying agenda items and individuals may be provided to aid the viewer.

## 2. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MESSAGES

- a) Information to be displayed on the “Community Information Message Display” may be submitted by any government department, City-funded agency or bona fide nonprofit organization which serves the residents of Milford.
- b) Messages submitted must announce events or services which are noncommercial, open to the general public, and do not discriminate based on age, sex, race, religion, national origin or physical impairment.
- c) Messages submitted must not solicit funds. They may however, provide general information about a specific fundraising event.

## 3. STATEMENTS BY INDIVIDUALS

- a) Statements by members of the general public and elected officials will be recorded in the regular discourse of a public meeting (pursuant to the rules of such meeting) or as participants in a panel discussion.
- b) MGAT will provide equal time and format opportunities for both the executive and legislative branches of local government and opportunities for federal and state legislators who represent Milford.
- c) Statements by announced candidates for public office will be permitted in the regular discourse of a public meeting (pursuant to the rules of such meeting) or within a forum of public debate with other declared candidates under the oversight of a non-partisan third party using mutually agreeable ground rules.

## IV. ENDORSEMENTS

At no time will MGAT endorse specific brand name products or service providers.

## V. EDITORIAL RIGHTS

MGAT is an operating entity of the City of Milford and, as such, reserves the right to identify any material as unsuitable for production or distribution.

## VI. WARRANTY

The City of Milford, its officers, employees and agents do not warrant the accuracy of any information distributed by MGAT.

## VII. REVISIONS

This policy manual and the associated procedures shall be subject to change, revision and amendment and shall be so enacted by a majority vote at a meeting of the Committee.

**CITY OF MILFORD  
GOVERNMENT ACCESS TELEVISION  
PROCEDURES**

The following procedures have been established to assist Milford Government Access Television Committee (the Committee) in its effort to accommodate the production and distribution of programming for Milford Government Access Television (MGAT). These procedures are intended to govern the requests of City agencies and departments as well as other qualified groups and organizations that choose to utilize MGAT and/or the "Community Information Message Display".

**1. Requests for Program Production and/or Distribution**

- A. Request Forms: All requests must be submitted in writing on the "request form" developed by MGAT. The form is available at Milford City Hall.
- B. Request Review: All requests will be reviewed by the Government Access Broadcast Operations Manager who will use eligibility, priorities and criteria segments of MGAT's policies to determine the suitability of the proposal, its priority in relation to other projects, and the anticipated number of work hours required to complete the project, if applicable.

(Live or recorded coverage of special meetings called by the boards, commissions or committees of Milford should be requested in writing at least seven (7) business days prior to the meeting date. Every effort will be made to honor the requests. However, the Broadcast Operations Manager reserves the right to deny the request based upon availability of personnel or other resources.

**2. Methods of Program Distribution**

- A. Cable Channel(s): Utilizing government access cable television channel(s) as provided for under the Cable Communications Act of 1984, Section 531, and the cable television franchise agreement(s) with licensed franchise(s) which serve the City of Milford.
- B. Capacity on Other Multi-Channel Services: Reserved for future use
- C. Public or Departmental Libraries: Placing program material in the collections of the local public library or various City departments for borrowing or home use.

**3. Methods of Program Production**

- A. Live Distribution: Live coverage, principally consisting of Board of Aldermen meetings and other meetings of the City's boards, commissions and other committees.
- B. Delayed Distribution: Public meetings may be recorded for distribution at a later date. Some live meetings may be recorded for subsequent replay to ensure additional opportunities for viewing.
- C. Preproduced Programming: Programs produced by MGAT or other entities related to government facilities, services and/or operation will be distributed, providing they comply with the policies which govern MGAT.
- D. Community Information Message Display: Information consisting of program schedules, meeting schedules, meeting agendas, descriptions of services and programs offered by departments and agencies and messages regarding noncommercial community events will be distributed. MGAT will accept announcements from City departments and agencies and bona fide nonprofit organizations that serve the residents of the City of Milford.

