

MUNICIPAL CABLE TELEVISION SYSTEM

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this document is to establish policy on programming, operational criteria and the role of LRTV in politically-oriented programming; in pursuing diversified programming of value and interest to the citizenry; in insuring policy and recommendations consistent with the FCC rules for a cable broadcasting station. To those ends, this document is intended to clarify functions and services of Little Rock Television, and to provide operational direction for staff.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

- A. Responsibility for production planning, programming, scheduling, distribution, review, playback and release approval rests with the City Manager's Office.
- B. Responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the system rests with the City Manager's Office.

III. DEFINITION:

The municipal cable television system includes the City-owned facilities and equipment necessary for video production and transmission for which is given by the cable franchise holder.

IV. POLICY:

Little Rock Television, Government Access Channel 11, is a Public, Educational, Governmental (P.E.G.) Access Channel as provided for under the Cable Communications Act of 1984, Section 531, and the cable franchise agreements with licensed franchise serving Little Rock. LRTV Channel 11 is fully-programmed and operates on a twenty-four (24)-hour, seven (7)-day a week schedule. Through the Comcast franchise, the channel is carried on the basic tier and reaches every Little Rock subscriber in the local cable system.

The mission of Government Access Channel 11, Little Rock Television (LRTV) is to provide residents of Little Rock with quality local government programming. LRTV's primary obligation is to air live public meetings and perform post production work so they can be viewed by the public. To accomplish this mission

LRTV will air information regarding the many programs, services and opportunities made available by the City of Little Rock by providing access to the activities and process of their municipal government, via LRTV.

V. PROCEDURE:

A. To achieve its mission, the following goals have been established:

1. To air public meetings in order to reach maximum amount of citizens.
2. To create non-commercial, non-partisan, outlets for the distribution of high-quality municipal programming to an informed citizenry.
3. To enhance access to the processes of government, and government officers.
4. To encourage interaction and dialogue between citizens and city officials.
5. To enhance delivery of quality government services to the public.
6. To provide greater public awareness and understanding of City Government by producing and distributing information regarding policies, procedures, resources, activities, services, events and City jobs available to citizens throughout the City.
7. To increase community awareness of the depth and breadth of important issues confronting City Government by providing programming that informs, educates and enlightens, as well as, exchanges ideas and opinions that shape community life.
8. To enhance public awareness of electoral processes, government decision-making and to encourage public participation.
9. To provide accurate, timely information in times of emergency and about emergency preparedness.
10. To support City Employee training, as required.
11. To promote use and awareness of television services programming and information.
12. To ensure LRTV meets the needs of City agencies and citizens.
13. To enhance the quality of life in Little Rock through programming that contributes to making the Little Rock area a better place to live through both content created by LRTV and content contributed by approved, affiliated agencies.
14. To insure that LRTV programming is unbiased and non-partisan.

B. Priorities: In providing each day the maximum practicable number of hours of on-air programming of value and interest to the public, the following priorities for use of personnel and equipment resources of LRTV are established:

1. Live and delayed coverage of Little Rock City Board of Directors Board and Agenda Meetings.
2. Live and delayed coverage of other local government public meetings.
3. Local government sponsored programs and activities that affect the public.
4. Informational programming on local government activities.

5. Acquired programming consistent with the mission statement and goals of LRTV.
- C. Exclusions: LRTV shall not air programming containing:
1. Libelous statements or matter.
 2. Copyrighted material without appropriate written releases or permissions.
 3. Obscene or indecent material as defined by City Ordinance or community standards.
 4. Commercial speech.
 5. Political programming (See Item Q).
 6. Material submitted for cablecast which does not meet professional broadcast production standards in quality of picture, sound, and technical or editorial execution.
 7. Any other material inappropriate to the mandate, mission, goals, and priorities of LRTV.
 8. Any material, which is in the judgment of the City Attorney's Office, is inconsistent with Federal, State or local law, ordinance or rule, which may subject the City of Little Rock to liability, shall not be aired.
 9. Technically unusable material as determined by Video Production Staff will not be shown.
- D. Resource Allocation: Scheduling of production personnel and equipment shall be governed by priorities set forth in GOALS, PRIORITIES and EXCLUSIONS. Given limited staff and technical resources available, LRTV cannot operate like a commercial station news department or video production house.
1. Scope of Work:
 - a. LRTV shall not compete with the private sector.
 - b. Utilization of the channel or equipment for personal and/or political gain will not be permitted.
 - c. Audio and video production by LRTV Staff shall be available primarily to City Government Departments/Divisions. If sponsored by a City of Little Rock Department, agencies and activities associated with local government may request the use of LRTV Staff and resources.
- E. Responsibility for Content: LRTV Management has ultimate responsibility for content airing on the channel. Responsibility for the content of any programming produced by LRTV for any Government Department or Division lies solely with the initiating Department or Division. Department and Division Directors shall be required to approve, in writing, programs and production requests relating to their Departments and Divisions. An approved script, story line or outline must be finalized before production can begin. LRTV shall have the right to edit copy without changing content if such copy does not meet professional journalistic and broadcast standards. Copy editing shall be performed in a consultive/collaborative spirit with the client.

