

**MCT Board Minutes
September 21, 2009**

A meeting of the MCT Board of Directors was held at 7548 Standish Place in Rockville, Maryland on Monday, September 21, 2009. The Board members in attendance were:

Paul Amon
Diane Butts
Dennis Courtney
Steven Friedman
Greg Hamilton
Marion Hayes Hull
Merrill Hessel
Jim Klimaski

Lee Klumpp
George Kosovich
Elizabeth Ortega-Lohmeyer
Marian Merewitz
Charles Finn Peña
Nancy Poole
Jonathan Walker, Sr.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

Also in attendance were:

John Hansman, Interim Executive Director
Alysia Thaxton, Executive Assistant
Don Katzen, Operations Director
Larry Merewitz, Training/Volunteer Manager

Roll Call

The following board members are absent from tonight's meeting:

Toby Beach proxy to Lee Klumpp
Henry Hailstock proxy to Diane Butts
Darryl Lesesne proxy to Diane Butts
Della Stolsworth proxy to Lee Klumpp
Noreene Wells proxy to Merrill Hessel

Approval of July 2009 Board Minutes

Greg Hamilton and Jim Klimaski seconded a motion to accept the July minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Jim Klimaski and Greg Hamilton seconded a motion to accept the minutes from the Special Meeting that convened on September 8th. The motion moved unanimously.

Presidents Report

There will be an October Board Meeting so that the auditors can present the FY09 Audit report.

Marian Merewitz, the Board Secretary, read the Executive Committee minutes for September 21, 2009.

MCT Board of Directors
Executive Committee
Meeting of September 21, 2009

Call to order – 6:34 p.m.

Attendance

Lee Klumpp, President
Marion Hayes Hull, First Vice-President
Dennis Courtney, Second Vice-President
Marian Merewitz, Secretary

Also in attendance were:

John Hansman, Interim Executive Director
Don Katzen, Operations Director

Executive Director's Report

John gave a report with recommendations for upcoming important activities that have been planned, will need to be planned and/or implemented in the near future.

President's Report

- A current copy of the Code of Ethics is to be distributed to the entire board.
- A potential relationship with ACPEN for webcasting from MCT studios was discussed.
- Lee discussed his meeting with Duke Realty and their willingness to help with our lease agreement.

Operations Manager's Report

This will be given in the Full Board meeting.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Adjourn – 7:34 p.m.

Interim Executive Director's Report

John Hansman, the Interim Executive Director, discussed aspects of his previously distributed report to the board.

(See Staff Action Item #1)

Operation Director's Report

Don Katzen discussed highlights of his report which were previously distributed to the board.

(See Staff Action Item #2)

Committee Reports

Budget & Finance Committee

- The auditors will present their FY09 Audit Report to the board at next month's meeting of the board in October.
- Lee met with the Senior Vice-President of Duke Realty, one of the largest managers of commercial real estate in the US and he has offered to represent MCT pro bono in renegotiating our lease with the landlord.

Ag Fair

Merrill Hessel reported that 824 people visited the booth this year. The positive impact to the organization was that the number of people signing up for Orientation this year doubled over the number from last year's Ag Fair.

Technology Committee

The committee met twice since the last board meeting. Minutes from the meetings were distributed to board members. Studio B will undergo a digital conversion and will be closed from December 15th through January 15th. (Addendum I)

Training Committee

Greg Hamilton, Committee Chair, held the committee's first meeting last month. The minutes from the meeting were distributed to board members. The committee is tasked with review of the current programs to see if changes are needed and if the current program fits into the organizations mission. Greg has been developing classes and ideas to supplement the station's existing training classes, i.e. creating a separate Studio B Certification, and non certification video editing classes in partnership with the CPCUG for the PCs in Classroom A. (Addendum II)

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

(See Staff Action Item #3)

Closed Session

Board Motion

Following the closed session the Search Committee and Executive Committee made a motion to accept the proposed slate of individuals put forth for the Executive Director position. Merrill seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the proposed slate.

Staff Action Items

1. Lee requested that all meeting invitations be sent out as Outlook Invitations so they could easily post to Board members' individual Outlook calendars, for those with Outlook.
2. A clarification about the currently running "Disclaimer Notice" was made. Staff was instructed to place this before each program. Staff is to also review ideas and give an update to the board with their suggestion for the best way to implement a disclaimer notification for individual programs that will work with all submissions, as well as, internet programming.
3. A request was made that staff again start sending out a weekly studio schedule once a week as had been done prior to the reorganization.

