

Town Hall
Ward 3
September 28, 2006

Council Member Karin Uhlich: O.k., Welcome everybody, My name is Karin Uhlich and I'm your Ward 3 City Council Member. Thank you for being here, thank you. And I'll applaud you for spending an evening here on an important community matter that we're gonna be navigating together over the coming months. As you know, we're in the midst of the renewal negotiation with Cox Communications. We want to have as much information as possible from community members about what your thoughts are regarding Cox's performance under the existing agreement, ideas of what you would like to see in the future related community resources and the Cox services and other aspects of the renewal agreement. I'm not an expert, but I have wonderful guides including all of you. I wanna introduce Miguel Ortega from my staff, and Ann Strine whose the Director of the Information Technology for the City, as well. I do wanna let you know I actually had a wisdom tooth pulled earlier today so I'm gonna probably start fading but I want you to know whatever you share will become part of the public record, part of our process, part of our consideration so if I duck out don't take it as meaning anything other than I'm gonna go take a nap and Miguel's gonna stay through the whole thing as is Ann and other staff members and just thank you again so much for investing your time and energy. This is very, very important to all of us. So thanks and I'll turn it over to Ann.

Ann Strine: Thank you, Karin. I also want to thank you for coming tonight. This is important to the City that we hear from you. I want you to know that we are taping this. It is just an audio tape but that helps us keep an exact record of what you say rather than trying to take notes and remember I've asked you to fill out a speaker form which is page 2 of the survey if you'd like to speak and then that'll help me keep track of you and we'll have your name written down so that when we do get to transcribing this we can make sure we have your name spelled right. I want to get just a little bit of background about this process and then will open it up to your comments. The license from the City to, in this case Cox Cable Company, is granted under the terms of the federal cable act and that act sets out rights and responsibilities of both sides so there are some things that the City must do and some things that the cable company must do. One of the things it does is set the maximum license fee that the City can charge to a cable company at 5% of gross revenues. That we refer to as the franchise fee. And this is compensation to the City for the use of the City's rights-of-way. So this is along the side of the road sometimes the utilities go through the middle of the street but the City maintains that land and so this is in compensation to the City for doing that. Also, there is a requirement that the cable company support the community needs and that is a negotiated item for that needs. Our current license was negotiated with TCI in 1997 we're coming up to the 10 year anniversary with that when the license expires. Cox, the license was transferred to Cox in 98 and they accepted the terms and conditions of that license with a few minor changes that were agreed to by everyone. Within this license there are customer service standards, there are the number of PEG channels that are assigned to the City, there's the

5% franchise fee on gross revenues plus some additional fees that support the PEG channels in terms of capital and operating costs. You may have heard that there's a new law passed by the Arizona legislature last spring which changes what some of these terms and conditions can be going forward. This law will take effect July 1, next summer so it is the intent of both Cox and the City to come to an agreement prior to that time. Cause that will give us a little more leeway than what is there under the state law. We're all committed both the City and Cox to finding a win-win for both of us but it's important to the City that we hear what your issues, concerns, desires, new things you want Cox to do, new services you would like them to have. We have some representatives from Cox here tonight including Michael DiMaria who is our focus, he takes care of government relations so Michael and I see each other a lot and so if we have questions that we want to direct directly to Cox, we can do that. So if you have and intro questions for me, I'm happy to take them now or

Unidentified female: When was our original negotiation which actually, strangely enough, was with Cox. That was in the late 70's

Ann Strine: It could have been. I don't know. I don't have that history. But I think Cox was the original cable operator. Then it went to Robbins Communications which transformed into TCI and then it was transferred to Cox.

Unidentified female: Been a couple of others in there, I think.

Ann Strine: It went from TCI to Cox, I don't know who might have been part of that so I have only three speaker sheets so if any of the rest of you would like if you would pass them up some how so that I can...

Unidentified female: Here's another one.

Ann Strine: O.k., good. O.k. so I can call on you. Thank you. We'll start with Stewart.

Robert Stewart: Where do I go.

Ann Strine: You could just sort of stand anywhere and turn around and look at us. I think the room is small enough that we'll be able to hear. If Randi can't hear, she'll ask you to come up front and shout.

Robert Stewart: I'm Bob Stewart with the Tucson Rodeo Parade Committee here in Tucson. I'm here talking about Access Tucson and Access Tucson has and continues to provide valuable support for the annual Tucson Rodeo Parade. During the past year Access Tucson has provided airing the 2006 parade to its viewers on numerous occasions, enabling those who could not attend the parade or view it live on the KOLD Channel 13 feed to see it at their convenience. The parade is a tradition dating back to 1925. The same arrangement is in place for the year 2007 so Access Tucson is planning to also rebroadcast through 2007. Access Tucson's documentary production of the Tucson Rodeo parade museum which has been shown on numerous occasions during the