#### 4. Editing of Program Content

- A. Public Meetings: All public meetings may be distributed in their entirety, gavel to gavel. Recesses and executive sessions will not be distributed. Explanatory information identifying agenda items and individuals may be provided to aid the viewer.
- B. Departmental Programs: Any program prepared for or provided by a City department or agency, with the exception of a panel discussion, may be modified or edited as deemed appropriate by the Line Producer/Broadcast Director or an agent directed by the Broadcast Operations Manager. This determination may be made as the result of policy restrictions or due to technical, scheduling or staff limitations and may be subject to the review of the Committee.
- C. Community Information Messages: The Broadcast Operations Manager reserves the right to edit for clarity and brevity, and will not be responsible for errors and omissions.
- D. Statements by Individuals: Any panel discussion program which features commentary by elected officials, candidates for public office, officials representing City departments or agencies, and members of the general public may not be modified or edited. This does not preclude the editing of introductory, transition or closing segments which are designed to complement the discussion portion of the program. MGAT will provide equal time and format opportunities for both the executive and legislative branches of local government and production opportunities for federal and state legislators who represent Milford.

#### 5. Retention of Recorded Programs

Public Meetings: Recordings of public meetings will be retained for two (2) years, after which the recordings may be discarded. Recordings of meetings **will not** be considered official records (unless otherwise specified by State Freedom of Information Rules) of said meetings and there will be no liability for erasure or omissions.

#### 6. Requests for Copies

- A. Requests for Copies of MGAT programs by the Mayor, City Clerk, or any board chairperson are free of .
- B. Requests for Copies of MGAT programs by the General Public have a fee of \$10.00 per DVD.

##### C. Additional Guidelines

- 1) Copies will be made from completed programs only, and may be copied in their entirety, *with the exception of public meetings which **must** be copied in their entirety;*
- 2) Programs which are considered "current" (i.e. scheduled for cablecast or other public distribution) may not be readily available for copying;
- 3) MGAT programs **are not** the official record of any board or committee;
- 4) MGAT copies will be made on DVD format which conforms to MGAT equipment
- 5) Copyrighted programs, for which MGAT has clearance for cablecast or other distribution only, **cannot** be copied;
- 6) MGAT copyrighted programs, for which a City department or agency has received written permission for duplication, may be copied.

Prohibited Uses: Equipment which is under the supervision of MGAT may not be loaned, rented or used for personal or commercial use.

#### 9. Program Copyright and Program Producer Identification

- A. Program Copyright: All programs produced by MGAT or by a City department will carry an *All Rights Reserved* message which identifies the City of Milford as the potential holder of a formal copyright for the program. When deemed necessary, MGAT will secure formal copyrights for individual productions.
- B. Program Producer Identification: All programs produced or distributed by MGAT will be identified by producer or source of programming. The identification may be in the form of credits at the beginning and/or end of each program.

#### 10. Program Schedule

- A. Scheduling Authority: Program scheduling is the sole responsibility of the Broadcast Operations Manager.
- B. Scheduling Priorities: Scheduling will be performed on a first come, first served basis with the exception of public meetings which will always be given a priority. Scheduling will be in accordance with the policies of MGAT and the availability of staff, equipment and other resources.

#### 11. Community Information Message Display Announcements

- A. Eligibility: Information for distribution on the Community Information Message Display may be submitted by any government department, City-funded agency, bona-fide nonprofit organization which serves the residents of the City of Milford, or committee established to coordinate an event or activities which are open to the general public.
- B. Prohibitions: Messages may not be commercial in nature and may not solicit funds. General information about fundraising events may be provided. Events or services must be open to the general public and may not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin or physical impairment.
- C. Announcement Forms: Those submitting announcements are asked to use such forms as may be provided by MGAT or the Line Producer/Broadcast Director. All information must be legible and state clearly the timeframes in which the announcement is to be aired.
- D. Display Procedures: Messages must be submitted two (2) weeks prior to the event.

#### 12. Questions or Disputes

In the event a question or dispute arises regarding the applicability or interpretation of these procedures such questions or disputes shall be initially directed to the Broadcast Operations Manager. Further questions or disputes shall be referred to the Committee.

#### 13. Precedence

If these procedures are in conflict with restrictions placed upon the Committee and/or MGAT by Cablevision of Southern Connecticut (Cablevision), then the restrictions of Cablevision shall take precedence.