Adjourn – 10:15 p.m.

Minutes Technology Committee Meeting September 10 @ 7:30 pm

Attendees: Paul Amon, Michael Boblitt, Toby Beach, Dennis Courtney, Steve Friedman, Gregory Hamilton, Merrill Hessel, William Stewart, Patrick Thorpe, Frank Nelson, Don Katzen, John Hansman

Item 1 Patrick and other staff (training, communication to volunteers) to present a full Studio B conversion plan verbally and in writing to the committee members.

Attachment I is the revised plan that was submitted by Patrick and the discussion that followed provided the following information:

- Studios A & B will be closed for production from Dec. 15th to Jan. 15, 2010. All equipment for the changeover is on hand. There will be testing and training on the new equipment in studio B of staff and volunteers during the first two weeks of January.
- Lighting for the Green Screen and appropriate virtual set software for testing studio B will be ready at the beginning of January.
- The new audio board will be installed in studio B by the beginning of October
- Notification of these changes and closing of studios A & B will be published and sent out to MCT stakeholders within the next few weeks

Item 2 Status of Capital Equipment budget from the County for next year. John Hansman or Don Katzen

- The County has not notified us with respect to the capital funds available this year. MCT management will notify the Technology Committee members as soon as they are notified.
- A list of suggested capital equipment with justification of the items is to be prepared by MCT staff within the next few weeks for review by the Technology Committee.

Item 3 **There was a discussion of motion passed at the May 18, 2009 Board meeting concerning requirement of Technology Committee approval of technical/production equipment**

Motion passed by the Board – Merrill Hessel moved and Greg Hamilton seconded a motion that any technical/production equipment for more than \$2,500 be approved by the Technology Committee prior to purchase except in emergency situations that require repair of the equipment. The motion was passed unanimously.

Item 4 Considerations for replacement of existing field cameras and status of a search for new field cameras. - Patrick Thorpe

There was a discussion of the impending changes of recording and camera equipment from tape to tapeless technology. Cameras with P2 card and SD card storage are now available. Almost all equipment is going to be High Definition. The county seems to pushing this change. Further discussion of these strategic changes will be discussed during the next meeting.

There are serious reservations by many Technology Committee members that the County will be making all PEG channels follow their lead. It was stated that MCT is a Public Access Channel and has significantly different requirements and approaches to their technology requirements and mission than the rest of the PEG channels.

No time was available for the following items to be discussed.

Item 5 Playback Equipment Failure of DVD's and Tapes to play properly for airing programs - number of failures per month. Is the Playback DVD up to modern broadcast standards. -- Statistics to be obtained from Feedback forms and Playback operators Don Katzen to report

Item 6 The reporting and tracking of equipment problems with studio and field equipment -The committee agreed the ideal system would be a computerized system preferably online. Paper forms have been developed but are underutilized and the tracking is difficult to get. Dennis Courtney will report at the next meeting on the computerized system he is implementing along with Patrick for this task.

Item 7 Equipment for Dubbing and Reading Secam and PAL Tapes Paul Amon is to report at the next meeting about the equipment and cost. Included in this report should be the number of users and MCT productions this equipment would be utilized. The alternatives for these productions should be identified if MCT does not purchase the equipment.

Item 8 Training of weekend facilities personnel A manual is to be developed for all facilities personnel defining their responsibilities and training is to be given to them on the basics of the equipment – Patrick to report on the implementation of this item at the next meeting.

Item 9 Addition of a voice over booth Patrick indicated such an item would cost about \$5,000. The location of this booth was discussed and it could be put in the space that is to the left of the editing booths. A request to the Board would be made when the details are clarified. – Patrick to report

Item 10 Utilization of Existing Space in both the main building and classroom

Attachment I -- Studio B Digital Conversion --Patrick Thorpe, Received Sept. 9, 2009:

Technical staff will be working on the preliminary stages preparing for the digital conversion from September – December with the studio and control rooms closed from mid December through the first week of January. All key equipment for the digital conversion has been received. Due to budget limitations, all design and implementation will be done by MCT staff.

Communications to volunteers has begun with an article in the September E-News newsletter and follow-up information will be sent in the October In Focus Newsletter.

The Training & Volunteer Department will be implementing training sessions for the new switcher. AMTV will offer daytime, evening and a Saturday session for volunteers. The training will include how to use the board for basic switching as well as utilizing the new green-screen set for Chroma key and a review of many of the other features. Starting in November, communications will go out to volunteers offering training dates in early January.