past year has enlightened viewers from one of Tucson's primo attractions, the museum, which is operated by the Tucson Rodeo Parade Committee. Earlier in 2006 I was contacted by the producers of the PBS Antiques Road Show for planning their site attractions for the June 2006 filming here in Tucson. I was able to cement an arrangement for inclusion of the Rodeo Parade Museum by sending the producer a DVD copy of Access Tucson's documentary. The Antiques Road Show Tucson sequence will later in 06 or early 07. With the huge worldwide audience the show generates, tourists will surely be drawn to the attractions Tucson has to offer. Without the DVD documentary that Access Tucson had done for us, it's unlikely that our museum would have been included in the Antique Road show presentation. So in summation, it is my recommendation to Cox or any other cable TV operator licensed by the City of Tucson, be required to provide service for Access Tucson if a license is granted to them. Many thanks for this opportunity to share my experience as it relates to Access Tucson. They're a great organization deserving of continuation in the next license with Cox.

Ann Strine: I know I'm gonna butcher some names tonight and I apologize. I'll just blame it on your penmanship not me. Rick Wamer?

Rick Wamer: That's not bad Ann, it's o.k. It's actually Wamer.

Ann Strine: Well, that was my second choice.

Rick Wamer: Thank you so much. Well thank you so much for opening up to have a meeting for us to be able to even discuss about such an important topic as how, really how media flows through this community and how information and also Access beyond just entertainment is also flowing through the community and used in the community. My name is Rick Wamer. I am a person who wears a couple different hats. On the one hand I am the "Opening Minds through the Arts" project coordinator at TUSD here in Tucson and wearing that hat some of the many things that I do, among those many things I do, one of the most important is that I oversee the professional development programs for the teaching of artists, for the arts integration specialists who are certified classroom teachers in the the schools and also for the TUSD Fine Arts Summer Institute and well we are now calling the Teaching Artists Summer Institute where we train our teaching artists to go into the Opening Minds through the Arts schools. The other hat that I wear is that I am also the co-artistic director of Theatrical Mime Theater and I'm a performing, internationally touring mime actor as well. And those two things—the arts, both how the arts can be used as a source of entertainment as well as kind of create profound connections in life for audiences and for artists as well transformation. I've also worked with the Opening Minds through the Arts which I think, as an artist, in the best situation, integrating arts with education. Giving our students a chance to have the arts and access to those arts allows for them to become really whole human beings and we know today through the research that it also helps them access higher levels of learning. Why I'm here tonight and why I'm very interested in speaking with you is because it's kind of twofold reason. Opening Minds through the Arts, we are using media more all of the time. And I wanna speak on behalf of TUSD TV, the Channel 20 services and ask for that continued support. This year and in the past year, without TUSD TV some of the

work that OMA is doing in using media as a way to both encourage, to spread the word about what we do, to gain access for the population in terms of information about what Opening Minds through the Arts is really doing and what it's about and how its serving the future generations that will one day hopefully will draw from those generations to serve on council here in Tucson. I want to really support that. This year we've been creating media that will eventually go up on our Opening Minds through the Arts website. We're creating media, I mean we've already created a lesson planning kind of class for the Department of Education, US Department of Education, to use in their training and on their website. I'm looking over and trying to implement a huge Department of Education grant that specifically is about dissemination and professional development and TUSD TV and their services have been integral to that work and we really need their support to continue sharing and extending the work that's happening in the classroom out to the community. Another thing I wanted to say is that one of the things that we created was at our last showcase in 2006, we created a video documentary showing some of the students and what they've been able to do in accessing the arts. For the past month, that video documentary has been running on TUSD TV Channel 20. I have gained a huge education within that month about who Access is and how much that station is used. I am an artist who travels literally every part of this county and it's amazing to me. I am featured with a student in this production that's being broadcast right now. A child come up on stage with me and we do a little improvisational performance. I cannot tell you how many people from folks I don't know in the Foothills to folks down in South Tucson, when I go into a school a principal who I'd just newly met that day, I hadn't met that principal yet, to just this afternoon walking into a choreography session at the University of Arizona in the School for Dance with a sophomore student who have all in one form or another over the month, numerous occasions, even at a Starbucks, a stranger who said, Hey, I saw you doing that stick thing with a kid on television. I cannot believe how many people have seen me and are watching this station for me it was opening my mind to the fact that this network and station and those services are used far more than I think maybe the average person in the population would really believe. So I'm here basically to ask for your continued support to tell you that I would be on board for any help and support for all the collaborations that may happen between the City between Cox, however it would work, to help TUSD TV stay on the air.

Ann Strine: Thank you Rick. I would like to remind everybody that we want to keep our remarks to 5 minutes or less. I have a whole (unintelligible) stack here and I want to make sure that everybody has a chance to speak. Nancy Martin.

