


From: "Ron Cooper, Access Sacramento" <rcooper444@aol.com>
To: Barry.Fraser@SFGOV.ORG

Date: Monday, July 13, 2009 12:02PM
Subject: Fwd: comment upon BAVC - Public Access decision

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Mr. Fraser...

While Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC) is a very worthy NPO training facility, this is another example of local government taking the lion's share of the local cable franchise fee for the general fund and government access programming and "farming out" public access with an insufficient funding mandate forcing more fee driven activities to "keep the doors open" and supplying the public minimal production support services.

The consequences are too often, (1) less facility and personal support for training, (2) less participation by community volunteers who need the additional training and support, often populations who are traditionally "disenfranchised" in tough budgetary times (3) a focus upon "serving those who can best serve themselves", the younger more tech savvy generations (4) continues to subvert the important PEG mandate of the 1984 Cable Act to support the communities access to cable television programming and the creation of local content and (5) as described in the Media Alliance alert, the BAVC move " . . . also takes a lot of the public out of of public access".

As we have now seen in Denver, Los Angeles and San Francisco, there are some in local government officials (not all, fortunately) who disguise keeping the franchise fee revenues for local government purposes and describe this diminishment of the "public electronic greenspace" as the inevitable but ultimately positive future resulting from evolving technology permitted by "Web 2.0". Public Access cable TV is no longer needed because people can get all they need from their use of the Internet.

We are glad BAVC, as an long standing and successful NPO organization, will continue to serve S.F. citizens. However, the City and County governments in L.A., S.F, Denver and other communities who spin these cuts as the "inevitable changing landscape of technological change" and a "benefit" to the people of these great cities are doing more than "making sweet lemonade". These are aggressive actions that diminish free speech in these communities, deny access to much needed training and public access facility support, and further silence those who need our support the most - minority languages, cultures, and points of view.

Ron Cooper, Access Sacramento and Treasurer, ACM Western Region

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