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Options for Continuation of Community Television Program Production in Long Beach After Dec. 31, 2008

California legislation , AB 2987, passed in 2006, stated that moneys from the Cable networks, to the City of Long Beach, can only be used for capital expenditures and equipment, not for production staff. This requires decisions by the City of Long Beach to take an active part in assuring the continuation of this media resource for our city and its citizens. Such a program should not cost the City money, but will be an income-generating option for the City and a benefit to its businesses and its citizens. In addition to creation of good jobs, there is an opportunity to bring in significant revenue to the City of Long Beach, that would be spent in the City of Long Beach on purchases of equipment and construction.

Use of these options could involve a non-profit entity, already interacting with the City of Long Beach in other areas having to do with communications and public information. The Long Beach Library Association, Long Beach Arts or other relevant non-profit, with an active Board of Directors, might act as such an entity for fundraising efforts by TV producers and program staff. The Library Foundation currently raises money and receives funds from various sources and has a logical connection to endeavors that expand communications. The City library system currently “manages” the Library TV Channel, as one of its PEG channels. Benefits of continuing the production operations of both the Library Channel and the Long Beach Community Television Channel include the following:

- Community Television gives a voice to all segments of our community not usually represented in the main stream media.
- Community Television provides promotion for long Beach businesses, events, culture and community diversity not seen in non-local broadcasts.
- Community Television documents historic events in our city
- Community Television addressed global and national issues from a local viewpoint
- Community Television highlights local artists, musicians, theater and other cultural events, such as Children’s Day and local political events, such a campaign forums and ballot measures
- Community Television can provider well paying jobs for Long Beach residents on production staff

There should be a report for the City Office of Communications and Technology, presented to the Long Beach City Council in a study session as soon as possible, and that action be taken to request that continued use of the bandwidth allotted for Community Television be enabled. There should be a response to the request for information, submitted to Charter Television and Verizon, by our City Communications Department, to allow continued broadcasts in 2009.

An accounting of what funds are now available (in 2008) and what is planned for theses funds, should also be presented. This should be followed by discussion of this plan at a City Council Meeting with an opportunity for public comment.

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Short Term Solutions:

Use of funding and equipment resources now used by the Library Channel to broadcast to the bandwidth now reserved for Community Television. The library Channel's public service messages would be broadcast between programs and after hours on the Community TV Channel. As the Library has no staff to produce programs and never did, this resource of funds for broadcast connections would better serve the public if used by Community TV and would assure that the media messages from the Library would continue.

Funding Options For Production Staff

If community television had studio space and/ or equipment, paid for with Cable Network funding, these City Production resources can be used as an income-generation option to raise money for staffing costs for the production studio.

The system described above will allow for various fundraising options to pay for staffing costs.

These options could include:

- These include, rental of the studio/equipment by independent production companies, who pay the cost of using the facilities. These incomes could be used for staff salaries and administrative costs.
- Use of studio time for fund raising activities, including fundraising for various community groups and organizations, with a portion going to the station for staffing costs.
- Use the funding from the City for studio space and equipment, as the City's "in kind" donation to apply for various grants to pay for staffing costs.
- Special projects, such as the generating of public safety and public promotional materials, paid for by various regional entities, such as the Port of Long Beach, Regional Water Quality departments, Port of Long Beach, to pay for staffing.
- Telethons for station fund raising.
- TV production cost charges, in fees for permits to the City, for various commercial events we record, as part of Long Beach culture and history- various commercial events and conventions, sports events, etc., pay the fee to have their event recorded and broadcast.
- Contracts with the DLBA, Long Beach Tourist Board and other Long Beach promotional organizations to highlight events, businesses, tourist attractions in our programming, at very low cost/no cost to businesses.
- Contracts with various State and Federal bodies for environment, health, safety and other public service messages, created in our programming.
- Permit fees for filming in the City will include a staffing fee for local production services and administration, to help offset cost of studio staff.

There is no shortage of creative ideas for using the faces, voices and creative spirit in Long Beach to serve our community in many ways. These are communication options that should not be lost to our citizens and for future generations.