- F. Non-Discrimination Policy: Programming on LRTV shall depict people in a manner which does not discriminate or foster discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin or ancestry, familial status, age, gender, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, Vietnam-Era or disabled veteran status, sexual orientation or menial condition.
- G. Retention and Ownership of Recordings: Based upon a recommendation from the City Attorney, videotaped or digital recordings of the Little Rock City Board of Directors Meetings shall be retained for a minimum of three (3) years. All videotaped or digital recordings shall be the property of the City of Little Rock, and it shall be a general policy to not retain all recordings of staff-produced programs, meeting, and events. Physical copies of recordings of the Little Rock City Board of Directors Board and Agenda Meetings, Planning Commission Meetings, and Planning, Rezoning and Conditional Use Hearings shall be indexed and retained in the Little Rock Television (LRTV) Cable Studio for the current year and the two (2) previous calendar years. All recordings from before that time period will be archived at the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies and available for public inspection, per a written agreement with the Butler Center.
- H. Copies of Programs: Viewers who wish to make copies of the City's programming for individual home viewing may do so, without charge or fee, by utilizing their own home audio/video recording device. The Little Rock Television production copyright on these programs remains in effect and no commercial use is permitted. For non-LRTV productions, intellectual property and copyright laws apply. The public should make every effort to view digital copies of recordings of the Little Rock City Board of Directors Board and Agenda Meetings, Planning Commission Meetings, and Planning, Rezoning and Conditional Use Hearings on the City's website. If a copy of a recording is requested, the default method of delivery will be a link to a digital copy of the recording. Physical copies requested by the public can be made as required and will cost \$5.00 per meeting or event that is contained on one (1) physical medium with an additional \$5.00 cost for each additional physical medium. Requesters shall be required to pay for recordings upon delivery. Meetings older than three (3) years will be archived as outlined in the Retention and Ownership of Recordings section. Recordings not owned by LRTV cannot be copied and sold.
- I. New Show Concept: Concepts for new shows must be brought to LRTV Staff and Assistant City Manager for approval. The title, format, host, number of shows, topics, amount of time needed per show, etc., should be provided in order to allocate usage of LRTV Staff and equipment.
- J. Fees: If a Department requires certain material and/or supplies, the Department should bear the cost.
- K. Operational Procedures: LRTV Staff will be responsible for quality of signal transmission to the Cable Operator's Head End. The current and future guidelines for signal quality shall be those set out in Part 76 of the

FCC rules, as amended. The necessary tests will be performed in accordance with good engineering practices. Additionally, the parameters of the modulating video signal will conform to Electronic Industries Association standard RS-170A, as amended. All recordings shall meet minimal technical standards outlined by LRTV Staff. Recordings that do not meet minimum technical standards will not be aired.

L. Types of Programs:

1. Live Cablecast: Live coverage of selected meetings and events will be provided. This will consist of City Board of Directors and Planning Commission Meetings, live call-in shows and other special programmed events.
 2. Recording-Delayed Cablecast: Recorded meetings, shows and events recorded in advance for cablecast at a later time. Note: Some events will be cablecast live and will also be recorded for later playback.
 3. Staff-Oriented Programming: Programs of this nature include programs for City Departments, issues related to City Government or regarding groups/committees/boards, etc., that are affiliated with City Government or which use public dollars. These programs could be either live or delayed cablecasts.
 4. Outside-Originated Programming: Material that is related to Municipal, County, State, or Federal Government that is produced by an outside source that can be purchased, rented or borrowed for cablecast. Also, programs disseminated through satellite down-link that are related to local, state, or federal issues may be cablecast. Written permission to air these shows must be obtained before airing and retained on file. Any program with a kill date or number of airings indicated must be labeled as such.
 5. Bulletin-Board Information: Character-generated messages related to City activities, programs, services and events sponsored in whole or in part by the City of Little Rock or other governmental unit affecting Little Rock citizens. This service will operate when other programming is not scheduled.
- M. Editing Policy: Editing of programming on Government Cable Channel shall be subject to the following:
1. Public Meetings: Any public meeting cablecast on Government Cable Channel 11, be it live or recorded, will be aired in its entirety, gavel-to-gavel without editorial comment. Technical difficulties may occur but do not constitute intentional editing. Exceptions to this policy may occur only when editing out possible recesses, to comply with public standard of decency or when technical limitations restrict production procedures. Supplemental information on agenda items which the City Manager's Office determines will aid the viewer in understanding the issues or matters under discussion may be provided.
 2. Departmental Programs: Any programming prepared or provided by a municipal agency/department may be modified or edited as

deemed appropriate to the policies governing LRTV use by the City Manager's Office or an agent directed by the City Manager's Office. This determination may be made by policy restrictions or by technical, scheduling or staff limitations and may be subject to the review.

