

From: Michael Muller michael@mullertech.com
Subject: Response to your letter
Date: April 18, 2019 at 10:44 AM
To: David Detmold daviddetmold@gmail.com
Cc: MCCI Board mcciboard@montaguetv.org, Dean Garvin infomontaguetv@gmail.com



Hey David,

Thank you for the kudos regarding our long-term commitment to keeping MCTV alive and kicking. It certainly has been a journey, and we have you to thank for part of our success.

Thank you, also, for bringing to us your "items of constructive concern." If our volunteer producers and the public in general do not let us know where we fall short, frustrations will simmer, we won't improve, and ultimately everyone loses.

So, in this vein, we would like to reply to your twelve points:

1. Yes, we have such policies in place, though upon review they were not laid out in their entirety on the Membership form nor the Cablecast Request form. Those two documents have been updated and are now in use at the front desk. The documents can also be found on our website on the About > MCCI Documents page.
2. Yes, training and technical support is always available from our staff upon request. In the past we have tried holding scheduled classes, announced in the paper and emailed from our website, but no one ever signed up, so we stopped trying. With the new Film Festival we are holding this year, perhaps this will change.
3. Regular station hours are posted, but sometimes, even with two staff persons, the station can be left empty while big shoots are being set up, or other unexpected issues arise. We have heard this complaint from other people in the past, and will review the issue again at our next board meeting (TONIGHT). We hope you will attend.
4. The ventilation system has recently been cleaned, as Dierdre mentioned at our March 21 board meeting. We will set up a schedule for regular cleaning of the vents going forward. Thank you for pointing this out.
5. This issue was brought up by Brett, and he has been invited to come to the station and discuss the matter with our staff, and if need be, the board, directly. As this is an employee issue, we cannot discuss details or outcomes with you.
6. See item 1, above.
7. We do, and the board has directed the staff to call upon local expertise to assist in that specific matter, as well as general maintenance review. Amherst's PEG station was mentioned, and has been contacted.
8. Normally producers are asked to provide their own storage media for their projects, specifically SD cards (as cheap as \$20 for 32GB), as they are easy to lose and to forget to return. The station has a budget for these "consumables", just like back in the days of video tape, but we really prefer producers buy their own so they can take their time editing and shooting additional footage if needed. This also ensures that their master footage is always in their possession. We made an exception to this policy in your case, but with so many different volunteers involved in your project, we felt it wasn't our place to manage and organize all the SD cards coming and going. This is your project, and if you're not aware of or able to manage that process, we suggest you work that out with the staff or ask your more experienced assistant producers to do that for you.

Having a cubical for each producer would be nice, but with the very limited space we have at the station, and the transient nature of MCTV's volunteer population, this would not be practical. For large projects, such as yours, you can certainly arrange to have a labeled spot on one of the many shelves to keep your DVDs and any SD cards that you have purchased. Station-owned SD cards cannot be held out of inventory for extended periods of time, as that would deplete what we have on hand for our own projects.

9. MCCI has reached out to the schools a number of times over the past decades, with either silence or outright denial most of the time. We did have some success with the Brickhouse for a while, and did receive regular DVD submissions from the high school when Doug was the video teacher, but those collaborations were always dependent on the producing entity. We can certainly review the situation again, and hope that the new Film Festival we are holding this year will help bring the kids in.

10. It is true that historically there have been many board members from the North & Center Streets neighborhood, but that happenstance was borne out of necessity when the board almost collapsed back in 2000, when Tom Adams was the Station Manager, and lived right on the common. Perhaps it's the water, or the mindset of the residents of that neighborhood -- you may recall Sam Lovejoy dubbing the station "Montague Center TV" back around 2001 -- but the board members from there have held on for quite a long time, helping to hold things together through thick and thin. We have advertised open board seats many times over the years, including handing out fliers at Town Meeting, printing advertising in the Montague Reporter, mailing postcards to every resident in Montague, and posting videos to channel 17 itself. It seems that people just don't want to join a board that is constantly under attack from the town leadership, including the select board for many years, and even the CAC, unfortunately. It's hard to be attractive under those conditions.

If you want to join, please feel free to apply. We have six open seats.

No, the hiring process is not "decided within family and friendship network of the key board members". We are not sure who the "some" people are who suggested such a thing, but it is just not true. The initial hiring process, back around 2006, cast a wide net up and down the valley, and we interviewed six serious candidates. Dean Garvin was one of the applicants, as was Jeff Singleton and Cathy King, and several others from out of town. Dean was the strongest candidate of them all, with a resume that included an IMDB record. You should look him up.

When it became apparent that Dean needed an assistant to increase station hours, after Cindy Tarrail left and Tim Lindop died, we again posted an advertisement in the Montague Reporter and Greenfield Recorder. Very few people responded to that ad, and from that tiny pool,

Dierdre was selected.

Though we hold infrequent staff reviews, we do keep in touch with their work and progress at every board meeting. A staff review is in order, though.

To clear up one point: the station is not funded by "public money." We receive funding through cable subscriber fees, collected on our behalf by Comcast. If you do not have cable, you do not contribute to that funding stream.

11. We do not have any Spanish-speaking persons in our employ, though that is a good idea. Outreach to that community is something we are now discussing, and will continue to discuss in the next few board meetings.

12. Yes, all videos are archived. We have boxes of videos in the station, and more on storage shelves in the basement. We do not have enough digital storage to keep everything online, although that is a goal of at least one of our board members. Both of the videos you mentioned are definitely still available, and may even be in DVD format on one of the shelves in the edit room. Ask Dean.

Thank you for your questions and concerns, and we look forward to discussing these points with you at our next board meeting on Thursday, April 18th, at 6:00 PM.

-MCCI Board

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