Metuchen TV & Technology Advisory Committee
Report on METV/Cable Service/Municipal Website Survey Results

I Overview

In connection with the Committee's function it was determined to conduct a survey to sample public opinion in Metuchen regarding the following:

- *Metuchen's Public Access Channel (METV) programming;*
- *Cable TV Service provider(Cablevision) Customer Satisfaction;*
- *Metuchen's Municipal Website;*

Survey Scope

- *Approximately 30 completed survey questionnaires at 10/11 Fair;*
- *Approximately 187 completed online via the Website;*

II Findings:

A **METV / Programmming** – The largest concerns raised by the public included:

-***Program Schedule***: the lack of readily knowing what programming was going to air when**;**
-***Picture Quality***: Poor picture quality compared to other cable channels/major networks;
-***Program Variety:*** perception that the number of programs are limited/repeated often;
-***Public Access Channel Purpose***: lack of understanding by public of its purpose/scope;

Issues/Causes/Recommendations

Several members of the Committee met with the METV Manager (R. DeSimone) on February 15, 2012 in order to assess these concerns and evaluate any potential solutions or possible enhancements. The following points were noted:

-*Programming Awareness*: it was noted that there already exists several sources for viewers to see weekly program schedules, both via the current link on the Metuchen Municipal Website, as well as on METV's scroll when programming is not airing**;**

Recommended Enhancements: *Based on discussions with Mr. DeSimone, it was suggested that:*

O ***Weekly Program Highlights*** *be added to the Website home page to bring attention to new programs. He would provide weekly updates to our service provider to keep those updates current;*

-*Quality:* Mr. Desimone noted that the lower picture quality is based on the quality of the transmission from Cablevision. *The Committee will explore further with METV and contact Cablevsion to assess any options/costs;*

-*Program Variety:* One problem noted was that no new concerts can be filmed/broadcasted in Metuchen due to a lack of any new lighting. The budget request for new lighting was not approved, thus resulting in more reliance on showing events from other communities (e.g. Woodbridge, Mercer County);

Recommended Enhancements

O Reconsideration of future budget allocations for at least some lighting to allow for new local events;
O Post on home page a request for Interns interested in working on METV to expand support staff;

-Purpose: *Public Access Channel:* from the opening page of the *METV* link on the Metuchen Website - "*METV is dedicated to meeting the community interest in government affairs, the arts, education, community events and informational programs."*

Issue: Whether current programming meet these goals:

O A review of current/past program highlights reflects a great variety of programs in the following areas(see attached)*:*

-***Government*** *(Council / Bd. of Ed. / Freeholders)* -***Seniors*** *(Seniorcize)*
-***Education / History / Arts / Health / Youth*** ***-Information*** *(New: Main & Middlesex)*

Recommendation: -*In order to more fully realize the "educational " component of the purpose of METV, the Committee recommends that the Council seek a broader participation of the Metuchen school system in programming for METV;*

Other Technological Enhancements:

O METV has been moving towards a 'tapeless' filming environment via newer cameras
O Industry trend moving toward programming "On Demand".

B Other Findings

- **Municipal Website**: – The largest concerns raised by the public included:
  -67% of respondents were Satisfied /19% Very Satisfied;
  -some see need to better format of home page;
- **Cablevision -** – The largest concerns raised by the public included:
  -complaints re: - Lost Service – 26%
  -Pricing – 26%
  -Digital Box Fee – 21%

Recommendations: *Need to address concerns with website provider and Cablevision.*