



Petaluma Community Access
Access Activities Plan and Budget
for Fiscal Year 2010-2011

The PCA Mission Statement:
To promote freedom of expression in a public voice,
provide access to communication tools, and
foster the use of media.

The contract between PCA and the City of Petaluma requires that an Access Activities Plan and Budget be created each Fiscal Year beginning July 1 to establish goals and describe the method of reaching them.

Staff & Board of Directors

As an independent, non-profit organization incorporated in 1995, as a 501(c) (3) corporation in the State of California, Petaluma Community Access is governed by a Board of Directors.

The current composition of the PCA Board:

Cindy Thomas <i>Chair</i>	Elected 9/28/08 (3 year term)
Eric Adams <i>Vice-chair</i>	Elected 9/28/09 (3 year term)
Richard Squaglia <i>Treasurer</i>	Elected 9/28/08 (3 year term)
Marcelle Guy <i>Secretary</i>	Appointed 10/20/09 (1 year term)
Jorge Panana	Elected 9/28/08 (2 year term)
Matt Pearson	Appointed 10/20/09 (1 year term)
Dave Rose	School District Designate
Tim Williamsen	City of Petaluma Designate

PCA is currently staffed by six employees:

John Bertucci	Executive Director (<i>Salaried Full-time</i>)
Lorena Gomez-Barris	Office Manager (<i>Regular Part-time</i>)
Thomas Harrigan	Programming Director (<i>Regular Part-time</i>)
Zach Smith	Production Manager (<i>Regular Part-time</i>)
Kate Gratto-Bachman	Access Assistant (<i>Regular Part-time</i>)
Max Piepenbrink	Access Assistant (<i>Regular Part-time</i>)

Review of Fiscal Year 09/10

Structuring PCA for stable operation by a part-time workforce was our primary objective at the start of the current fiscal year, and we can be proud that PCA is presently functioning quite well. Based on the balance at the end of three quarters, we will probably close this fiscal year about \$30,000 under budget. There was considerable turnover in staff, however, and the process of filling these open positions established two facts: our current pay scale is low; our needs are quite specific. We have definitely benefitted from the current economic downturn in the high level of qualified applicants we have been able to choose from.

The services we provided to the public continued as they did in FY08/09. Without a live studio, we have focused on optimizing the field production resources we offer, and our eight Sony cameras and four Final Cut Pro editing stations saw considerable use this year. We have also made strides in fulfilling our obligation to the City of Petaluma to providing meeting coverage.

Developing our Programming Department was the most difficult challenge this year. We lost our Programming Director in August 2009 and postponed hiring a replacement until we had modified technical aspects of the programming procedures (to permit file sharing and thus lessen our need to access our broadcast servers in City Hall which remains closed to us from Thursday night to Monday morning). We hired our new Programming Director in April 2010 and revised procedures to make the process more efficient, and to produce a weekly calendar of scheduled broadcasts.

We were able to sell the mobile production trailer and truck purchased in April 2008, and have expanded our office space with an additional room in the same building to alleviate congestion in a shared staff/member workroom. Everything we decided, accomplished or developed in FY09/10 was weighed according to our three primary goals: to assure the administrative viability of PCA; to purchase and maintain reliable media equipment for member use, and to provide an agreeable, stimulating place for members to edit their programs.

Developing our Radio Project (using a TV channel to broadcast audio only) has been a struggle, given certain technical issues in sending the audio to our broadcast servers in City Hall, but we remain committed to offering this media option. We have also overhauled the PCA website to accommodate easier staff administration and to achieve a more engaging online presence, and have launched a Facebook page for social networking.

Finally, we made a special effort to reach out this year to build mutually supporting relationships with numerous local non-profit organizations in Petaluma. We are currently partners in a grant request authored by Healthy Communities Consortium, and have provided media assistance to the Arts Council, Downtown Association, Phoenix Theater, Petaluma Bounty, etc.

