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To: barry.fraser@sfgov.org

Date: Thursday, July 09, 2009 08:50PM
Subject: Public Comment BAVC Contract

History:  This message has been replied to and forwarded.

For disclosure's sake I must inform you that I have been a board member of Access SF for nine years. However, we did not submit a bid during this last round of the RFP because we do not believe we can do a good job with the money promised for years two and three.

I am also a public access producer and have studied film at CSF for almost three years. I won a community access award, as have several of our producers. Newsroom was nominated for a Northern California Emmy.

I have lived with a disability, using a wheelchair, since the early nineties. These experiences give me a great deal of insight into public access considerations.

I have some questions.

1. Diversity of opinion and access to the media for anyone with a message is the point of public access, not popularity or ratings. It may be a very subtle difference for many, but it is at the heart of the responsibility BAVC is assuming. The proposal's description of how BAVC intends to program the channel leads to a question regarding whether or not BAVC fully comprehends this.
2. Cable companies are a public infrastructure, with little or no real competition, and as such owe the community something back. We're certainly not getting it in terms of reasonable pricing for their various packages. Given BAVC's description of their business plan, how do you and they understand this concept?
3. I'm not totally clear about exactly what BAVC is planning, as much of the language is unfamiliar to the non-professional filmmaking community. And I have taken several classes.

4. What does three free classes per year mean? Will most public access producers, many of whom live in poverty or have lost jobs, be forced to pay high prices for classes?
5. Many public access producers have minimal skills and rely on the equipment, which has been available without charge. Many cannot afford any charges. What are BAVC's plans?
6. Will local producers continue to be able to rely upon the available facilities for production, editing, coaching and assistance without charge? Many cannot afford any charges.
7. Local nonprofits, and city departments can produce and disseminate a lot of information if the cost is minimal. What do you have in mind?
8. The BAVC proposal says BAVC is wheelchair accessible. That, to me as a wheelchair user, is a warning. Are you aware that wheelchair accessible is usually a reference to building codes, and building codes quite frequently do not even provide real access?
9. Are you aware that real physical access means experimenting with configurations that allow persons who live with disability to both work and be involved in everything that goes on? Examples: purchasing equipment such as trackballs, workstations that can be raised or lowered, and programs such as speech to text, configuring office spaces so someone with a disability can be employed at BAVC.
10. Are you aware that code does not even begin to address programmatic access? Examples: people who cannot take class notes must be allowed to tape classes; since classes are generally hands-on fatigue issues can be handled by splitting classes into two or more days; BAVC might need to provide priority registration.
11. BAVC is time consuming and difficult to reach using public transportation.
12. The city departments could save a lot of money if the public access remains affordable. Are you aware that many seniors and

persons who live with disability cannot use computers and that the internet is not sufficient for getting information, etc, to these people? Others cannot financially afford computers, never used them, or simply don't like the internet.

Basically, BAVC is a highly regarded nonprofit. Their current business is with fast paced professionals in a fast paced industry, which could easily preclude most relatively low skilled community producers and destroy the fabric of community volunteers who make it possible for relatively unskilled people with diverse experiences to produce shows. Its also synergistic; by providing a sense of camaraderie and community as well as mutual assistance, it improved a lot of people's lives.

Since the budget included in the BAVC proposal was not posted, we do not know what local producers, nonprofits, and city departments will be charged.

The description of how BAVC intends to program indicates that publishable broadcast times may not be available for local producers who just want the right to get their diverse opinions broadcast. As a producer, I want this.