

**Town of Chester  
PACT Committee Meeting  
Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018  
PACT Studio  
Approved Minutes**

**I Preliminaries**

Call the Meeting to Order  
Roll Call  
Chairman's Additions or Deletions  
Public Comment (10 Minutes)  
Old Business  
New Business  
Roundtable  
Meeting Adjournment

*1.1 Call to Order*

Joe Castricone, Chairman, called this meeting of the PACT Committee to order at 10:05am.

*1.2 Roll Call*

**Members Present:**

Joseph S. Castricone, Chairman  
Stephen D'Angelo, Selectman Liaison  
Bob Grimm, Co-Chairman  
Karl Knudsen, Secretary  
Terry Traynor

*1.3 Additions or Deletions*

None.

*1.4 Public Comment*

None.

**II Old Business**

*2.1 School*

Co-Chairman Grimm reported that Kim Peterson presented the School's Cable TV current uses and future wants and needs at last Thursday's School Board meeting. Upgrades including Hi-Def capabilities are among items on the wish list. Students hoped to see more sports highlights during morning announcements; and parents reported not watching Channel 22 very much. Co-Chairman Grimm felt that since only one School Board meeting per month is played on 22, upgrades are not warranted.

Co-Chairman Grimm noted that approximately \$23,000.00 would be needed to proceed with the School's requests; but opined that such funding should not come from the PACT fund. The School's hope is to

bring programs over the internet via a secure link instead of broadcasting them on Channel 22. Chairman Castricone added that the equipment used for the morning show is mostly on loan by PACT.

Even though the services PACT provides to the Town and to the School overlap, Mr. Traynor felt that PACT should have limited responsibility for School-related content. Chairman Castricone clarified that Channels 20, 21 & 22 exist to provide Governmental, Public Access, and Educational content, respectively; and that what airs on each is PACT's responsibility. Mr. D'Angelo felt that PACT was "joined at the hip" with both the School and the Town; and that it would be essential for PACT to offer all documentation justifying its budget requests as put forth to the Town and the School.

Chairman Castricone pointed out that the PACT fund--not taxpayer monies—paid for PACT operations. Mr. D'Angelo felt that this didn't matter; PACT fund expenditures could only be approved by the graces of the BOS and the Townspeople. The requested part-time studio employee, for example, would still be a Town employee. Chairman Castricone reiterated that the individual would be interviewed and hired by PACT and paid via the PACT fund; Mr. D'Angelo furthered that in the eyes of the Townspeople, this was still the addition of an employee and potential benefits to the Town's payroll.

Chairman Castricone explained that nine years ago, Co-Chairman Grimm and Hilary Hall had mentioned to the BOS at the time that the need existed for a part-time studio employee. Mr. D'Angelo opined that PACT's presentation at last year's Town Meeting was confusing to many, including the BOS and the Budget Committee.

### **III New Business**

#### *3.1 Channel 20 Programming*

Nothing to report.

#### *3.2 Channel 21 Programming*

Mr. Traynor is producing a new hour-long show that airs Wednesdays at 10pm, called *Late Night TV Live*. This has added seven new volunteers to the studio activities log. Mr. Traynor's objective is to improve the way public access cable is perceived by featuring local artists, musicians, and actors in a Johnny Carson-reminiscent format. Initially, the show was experiencing a two-minute delay on Facebook Live due to the TriCaster; which has since been reduced to a seventeen-second delay. The hope is that viewership will increase by offering this new, appealing show.

Promotional ideas for *Late Night TV Live* were discussed. Mr. Traynor explained that he intentionally did not market the show initially because he knew there would be bugs to work out; and from the first episode to the third, there have already been great improvements. Mr. D'Angelo suggested using Twitter and YouTube to widely advertise to potential viewers. Mr. Traynor believes that a common thread in the world of public access cable is lack of entertaining content; and he hopes to eventually get other local cable stations to broadcast the show as well. Mr. D'Angelo also suggested using short, previously-recorded interviews or PSAs as a means of transitioning segments. Mr. Traynor thought that would be ok, as long as these segments were fun, entertaining, and gave viewers a reason to watch.

Co-Chairman Grimm and Mr. Traynor volunteered to film the PTA Chili Cookoff and Bingo on Friday, January 26th.

Mr. Traynor reminded that the Committee is welcome to use any content on the Narrow Street Films website on channel 21, as they see fit.

### *3.3 Channel 22 Programming*

Nothing further to report, as only the monthly School Board meeting airs on channel 22.

### *3.4 2017/2018 Budget*

There is approximately \$5,000 remaining in the 2017/2018 budget; Chairman Castricone explained that most of that is going to contractor Greg Hall for work he's been completing. The PACT account has a balance of \$42,424 (less the ~\$5k above, therefore ~\$37k is available). The lighting purchased this year has been tremendously useful. The church donated the rear projection screen to PACT, under the condition that it be available to other groups that need it. Teleprompters were discussed and it was felt that one would be very beneficial for program production. There are currently no funds available to purchase one, which costs approximately \$5k.

### *3.5 2018/2019 Budget*

The BOS approved increasing the franchise fee from 1% to 2%; PACT will take in approximately \$34k in fees this year. It was agreed previously that PACT's expenses should not exceed what is taken in. The two expenses that must be factored in are the internet (\$9/mo.) and the contract (\$5k annually). Chairman Castricone referenced an email from Greg Hall, recommending the following purchases: RGL Automatic Gain Control Setup for the educational channel, \$1,200; eight 1x5 AB distribution amplifiers to replace the failing DAs, \$450 each for a total of \$3,500; 2 4-channel multiplexers, \$350 each for a total of \$700. The Committee agreed to put these three items into the budget.

The proposed part-time employee would cost \$21,000; based on 20 hours per week at \$20/hour, including taxes. 647 unpaid studio hours were logged from July 17, 2017 to December 31, 2017; which does not include all the hours Chuck Heuer has spent programming. Additionally, 660 miles were driven by volunteers during that same timeframe. Chairman Castricone suggested that Mr. Traynor, Co-Chairman Grimm, and Secretary Knudsen present the PACT budget proposal to the BOS on their designated night. Chairman Castricone shared a sample of Sandown's Cable TV Operations Reorganization chart with the Committee. Their studio employee works 15 hours per week at \$20/hour, and only manages one channel.

Mr. D'Angelo urged the Committee to carefully construct their narrative supporting all aspects of their budget proposal. From his experience on the Budget Committee, Mr. D'Angelo felt that often, not enough documentation is provided by the parties requesting approval. Much like preparing a business plan to a bank while applying for a business loan, the Committee should project where the station will be in the next few years. What gaps will the paid studio employee fill? As cable subscriptions go down, what kind of livestreaming will the studio offer? What technological advances will be worthwhile to invest in? It will be vitally important for the Committee to demonstrate all the work that goes into producing programs. Do viewers understand how much behind-the-scenes work is involved in broadcasting and programming, or is this taken for granted?

## **IV Roundtable**

Replacing the Ultra Nexus was briefly discussed. Would this be necessary? There are multiple ways this can be done, some more affordably than others. This will be further discussed later.

**V      Adjournment**

The next scheduled meeting of the PACT Committee is to be determined.

**Chairman Castricone moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Traynor seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative; so moved.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caroline Rose Wilson  
Recording Secretary in absentia