Defining Factors for the Future

The dominant factor informing our plans for the upcoming year is the imminent disruption of our primary funding stream. Starting August 19, 2010, the agreement defining the obligations of the cable provider serving Petaluma will no longer be based on a negotiated franchise with the City, but will be defined in a franchise obtained from State authorities. The terms of this transition are mandated in the "Digital Infrastructure and Video Competition Act," DIVCA. The City of Petaluma

consequently passed an ordinance to establish its continued right to returned revenues, for itself and PCA. The full impacts on PCA's operating income will probably not be known until we receive Access Fees for the first full quarter after DIVCA takes effect, which could be in February 2011.

Our current quarterly Comcast checks (combining a \$.25 mandatory charge and \$2.00 optional charge on each monthly cable bill) have allowed us to underwrite a thriving operation. They have also allowed us to concentrate on serving the community without having to mount intensive fund raising campaigns. PCA's core revenue source is supplemented by membership fees, DVD sales, donations, etc., but this income has never represented more than 1% of our operating revenue. The anticipated decrease in our cable Access Fees income, dropping from \$220,000 to \$185,000, is the primary issue confronted in this Plan, and the attached Budget.

We have received the last of four annual capital grants of \$30,000 that were defined in the last Comcast franchise agreement. The current balance in the Capital Expense Fund account that the City of Petaluma administers for PCA is \$110,000. We also have \$19,600, received in the sale of the mobile production trailer and truck, on reserve in a separate Capital Expense account. There is, however, no existing provision for future deposits in either account.

Should the scale of our projected operations and development in the coming year remain consistent, the current Capital Expense account can accommodate four or five more years. Special expansion projects, such as building a new TV studio, can be underwritten with a high profile fund drive specific to that objective.

Reframing Our Mission

That PCA is facing a reduction in its financial resources in the coming fiscal year is certain; the impacts of this transition, however, are far from clear.

This is not an unprecedented situation; PCA was faced with a similar predicament in 2000 when its primary funding stream shifted from \$.75 mandatory charge on each cable bill to a \$2.00 optional charge. Anxiety was high as a small staff kept the operation running at the most modest level of performance until it gradually became apparent that the people of Petaluma were equal to the "optional" challenge and voluntarily supported their Access Station with consistent and substantial funding.

The cautious strategy that carried us over that uncertain transition was to reaffirm the basic tenets of our Mission Statement and then fulfill it in the most economical manner. This is the approach that we must again embrace to negotiate the first two quarters of FY2010/11.

The survival of PCA in the event of a potential collapse of its funding mechanism lies in recognizing that our obligation "to promote freedom of expression in a public voice, provide access to communication tools, and foster the use of media" is not specifically limited to the operation of three channels of local cable television, but can equally apply to the full range of available communications technology such as radio or the internet (websites, social networking, blogs and streaming video). A multi-year effort to establish a low-powered radio station collapsed in 2007, but the internet remains an important option for us should the financial impacts of this transition reach crisis proportions.

Fortunately, we are not now faced with such difficult choices. We are, however, confronted with the need to radically realign our expectations and initiatives to accommodate an inevitable loss of income, and develop new ways to access other sources of revenue to maintain and expand the services we have been providing the community since 1996.

We also have an immediate task before us: to see that the existing City ordinance is modified to increase the designated 1% of revenues payable to PCA as Access Fees. It has recently been determined that, under DIVCA, we can use our average income from 2006 to set the exact percentage needed to restore that level of funding (1.24%).

Like so many others in today's shifting economy, we are going to have to carefully weigh our hopes and desired goals with financial reality. To adapt with vision and courage to the serious challenges ahead, PCA needs to carefully interpret and embody our fundamental mission to promote and explore new ways to provide access to modern media to serve the communication needs of our community.

Goals & Priorities for Fiscal Year 2010/11

1) Staffing

The staff is the lifeblood of this organization and cultivating the way they function together and serve the public is a vital responsibility. Raises are in order and scheduled (October 2010) and staff equipment and supplies are being upgraded and augmented to make their work more effective and comfortable. Their enthusiastic service to PCA constitutes our primary resource.

2) Facilities

Moving the Executive Director and Programming Director's desks out of the main office has allowed us to expand the member's area at PCA. We are purchasing another video editing computer, giving us a total of five stations, and rearranging the layout to make this area more user friendly, and to allow larger training classes.