Nancy Martin: Yes. Thank you. I'm Nancy Martin, I'm actually a resident here, Jefferson Park neighborhood and I'm on the Board of the Jefferson Park Neighborhood Association. I'm also, I wonder why I'm busier in my retirement than I ever was before, I'm also President of the Board of Arts Genesis and a founding mother and secretary of the Board of Womencraft. Now I actually was here in the late 70's when we first negotiated this cable franchise and I remember very very clearly that the will of the citizens who attended those many, many, many meetings was that there be a very, very strong public access component. In fact, in the early days we had production funding in,

in, up until very recently your classes were free. Little by little, we have seen erosion of support for public access and I really, really, really would like to strongly come out against any more pandering to corporate greed and indeed really having the will of the people be done. I concur with the gentleman from the rodeo parade and the gentleman from the OMA program that this has been really really important. I probably have 10, 12 of these tapes that have been produced with facilities of Access Tucson that nonprofit organizations in this community have been able to use to expand their audiences and promote their programs. So any cuts to public access are again more cuts to funding to the arts and social service nonprofits. Thank you.

Ann Strine: Arlene?

Karin Uhlich: I'm sorry to interrupt we're gonna set some chairs up on this side of the room as well, we want to make sure everybody is gonna be comfortable so continue with your conversation but we're just gonna have a (unintelligible) get some more seating, it's great to see this kind of turnout...

Setting up chairs...

Ann Strine: We're gonna have a musical message. This is called, "The Right to be Heard."

Without public access,
Where would we be,
No Democracy Now no INN,
And no free speech TV,
Without Access Tucson,
The finest in the land,
Where we find our voices heard,
Beyond CNN's command,

(Unintelligible)
Only we can free our minds,
Public access keeps us strong,
Being deaf, dumb and blind,

This is what we think it's like when we don't have Access...

Amazing faith, the people have,
In what the media say,
They do not question what's the source,
Or who it is that pays

So many lies the government tells,
So many ways deceives,
Yet most reporters bow their heads,

And say yes I believe.

A few corporations have all the power,
To speak in one strong voice,
Their money buys our government,
In their power they rejoice,
The people live such busy lives,
And then they watch TV,
So limited in what they learn,
The truth they never see,

Amazing faith the people have,
In what the media says,
They do not question what's the source
Or who it is that pays.

Ann Strine: Debbie Fricke?

Debbie Fricke: Hi I'm Debbie Fricke and I'm gonna say mine, I'm not gonna sing it. I moved here to Tucson a little over four years ago and I'm from Boston and I got involved in Access Tucson through someone that I met here and it has changed my life. In one way it has changed my life cause, I've learned that there's a thing called free speech in this country and that is of value. And I don't agree with everything everybody puts on Access TV but what I have come to realize is that I respect people more for expressing their opinion and if I agree or disagree, I have a voice as well. The other thing that I've learned is that when I got to Access Tucson being new to the community, I started to learn that there are these many, many, many, many nonprofit organizations that were there for me to take part in and it really helped me feel a part of a community so quickly and I never had that in Boston, granted Boston's larger but Tucson really gave me a feel of I am included in this community. Through my volunteer work at Access Tucson, I learned more and more about the goings on down there and I actually gained confidence in the ability to produce my own documentary. When I moved to Tucson, I'm a survivor of incest and rape and I was in crisis when I came to Tucson so Access TV provided me with a means of learning what services were there for me to take part in, to grab hold of when I was in crisis and to help me get back up on my feet. As a result, I'm producing a documentary on healing sexual abuse and what I want to do is give back to the community. I want to help other survivors who don't know where to go. Who have no hope, who feel alone, who feel hopeless and I'm here tonight to say that public access TV, Access Tucson in particular, is a tremendous value to this community. I don't think people realize how valuable it is. I'm also here to say to Cox and to the City that I hope whole-heartedly that you will at the very least, continue to maintain services to public access TV and free speech. Thank you.

Ann Strine: I'll read the first name not the last. Martha? That's you?

Martha Retallica: My name is Martha Retallica, I'm a professional computer geek and I'm here to speak about Cox's internet service and a problem I had a month ago relating to something I was trying to do for a client which Cox made very difficult to accomplish and I had to charge my client several hundred dollars more than the task would have normally called for due to my difficulties in dealing with Cox. This is ...

Ann Strine: Let me interrupt here just a second (unintelligible). I'll give you a few more minutes to make your comment and I want everyone to understand, this hearing is about the video service.

Martha Retallica: O.k., it's not about the (unintelligible).

Ann Strine: Because telephone and internet are not covered under the City's agreement with Cox so it may be that you just want to speak to one of the Cox representatives as (unintelligible). your issue but the City, that's not included in the City's license with Cox.

Martha Retallica: Yeah, but they're the sole supplier of high-speed cable internet within the City of Tucson. We don't have the choice of Comcast within the City. There is no other provider...

Unidentified female: Doesn't the City (unintelligible)

Ann Strine: No, the City has nothing to do with internet or phone service,

Unidentified female: The SEC told me that the City of Tucson sets up the contract for (unintelligible).