When the new switcher is installed, we will be completing the County mandated transition to digital technology in Studio B. Studio B will be operating in the digital realm. The studio will have similar capabilities to Studio A. It will have a Multi-definition, 2ME digital switcher that is from the same manufacturer, but a newer model line than the one in studio A. The audio mixer is from the same manufacturer and product line as the one in studio A, except it is 16 channels not 32. The Character Generator will be the same one that is in Studio A.

Design & Engineering Phase

- ❖ Survey of all equipment
- ❖ Order Switcher/D.A.s/preliminary equipment as necessary
- ❖ Order remaining cabling and supplies as necessary
- ❖ Complete As-Built survey and Engineering Drawings (as necessary)
- ❖ Verify current Cable Run list (as necessary)
- ❖ Complete to-be-built Engineering Drawings
- ❖ Complete to-be-built Cable Run list
- ❖ Research and Order Desk mount for Synergy Vision VGA Touch Screen Control Panel
- ❖ Interface with Training/Volunteer Services and Outreach Departments

Pre-Install Phase

- ❖ Order any remaining equipment (if required)
 - Order Wholer Audio Monitors for Video Tape
 - Purchase new Tally Breakout Cable
- ❖ If possible, change over DA Tray(s) from GVG Analog to Ross Digital/Analog. At first using Analog D.A.s for current existing equipment, but planning for a switch over to new digital equipment/signals.
- ❖ Create and (if possible) Run new cables, Attach to (Primary Patch Panels/Substitute Patch Panels/Routers/DAs/BNC Barrels') as available. Cable lengths must be adjusted/allowed for, locating/relocating to final destinations.
- ❖ If possible, test individual cables and complete cable paths.

- ❖ Survey Ross 316 condition and operation, and document
- ❖ Power-up and test all “new” equipment for operation and function (e.g. digital CG), where possible, physically covert to new systems.
- ❖ Training where appropriate for new systems
- ❖ Purchase / Verify UPSs for all new systems
- ❖ Create as necessary, new VPP & APP, patch panel labels
- ❖ Rearrange VTR Racks for installation of new Digital Still Store (County Procurement FY’10 Purchase)

Installation Phase

- ❖ Verify Ross 316 condition and operation and tag unit for storage.
- ❖ Remove Ross 316 Control Panel, wrap in non-static bubble wrap and store.
- ❖ *Ross 316 Main Frame to stay in place and Cabled for an indeterminate time.*
- ❖ Prepare opening in console for mounting of Synergy Vision Control Panel (either rebuilding or cutting opening).
- ❖ Install Desk mount for Synergy Vision VGA Touch Screen Control Panel, and if appropriate at this time, mount monitor on mount.
- ❖ Mount Synergy Vision 2 Control Panel in Studio B Console
- ❖ If not already completed, mount Synergy Vision 2 Main Frame in Transmission Rack
- ❖ Cable Synergy Vision 2 Main Frame to Vision 2 Control Panel
- ❖ Where necessary, attach/move NEW digital cables to final destinations @ Synergy Vision 2 Main Frame/Patch Panels/D.A.s/Routers/Video Monitors/WFMs.
- ❖ If Possible, Ring-Out systems and complete cable runs, correct for any errors
- ❖ Power complete Synergy Vision 2 Control Panel/Main Frame/Synergy Vision VGA Touch Screen Control Panel, check for errors or problems (NOTE: For safety of the building and equipment, this task should be completed early in the day, then watched.)
- ❖ Using a Test Generator, test all cable paths through complete Synergy Vision Switcher system, correct for errors/problems, and document same.
- ❖ Power all associated Studio B Components and “Basic Test” Synergy Vision Switcher system, correct for errors/problems, and document same.
- ❖ Complete “Extended Test” of Synergy Vision Switcher system, correct for errors/problems, and document same.
- ❖ Permanently apply, as necessary, new VPP & APP, patch panel labels
- ❖ Prepare for Commissioning / Training as necessary.

Post Installation Phase: To be completed January 2010.

- ❖ Commissioning
- ❖ Staff & Access Training

Epilog

- ❖ Pull old Ross 316 Switcher Main Frame and associated cables/hardware.

Training Committee Report and Recommendations
September 21, 2009

Members

Gregory Hamilton, Chair



Diane Butts

Paul Amon

Larry Merewitz

Daniel Immerman

Frank Nelson

Bill Stewart

Paul Silverman, Advisor

Sufficient training opportunities are essential to facilitate the public's creation and distribution of media of interest to the citizens of Montgomery County, the mission of MCT.