3) Membership

The FY09/10 augmentation of our field and editing equipment has made it possible for PCA to eventually serve more members and a strenuous effort to raise our membership base is planned. Reaching this broader base depends largely on the image we project, so press releases, mailings, eblasts, Facebook messaging and maintaining our general visibility in the community are crucial.

4) Equipment/Checkout

The basic operational function of PCA has always been to make cameras available to the public and we will continue to maintain our equipment resources in up-to-date and excellent working condition. Additional sound and lighting equipment still needs to be purchased, and the portable studio that staff has been using for parades and graduations modified for eventual member use.

5) Training Programs

An expanded program of classes is under review for the coming year, with staff and guest instructors teaching more advanced aspects of media production. Basic orientations on PCA rules, camera use and video editing will remain a benefit of regular membership, but the advanced classes will require a fee, yet to be determined.

6) Programming

PCA broadcast content depends entirely on the programs submitted or sponsored by our members producers, and government meetings. We are constantly striving, in our classes and mentoring relations, to enhance the quality of member submissions. The internal procedures and presentation of our scheduled broadcasts are, however, fully within our purview and have enjoyed remarkable improvement over the past few months. Efforts to make our programming more viewer friendly and rewarding will continue.

7) Business Sponsorship

Over the past few months, PCA has worked to develop an entirely new funding stream, an underwriting program whereby local businesses can donate as much as \$5,000 to sponsor designated blocks of our broadcast air-time. The success of this initiative would securely offset the loss in anticipated revenues due to the DIVCA transition and will be pursued with vigor.

8) Educational Outreach

Given the overall reduction in local education financing, an important opportunity exists for PCA: to develop partnership projects with schools that will contribute to the educational opportunities they can offer their students. PCA recently helped launch a Facebook page for youth leadership support, and we regularly enjoy the services of student interns getting school credit.

9) Policies & Procedures

As a result of the many major changes in our facilities and operational scope over the past few years, the existing 1996 Policies & Procedures document is barely relevant to how we operate. A comprehensive revision of this document was initiated in February 2010, with the PCA Members Advisory Committee currently doing an initial review, and a fully revised version should be ready to present and adopt at the Annual PCA Members meeting in September.

10) Non-Profit Partnerships

PCA has for years devoted significant attention to partnering with other local non-profits and community organizations, and this will remain a priority. Collaborating with these organizations in the production public service announcements, event coverage and specific projects is a vital way to extend our resources and services to the community we share with them.

Programming Statistics

Petaluma Community Access broadcasts television content on 3 channels, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All of the programs that we broadcast are repeated numerous times and whenever there are any unprogrammed spaces in our broadcast schedule, an automated Bulletin Board is activated to offer announcements and information of interest to the community.

According to our records for the fiscal year 2009/10, a total of 866 programs were submitted for broadcast on PCA channels 26 and 27.

These programs can be distinguished as either: "local programming," which designates programs produced by residents of Petaluma, including PCA staff productions; or "non-local programming," which designates programs submitted or obtained from satellite feeds, organizations, other Public

Access producers and independent filmmakers from across the country. All non-local material is sponsored for PCA broadcast by a Petaluma resident.

A review of 2009/10 DVD submission forms reveals the following percentages*:

Channel 26 - 80% local, 20% non-local;

Channel 27 - 57% local, 43% non-local.

(* does not include streamed programming)

Channel 28 is devoted to government meetings and its content is, by definition, local. PCA billed the City of Petaluma for 237 hours of meeting coverage in FY09/10, with those programs being broadcast live and repeated numerous times in our schedule. Estimated percentages:

Channel 28 – 95% local, 5% non-local (County Board of Supervisors).

The total annual percentages of PCA broadcast content are thus:

FY09/10 - 77% local and 23% non-local.

Projected Budget for Fiscal Year 09/10

Attached.

Closing Note

This Plan is essentially a two year plan; it will be accounted for and adjusted accordingly for the following fiscal year. The attached budget, however, will be subject to a critical review at the end of this fiscal year's second quarter, in February 2011, when the full financial impacts of the DIVCA transition are known.

FINAL – approved 7/20/10