Unidentified male: It all piggybacks off the one line, one of the lines, all of the rest of the services are just taken care of in the home and (unintelligible).

Martha Retallica: Cause I've gone to the Corporation Commission about this and they funded me too. Basically what happened...

Ann Strine: Yes, Cox provides all three services. The City only gives them a license for video so anything they do with respect to telephone or internet is as if you were talking to Qwest for telephone, Qwest for DSL lines, any of the other internet service providers so if you want to quickly go through what your issue is, but I just want you all to understand that this is fine but the City can't do anything about whatever your issue is and it won't be included in our agreement with Cox.

Martha Retallica: My problem was I was trying to send an email newsletter for the client. Before I send out an actual email newsletter for the client, the client needs to review it to make sure it's worded correctly, formatted correctly. Cox flagged it as a false positive spam. False positive spam means that it's not really spam email but something in Cox's spam filtering system thinks it is. I could not receive a copy for review neither could he. And he's a nationally syndicated newspaper columnist. He was

very strongly tempted to write a column about this because it took me several days of begging and pleading with Cox wondering what did we do wrong. What did we say in this email newsletter which was about such things as getting along with different generations in the workplace, finding a job with a good boss and getting health care coverage on the job. What did we do wrong? I never found that out. The only thing I was told to do was send it to a special email address and then it won't be flagged as spam in the future. But I found that out after four days of trying and mind you, I had to charge my client for my time and it cost him several hundred dollars more than it had to due to the fact that I had such difficulty getting an answer out of tech support at Cox. They would tell me how to solve the problem in such a way that my client would not be so inconvenienced. Thank you. By the way he knows that I am here tonight and he knows that I am raising this issue. He's in Washington, D.C., right now.

Ann Strine: You know, sometimes it gets confused because Cox provides all three services, people want to talk about all three services and I appreciate that you may have positive/negative/neutral things to say about all of these services but you need to take those directly to Cox because the only ones that the City...

Martha Retallica: Maam, I tried to do that. I spent four days taking it to Cox trying to get it answered. Four days, for which I had to charge my client, it increased my revenue but it (unintelligible).

Ann Strine: Well, let's move on and just remember that this is about the video, the cable TV service. Dorothy Richmond?

Dorothy Richmond: If it's o.k. I'll just talk quickly even though I already sang. I just want to also talk to Cox in particular because I was with Access Tucson way long time ago when I was (unintelligible).and we were doing a lot of live productions and I know that it changed my live as well as yours, I thank you for saying that. Oh, o.k. I would like Cox to stop trying to cut funding for Access Tucson about every year and a half. It seems to me that this is something they agreed to in the beginning because they receive a huge amount of money from our community. Every other channel except for a few makes them lots and lots and lots of money and as a community we were so fortunate that the people that began this whole agreement with Cox, had seen how that went in other cities and that their definitely going to be making lots of money as long as they're in Tucson and they owe us this. This is one of our rights. This is not something we should have to beg for every time the contract comes up for renewal again. I would like them to stop this campaign of trying to cut the things they agreed to when we first let them become our sole provider of internet and this wonderful Access Tucson and if we weren't allowed to get the alternative news program that we see on our local programming which is nationwide, award winning, we would be a much more culturally poor community.

Ann Strine: I don't want to interject myself in this tonight but I do think it's important that I make it very clear that Cox has met the terms of their agreement in terms of paying the city what they are obligated to pay us which is basically a pass through collection to all the subscribers. It's the City Council's decision how to allocate money to various

agencies. So Cox has had nothing to do with how money is funneled from there. They have met their obligation in terms of what the license requires them to collect for the franchise fee and the PEG fees. So I appreciate your concern about funding for Access Tucson but I want to make sure it's not directed to Cox because they have done what the license requires them to do.

Dorothy Richmond: What I understood about that is that the way that they do it is by using lobbyists up in the state legislature. Excuse me, did you want to say something?

Unidentified male: No, no, you've just answered me.

Dorothy Richmond: That's the way to do it, it's not done through the city's relationship. They've done it by trying to change the law.

Ann Strine: Well, admittedly, the Arizona Legislature passed a law that changes some things going forward. But if you're looking at past, how funding has been done, that's not Cox's decision how that money is spent. So...

Dorothy Richmond: O.k.

Ann Strine: Mary Jo Ghory?

Mary Jo Ghory: That's me. My name is Dr. Mary Jo Ghory. I'm a physician and I work at TMC. And at the time of the build up to the Iraq war, I got very concerned about the need for alternative views to what's expressed in the mainstream media. So I joined a group of students from the University of Arizona and faculty from the University of Arizona to present a film and lecture series at the University. And I have to say that Access Tucson has really been a great support to our group. We used Local Matters and Tucson Vision to get the views that we believe in to the community and going through the hospital I have been amazed at how many people say that they have seen me on TV too so I would like to support Access Tucson because of the importance of allowing people to express alternative views and also because of how many people watch the TV shows. I'm also on the board of City High School down town and this is a small charter school that tries to get students involved in the community and I think that Access Tucson has also helped our students to learn about video production and that is a very important way to involve students in the community and in learning so I really support Access Tucson.