Creating increased new shows requires creating new, certified producers, directors, and technicians in adequate numbers. MCT has experienced excellent attendance at its orientations, but has experienced large drop-offs from orientations to successful certifications. The base of volunteers participating has not grown. If MCT is to increase its output of volunteer-produced programs, it needs to increase its production of trained volunteers.

The Training Committee has searched for opportunities to supplement existing training, in a cost effective manner, which also help mitigate causes of the loss rate of new potential volunteers.

Key training aspects identified are:

Length of time and number of classes required to become fully certified

Overall costs of multiple classes

Lack of weekend Studio classes

Lack of Friday evening access hours

Lack of training oriented towards the less complex environs of Studio B

Video editing training is limited to using Final Cut Pro only

Current studio training classes require 24 weeks of classes to complete. Because there are four separate, sequential classes, the calendar time to complete all four would typically be much longer than the nearly six months of class time. Current training costs for the four studio classes total \$290.00. While this may be a competitive bargain, it is nonetheless real money out of the pocket of would-be volunteers.

Current studio classes are offered only on weekday evenings (Tuesday or Wednesday), lasting until 10:00 PM or even later. Many potential volunteers may be unable to participate late on work/school nights. All studio training is conducted in the large Studio A. It is a large, complex work space which can be intimidating to new students. No classes are held in the smaller, "friendlier" work space of Studio B. Show production in Studio B is further streamlined by simpler lighting, and the ease of moving between the studio and the control room.

Video editing training is currently offered, in the editing booths, using Final Cut Pro (FCP). With a small number of booths (5), training is limited and is in competition with certified users for booth time. Other, less complex forms of editing, Mac-based, PC-based, or linear are not offered. Offering alternative editing classes increases revenue and opportunities for successful completion of programs.

The Training Committee recommends the Board vote to support the addition of three training programs, to supplement current training effective Jan 2010.

Creation of a Studio B Certification and Classes

Video editing classes on alternates to FCP

A Service Learning Program for Montgomery County Middle & High School Students

A streamlined eight week (with 6 hours additional labs) course leading to certification for Studio B would offer multiple benefits to students and MCT. This course could be offered five times per year, on Saturday mornings in Studio B, yielding certification for all positions in that Studio. Students would learn all aspects in a single, uninterrupted, eight week course. Four of the classes could be used to shoot a program, and another to prepare PSAs. Such a class, offered five times per year could generate 20 hours of new programming, plus PSAs, annually. With a class limit of ten students, it could generate up to 50 new, fully qualified, Studio B volunteers. **The class would only need two instructors.** While specific costs of such a course are not agreed upon yet, the Training Committee believes that MCT should be able to offer this class on a budget neutral basis, and still offer it at well below the \$290 total of the current studio classes. We request that MCT staff prepare such a cost estimate in coordination with the Training Committee.

Additional video editing training could be offered on the use of linear editing, which is well suited for most Studio B productions. **This class would be an additional 4 weeks with 6 hours of labs.** Linear editing is much less complex than non-linear editing, as represented by FCP. MCT has two existing linear editing booths, Booths E & F. They are easy to use to quickly bring a production to completion.

Other video editing training could make use of the installed base of PCs in Classroom A to offer instruction on less, expensive, less complex editing programs, such as Windows Movie Maker, Sony Vegas (\$135.00) or a variety of others. It could easily be fitted with less expensive Apple computers to perform a similar task, using MAC's I-Movie or Final Cut Express version of Final Cut. Cost of Final Cut Express software is \$199.00 vs. \$1,000.00 for Final Cut Pro.

Again, while specific costs of such courses are not agreed upon yet, the Training Committee believes that MCT should be able to offer these classes on a budget neutral basis to MCT. The costs to volunteers of using these less complex programs on their own home computers, as many would prefer, would be vastly lower than their purchasing FCP to edit at home.

A third initiative, in synch with MCT's outreach goals, is a new "Service Learning Program" for Montgomery County high school students. This program could allow ten students per class to earn credits for high school graduation while they also help produce programs. Each student would be expected to devote a minimum of 36 hours total to the program. These students could be expected to continue to volunteer at MCT, increasing the pool of volunteers. This program can be offered Friday evenings from 5:00 to 9:00 and Saturday afternoon from 12:00 noon to 4:00pm.