

## Who's Watching MCTV?

### **Findings:**

Staff is in general agreement with the Grand Jury's findings.

### **Recommendations:**

**The Grand Jury recommends to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and the City Council of the City of Half Moon Bay that they each:**

- 1. Communicate and coordinate any agreements with Mid-Coast Television (MCTV) in order to speak with one voice in contractual and oversight matters.**

**Response:** Agree, however, the recommendation requires further review and evaluation of both agreements with MCTV to determine the differences between the agreements and whether there would be any benefit gained from having similar agreements between MCTV and each jurisdiction. Additionally, the City and the County have separate agreements with Comcast containing different elements and requirements that may preclude implementation of identical agreements with MCTV.

- 2. Join with MCTV to create a strategic plan that improves the quality and relevance of service.**

**Response:** Agree in part. This recommendation can be implemented should MCTV embark on creating a strategic plan. The County is willing to be an active participant in a strategic planning process and offer input during the planning process. However, MCTV should take the lead on any strategic planning effort.

- 3. Initiate with MCTV a process of improvement based on community surveys and public input. The bylaws of MCTV should be adjusted to codify these reforms.**

**Response:** Agree in part. The recommendation to initiate surveys and public input, as well as, modifying the MCTV's bylaws could be implemented, but the County can only assist MCTV in obtaining feedback and suggestions from their viewers. The County can offer suggestions to the bylaws in terms of community surveys or public input components; however, the MCTV Board is the entity responsible for revising and adopting bylaws.

- 4. Encourage MCTV to seek out, foster, and broadcast new locally created programming. The agencies should consider Public, Educational, and Services (PEG) Station guidelines as a minimum-programming standard.**

**Response:** Agree. The recommendation for MCTV to broadcast recent and locally created programming can be valuable to the viewers; however, even programs that are not locally created can be very valuable to MCTV's viewers. The MCTV website contains information and requirements for programming that is submitted to MCTV, which could be recent and locally created. It appears that MCTV does not preclude programming contributions produced locally, but does specify that the submittals will be viewed by MCTV prior to being aired on the station. MCTV's viewers can also benefit by programming produced by other PEG channels or nonprofit organizations that provide appropriate programming for PEG channels. There are many important messages and information that have been produced by other entities that may have great value to MCTV viewers. This appears to be an affordable option for a PEG station of this size with limited revenue. The County can work with MCTV to ensure they are aware of specific programming that may have value to their viewers and encourage that the programs be aired on the station.

**5. Work with MCTV to identify and develop new funding sources so that MCTV may carry out its mission more effectively.**

**Response:** Agree. The recommendation for MCTV to identify and develop new funding sources is important, particularly in light of the other options available to television watchers that do not rely on cable. The existing franchise agreement between the County and Comcast allows for PEG Capital funding. The Board of Supervisors previously approved an allocation of this funding to MCTV and they have been reimbursed appropriately for PEG Capital expenses in connection with the Board's approval and the franchise agreement. The County can provide input to MCTV in regards to funding options, but this is a challenge that many PEG channels face and work to solve in various ways.

**6. Direct MCTV to publicly announce and invite the public to participate in its Board meetings**

**Response:** Agree. The MCTV Board meetings are open to the public, however, notification of the meeting dates and times could be improved to potentially increase the number of meeting attendees. Staff was unable to find information on the MCTV website regarding the MCTV Board Members, scheduled meetings, agendas, meeting minutes, or existing bylaws. The website could be a valuable and visible place to post this type of information to keep the public informed of MCTV Board activities and bylaw requirements.