Ann Strine: Karen Brandel?

Karen Brandel: Yes, I'm Karen Brandel. I...

Ann Strine: Would you stand up please so that your voice will project a little more for us.

Karen Brandel: I'm with the Palo Verde Neighborhood Association. I would just like to put it out that I'm all for renewal of license share, certainly the Access program, especially after tonight, thank you very much for all the information. But I would like to put it out that the FCC has told me that it's the city of Tucson that makes the choice of which cable companies that we do business with as consumers and even this is all about the Access programs and some other aspects of license share renewal, I would like to put it out that we don't have a competitor. Internet service, and high-speed internet, and cable TV are considered luxuries so they're not regulated so we need a competitor in this area just like the county has. And why is that not up for discussion, why is that never up for discussion? Can anyone answer that?

Ann Strine: I can...

Karen Brandel: Would you try?

Ann Strine: I'll try and I'll look to some of the Cox folks to augment what I'm saying on this. Three years ago it was declared that there is competition in this marketplace according to the rules set by the FCC, two or three years ago, I've forgotten what it is, so therefore, there is no regulation of Cox. Competition is provided by Dish, direct TV, any others? I think those are...

Unidentified male: There's no comparable service... You can say what you want and you can interpret what you want, but there is no comparable service. Every one of the other services are much slower, harder, latency, there is nothing that's comparable.

Ann Strine: Remember, we're not talking about internet service.

Unidentified male: I'm not talking about video signal. I'm talking about the whole thing. All your satellite dishes, let a storm come up in the southwest, I don't get no video. Come over the phone lines, now I don't have a personal experience of that but I've heard stories, it isn't comparable getting your video signal over Qwest, there is no comparison. And even after the latest upgrade, I've got Paul (unintelligible). And I haven't had time to say anything to em, this'll be the first time they've had a complaint from me but they did a recent upgrade and now my video signal is trashed all the time...

Ann Strine: Let me answer your question...

Unidentified male: I'll shush until you call on me.

Ann Strine: It is not my say or the city's say about what counts as competition. It's the FCC that declared the rules of what that is.

Karen Brandel: Can I just... why hasn't the City considered Comcast or some other provider?

Ann Strine: Let me go through... Now I'll go through the routine of how this...

Miguel Ortega: Can I just quickly interrupt. I just wanted to ask as far as the process, I think the nature of these meetings should help more to receive folks expression and I think to share information and we certainly, there's folks here to do that, but I think that we want to hear from folks regardless of their position, whether they're supportive or not and to hear from you what you're thinking, how you're feeling, that's more important and certainly there's folks here who can answer questions but its really, it's your evening to share and to document what your positions are.

Karen Brandel: Well, I'll continue sharing then. Just in regards to Cox cable, they consistently offer free promotional free installation (unintelligible).to the internet and with the telephone and they consistently bill for those services. And thank you Ann for interfering on that I got a letter dated September 6, it was your department that finally called Cox cable on my behalf because I kept trying to deal with Cox cable, day after day after day, and like everyone else I work full time and it, there's very little time to do these things but I, they just would not, they're so well trained to not let you to the next tier I hear of supervisor, that it was impossible so I kept getting these bills and I was, they called me to sell me the service with this free installation, it was very, very frustrating, so I finally called the mayor and council hotline and it took me a lot of research to finally figure out to do that. And someone from your department contacted me and contacted the billing supervisor which I was unable to get to. I went down to 15th street and saw a line of people in the lobby, dissatisfied customers. So that makes me think more than ever we need competition. We need a competitor.

Ann Strine: When we finish, if some of you are interested in the process that the city goes through to award a license and how it works in terms of other competitors coming in we can talk about that but I think Miguel makes a good point that we want to make sure that we gather the input from all of you so we can give that to the council members.

Kathy Wilberson?

Kathy Wilberson: Hi. I just wanna speak as a citizen and consumer of both Cox and being a citizen of the City of Tucson. My experience in Tucson is that I've found that the City of Tucson has a lot of really strong assets that the general public just doesn't seem to be aware of. I mean we have lots of valuable things here in our community and Access Tucson and our PEG channels are one of the many things that we have. I know from first hand experience because of some groups that I work with, some youth groups, that they have participated in free Access Tucson equipment and classes and been able to produce their own shows. They have also displayed their artwork in the gallery. It gave them huge satisfaction and built their self-esteem to know that they had their artwork in a show downtown. That Access Tucson supported. It's a really big esteem-building thing. And these are at-risk youth. The other thing is when you talk about a win-win situation for both the City of Tucson and for Cox cable, I would like to say that it is totally a win-win situation if we continue to support all of our PEG channels, all of them. Don't take away any, don't change em, support them. We are a growing community. We're working really hard on Rio Nuevo, we're trying to become a really strong contemporary urban community. We need to have these valuable assets in our community. Things like our

Parks and Recreation Department, our PEG channels, our education, the University, Pima College, all of these things are gonna go together to make us a strong community. We don't need to take em away. The more things that we have here that we support here, are going to bring more businesses more people here, more money for Cox, more tax revenue for the City, it's a win-win situation to continue to support the extremely fine things that we have. Thank you.