N. Sponsor Acknowledgements/Advertising: LRTV may provide "on-air" acknowledgments of program sponsors of LRTV Programs, in accordance with The National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB) Guidelines to underwriting for public radio stations, dated October 1992. These guidelines are:

1. Underwriting defines what LRTV may and may not do in announcing funding for a specific program or series of programs.
2. If money is given without direct connection to any programming, it is considered a donation. Donor announcements are not required, but may be made at LRTV discretion.
3. When announcements for donations or underwriting from for profit entities are made, may include:
 - a. A trade name or brand name.
 - b. Location and phone number.
 - c. Logograms or slogans that are not of a promotional nature.
 - d. Value-neutral descriptions of a product line or service that aid in identifying the contributor.
 - e. Names or service listings that do not include qualitative or comparative language.
4. LRTV is not allowed to promote the goods or service of any underwriter or donor. In order to avoid "promoting," announcements made regarding entities who have furnished some consideration must not include any:
 - a. Mention of Price: no interest rate, pricing information, discount, savings, or value of any kind may be included in acknowledging a contribution.
 - b. Call to Action: any announcement regarding a company or person who furnishes remuneration to the public broadcaster may not suggest that the listener take action - the listener cannot be encouraged to "call," "come by," "try," or even "be sure" in relation to a product or service.
 - c. Inducements to Buy: it is improper to entice the viewer to make a purchase by offering bonuses, freebies, or other specials.
 - d. Qualitative or Comparative Language: descriptive or comparative language of a product or service. An announcement may not explain, for example, that something is "perfect," "less filling," or is the "largest," "smallest," or "most" anything.
5. Cablecast Commercialism of Public Forums is Discouraged: In furtherance of this policy LRTV will get tight shots of speakers in a manner to exclude commercial banners and logos wherever

feasible. It being understood that a commercial name may appear, and LRTV cannot control its exclusion, such as hotel names or other sponsor's logos on speaker's podiums.

- O. Promotions: Promotional announcements for municipally sponsored events or activities are generally, acceptable for cablecast on LRTV. Public Service Announcements for agencies outside of municipal government are subject to appropriateness as determined by the City Manager. No commercial oriented promotions will be considered for cablecast.
- P. Political Programming: No political programming will be permitted on the Government Access Channel with the exception of providing factual information on any ballot issue affecting Little Rock voters.
- Q. Candidates: LRTV shall not cablecast campaigning by, or on behalf of, any candidate for public office. Utilization of LRTV by elected officials seeking re-election and candidates seeking election is prohibited. A candidate for public office, any individual, incumbent or otherwise who:
1. Has publicly announced his or her intention to campaign for nomination or office. A public announcement shall be considered any one or more of the following: A) the retention of a campaign manager or other campaign employees; B) the opening of a campaign bank account; C) the receipt by a candidate of any campaign contributions; D) the expenditure of funds for campaign obligations; E) the printing of any campaign promotional material; or F) a declaration as communicated by any candidate to any print, broadcast or cablecast media.
 2. Has filed a Declaration of Candidacy with the City Clerk for the Office of Mayor or City Director.
 3. Has otherwise qualified under County, State or Federal Law to hold the office for which he or she is a candidate.
 4. Has qualified for a place on the ballot or has publicly committed himself or herself to seeking election by the write-in method.
 5. Who has made a substantial showing that he or she is a bona fide candidate seeking nomination to any public office at a convention, caucus or similar procedure; except that no person shall be considered a candidate for nomination prior to ninety (90) days before the beginning of any convention, caucus or similar procedure in which he or she seeks nomination, whichever (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) comes first.
- R. Access Policy: Access to LRTV is limited to municipal agencies/departments and those entities with a direct corporate relationship with the City of Little Rock. LRTV is not intended for general public use.
1. Public Meetings: All public meetings of City policy-making Commissions and Boards are authorized for cablecast. All regular City Board of Directors Meetings will be cablecast. Meetings related to governmental committees, Boards and Commissions might be

cablecast at the request or by permission of the presiding officer, logistics permitting.

2. Informational Programming: While all programming on LRTV is considered to be informational, those herein are considered to be pre-produced feature programs and program series. All municipal agencies/departments may submit through their Department Director, requests which they feel may be appropriate for cablecast on LRTV. Any programming request shall be subject to review of the Assistant City Manager and LRTV Staff. The decisions of the Assistant City Manager and LRTV Staff may be appealed to the City Manager. Written permission for use of copyrighted material must be authorized in advance by the materials owner and obtained by the sponsor of said material.
 3. Billboard Information Messages: Information for the billboard may be submitted by any municipal agency/ department. Messages submitted should be consistent with the previous policies and intentions of this policy statement and shall be cablecast at the discretion of the Assistant City Manager and LRTV Staff. Decisions of Assistant City Manager may be appealed to the City Manager.
- S. Grievance Procedure:
1. Authority: The City Manager shall have the discretion to interpret definitions and enforce prohibitions and policy guidelines and procedures.
 2. Response to Complaints: After receipt of a complaint, LRTV Staff shall attempt to resolve the issue with the complainant. A written response outlining management's decision on the issue shall be provided for the complainant within ten (10) working days of receipt of a complaint or additional time will be requested of the complainant if needed to obtain more information.
 3. Appeals: Written appeals of decisions shall be made to the City Manager. The City Manager shall attempt to resolve the issue with the complainant within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of an appeal.

Approved:



Bruce T. Moore
City Manager