Ann Strine: Jennifer Godwin?

Jennifer Godwin: Hello, my name is Jennifer Godwin. I am here to support public access television as an individual because I enjoy watching the City Channel and as part of an organization as well. I volunteer with the Friends of Buenos Aires Wildlife Refuge and we are a nonprofit group that supports the national wildlife refuge system in general and specifically our local wildlife refuge. The most common response I get when I tell people that I volunteer with Friends of Buenos Aires is, oh so you're an international organization. Many people in Tucson don't know that this refuge exists and it's only 60 miles away from town just southeast of the Kitt Peak observatory. That's where public access television comes in. The Friends produced a video about the refuge. It's been aired this month on Access Tucson. The video describes the history of the refuge, some of the plants and animals that are found there. Some of the recreational opportunities that are available to the public such as hunting, hiking and wildlife watching. In addition, we've been invited to be guests on the shows Local Matters and Government Connection. Excuse me I am very (unintelligible) public speaking. Our refuge manager, the outdoor recreation planner and representatives from the friends will have a chance to let people in Tucson know more about what's happening right around the corner from town. The national wildlife refuge system is dedicated to education with Buenos Aires described as an outward classroom but the refuge system as a whole is suffering right now from budget cuts on the federal level and we need public support now more than ever before. Public access television allows us the opportunity to create and broadcast educational programs reaching a large audience in the metropolitan area. The Friends have only recently recently found this avenue for public outreach and would like to continue utilizing this new valuable resource in years to come. Thank you.

Ann Strine: I'm sorry, I cannot read this last name. It's Pat who lives on Bar X Street?

Pat Birnie: It's Pat Birnie. I just wanna support Access Tucson for all the wonderful programming they do and my original idea was to ask Cox to increase their budget for Access Tucson and I find out that's the wrong tree to bark up maybe I need to ask the City Council to negotiate a higher percentage of revenue for Access Tucson. However, I just feel that I look forward every day to watching Amy Goodman's Democracy Now, one of the few channels that you can get accurate news on what's going on in this world and I'm so impressed with the type of programming that is done locally by we the people on some of the programming and it's just, it's fantastic to learn the variety of resources in this community. I just want to encourage the powers that be to increase, one of my problems with Access Tucson now can be helped with a little bitty rise in the budget, I have some DVD's that are extremely important for the public to see and they only accept

VHS so right now we need to upgrade the, their production center at the Access Tucson so they can accept DVD's, that's the coming thing. And so, let's see what else... Anyway, all the support that we can give to Access Tucson we're really all behind ya.

Ann Strine: Gordon Austin?

Gordon Austin: I'm 14 years old, I'm a sophomore in high school and I've been going to Access Tucson since I was 8. My Mom here dragged me there, she said oh you don't have any homework this weekend you can come with me because I'm meeting a friend and she's doing a production there. I had no idea what Access Tucson was. We went there, I saw it was actually a program called Real Kids, a production and there were kids there from 15 to I guess 18 there. They were working on a lot of things. They knew how to use the equipment, they were certified in just about everything and I was really interested and I wanted to do it too. This was before Access Tucson had their kids' classes I believe so I got enrolled in regular classes. I learned a lot, great teachers and I'm now certified most everything at Access Tucson and I've been volunteering there on various shows and remote shoots since I was 12. I've even had my first paid job at Access Tucson. I was an audio man for a TV show. With my volunteering I'm mostly doing a show called TV Toastmasters with Al right there and I've really gotten more diversity when I got involved in other shows like Unscrewed Comedy, where I actually met my middle school history teacher (unintelligible) and as of this year, I became one of the volunteers of the year with more than 150 hours volunteer hours at Access Tucson. I'm trying to achieve the Congressional Award, Bronze Certificate, the lowest one and the first one and one of the required parts is community service and I'm using Access Tucson to achieve that goal. I'd like to thank everyone at Access Tucson for making all this possible for everyone at every age.

Ann Strine: Jeanne Connell

Jeannie Connell: I appreciate you letting me go...

Ann Strine: Hey, these are random, I just tucked em in here.

Jeanne Connell: My name is Jeanne Connell and I started doing a program at Access about 11 years now I think it is. And I know I've done over 100 and some odd programs called Hot Hobbies (unintelligible). I started doing it for the Women's Commission and then that kinda fell through so I started doing it on my own and I really wanna make this really short and sweet but the, number one this is what our country is all about and it's democracy and it's one of the places that I see where there is absolutely freedom of press, freedom of speech, freedom of what you want to talk about. I'm forever amazed when I ask may I do this program and they'll say it's your program, you can do what you want to on your program and to me that's what democracy is all about which we don't have in the rest of the media. The other part of that I'd like to say is that it gives me an opportunity to find out what is happening in Tucson and that it, I can get guests (unintelligible) that will (unintelligible) to maybe help the outcome (unintelligible) organizations doing things for people and the third thing that I think of right now, I've got a whole lot more things

but, the third thing that I wanna say is I think it's also a wonderful place for diversity. I have met all kinds of different people, all kinds of different friends I made you know of all races and genders and it's just been a wonderful experience for me. Now, if I was gonna have a complaint I would tell you one complaint I have and that's that it's not advertised, it's not put in a book, it's and I know I can make a little picture thing or something, but I've run into a lot of people who care about what I'm gonna be talking about women's rights who say well Jeanne I had no idea where it is, when it is, what station it's on and that would be I would say would be the only complaint that I would have. But and just personally if I may there was a woman that worked at Access who was my mentor and meant so much to me that I want to just give my condolences to Harold (unintelligible) because was, she made and taught me and was my mentor and I just think it's just democracy at work so thank you very much for letting me go.

Ann Strine: Al Graham

Al Graham: Hi, it's me. I saw Gorden take the (unintelligible) and I had to do this. But I'm not sure who I'm addressing. I got here a few minutes late and I don't know your name.

Ann Strine: I'm, I apologize I was introduced at the beginning. My name is Ann Strine, I'm the Director of Information Technology for the City of Tucson and the, my office sort of oversees the cable agreement, interactions with Cox and therefore, is coordinating all of the elements that go into a renewal.

Al Graham: O.k., you're Ann Strine, is Karin Uhlich actually here?

Ann Strine: She was here, she had a wisdom tooth pulled this morning so she said hello to all of us and went home for a nap. Her chief aide Miguel Ortega is here representing her office and is listening intently for her and we are taping everything for those of you who came in late.

Al Graham: I'm wondering about something ever since I had the great singing earlier. Have you banned television cameras and video?

Ann Strine: Here? No not at all.

Al Graham: Well, I see all these Access Tucson people here and I don't see a video camera anywhere, you know (unintelligible). And along those lines, I mean that's exactly what Access Tucson and is very good at, community activities and things. It'd probably be a good idea to record and televise some of these things maybe even do it live if you can fit it in the program. And let me get to the point about why I want a speak. I'm rather unusual. I'm part of the strange subculture that most people don't wanna be associated with. I'm a toastmaster and you know, it's kinda, I enjoy it, I like getting up in front of people and speaking. I enjoy doing it on television, in fact I produce a television show on the Access channel called TV Toastmaster Live. Gordon works the control room for me and he's just wonderful. Exactly thank you for giving me an example of

what I wanted to talk about which is the training available from my own show from the Toastmaster show that we present but also the entire Access channel they have classes they run television shows. This is a community resource that just isn't obtained in any other way. And I realize I've been in Tucson for a long time that earlier is used to be completely free. Now a days you have to pay at least a nominal fee but it is still pretty nominal. But it is really something the community needs to continue so it's not quite free speech but it's just something and somebody's already pointed out the access studio provides an awful lot of things to Tucson one of them is the ability for people to learn about producing a television show, running a television counter, going out on a shoot and finding out what it means to set up and do things. There is the training aspect of TV Toastmasters. You often have these speeches, I gave one myself, because I'm a supporter of light rails, people get a chance to get up on TV Toastmasters and talk about community affairs. And also learn about communicating on television. One of the Toastmasters' advanced modules is learning how to communicate on television. I always get a laugh when I look at it cause it says, well in your meeting pretend that you have a video camera, pretend you're on television. Well I tell all the Toastmasters everywhere that you don't have to pretend, cause on the TV Toastmasters we can do it for you. So I think my show provides a service to the community and I'd like to continue doing it and I don't think that, this would never be a service that would ever be provided by commercial television. There has to be some other meetings providing these kind of things to the community. And again, I must admit, I am biased, I wanna continue producing my show but I think people enjoy it, they learn from it and I hope you can continue.

Ann Strine: Monique Soria?

Monique Soria: I thank you. My name is Monique Soria and I'm the Director of Public Relations for the Sunnyside Unified School District. Sunnyside produces original programming for cablecast on Cox channel 20 and Comcast channel 71 on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. We're on school TV, Sunnyside TV and we broadcast in cooperation with TUSD TV. One of our monthly programs is the Sunnyside Update. It's a new show, our anchors are district high school students and our production assistants are also high school students. One of them is here tonight. This month's Update covered news stories on a recent drive for school supplies, a murder mystery lesson at Challenger middle school, the MISS Adventures science, math, and technology Camp for girls, Meet Your Teacher Night at Gallego elementary, Sunnyside High School's Freshman/Parent Orientation and information about the district's upcoming Make a Difference Day. That's on channels 4, 9 and 13, Today' News. The Sunnyside Update is just one of the programs our district is airing on Cox Channel 20 to communicate with our students, families and the community about the instructional programs and services we provide. We've also produced shows ranging from 10 minutes to 2 hours long on subjects such as the parents as teachers program which is free to all families in the Sunnyside district with children under the age of 5, Project college bound's parent-student network, we've shown in it's entirety workshops on financial aid and preparing for college, our Tucson Citizen and Sunnyside District Town Hall on topics of career preparation, planning for the future and parent involvement, we've shown our graduation ceremonies, student talent shows, our opening of school celebration

featuring star teachers and pride of Sunnyside awards to support staff, a community forum on illegal drugs and underage drinking, the Sunnyside School District Alumni association's hall of fame which is coming up October 7, a gang awareness forum, our Lauffer Middle School dedication when it opened, our District spelling bee. We've also produced public service announcements to promote attendance and increasing graduation rates. We created English and Spanish TSA's for Metropolitan Education Commission's Goal One: Graduate campaign. We have a lot of programs in the works. We see this as a great opportunity. We appreciate that Cox has had these channels and this is the channel for K-12 education. TUSD had been using it. We had consultants tell us, the way to reach our families. 88% of the students in the Sunnyside District are Hispanic and we asked particularly how to reach those families and they told us TV. And so we want to reach out. Access is wonderful and I appreciate everything that was said here tonight about Access. What's really great about having our own channel is that we can program it the times when our families and our students are there to see it. We're already starting to hear from another district that wants to use it so we're just beginning. We have made a big commitment to this. We have a full-time videographer we hired for the sole intent of creating programs we can put on this channel so our superintendent and our governing board support this. We also are working with our career and technological education department. They started us out with \$85,000 to get equipment and supplies to start the program. We have a \$20,000 agreement with TUSD to help with their production costs. I know it sounds like small money to some people, it's big money to us. That we want to see it keep going and now in the November 4 election there'll be the proposition 400, Joint Technological Education District and that's just one more way that help this project grow and it gives students the opportunities to get the work experience. We have student interns working with us every day as production assistants and as I said before as anchors on our program. We want to do more Spanish language programming, we want to have a cooking show we're working on with our culinary arts teacher, homework help, health programming in cooperation with the U of A's project export and a community heritage project we're working on as part of our proud learning community initiative where we have digital storytelling produced by students. We want to see this keep on going and we hope that Cox and the City of Tucson will support the education in public, education and government broadcasting. Thank you.

Ann Strine: Stan Grimes?

Stan Grimes: Yes, and I'm Stan Grimes and I'm chairman of the Rodeo Parade Museum and last year Access Tucson, really supported us, and they came out and they filmed our museum for seven hours and then the one thing I really enjoyed the most is they shot a complete video of the parade and our museum. And normally I work during the parade lining wagons up so I never get to see the parade. Well, last year Access Tucson filmed it and showed it almost 10 times. I thank em forever because we have a wonderful video at our museum now. I'd like to have you all come out there we have 160 wagons and western town and I've been around at the studio and I saw a program my wife put on about the season for non-violence. We need this, we need this. Not only for the students but for everybody in Tucson.

Ann Strine: Beryl Drobeck

Beryl Drobeck: I'm 85. I'm Beryl Drobeck. I've been in Tucson 55 years so I was here when Cox came to Tucson. I want to thank Cox and the City for allowing Access to do what they're doing and I ask please give em more and more. I'm talking for the people that are homebound. I'm more or less homebound now. I can't go to the parades. I used to go to all the parades and now they go up and they take it and I can sit home and see it. The people in nursing homes, they're able to see it. We can, they actually went to Marana where I have great great grandkids and took that show, they taped that, I was able to sit home, I could cry because it was so beautiful to be able to sit and see it you know, when you can't go anywhere else, I just want to say thank you, thank you and give access all you can please.

Ann Strine: Jackie Stubbs?

Jackie Stubbs: Well first off, I'm Jackie Stubbs I'm 16 years old. I work at the Sunnyside District building and they basically just gave me my own show, they're like do what you want with it. You know I do it on my school, Desert View High School, I go there. And a, I just really think it's essential for you know Tucson to have such a great channel, I mean I'm listening to all everybody's opinions and why it's important and stuff like that and I'm just like you know Wow, I can't believe that they would want to cancel such a great you know thing going on right now. I mean not just for the schools you know but to everybody, it's showing everybody's opinion on whatever they like you know and I think that's just really cool and a for me especially, I think it's awesome cause you know who can say at 16 years old you get paid to make your own TV show. Honestly. And like honestly I'm learning so much more like everyday that I go through it, I'm just learning so much more about like you know what's new, what's not new about the show or you what's going on, I think it's just so cool that you know we get the opportunity to have such a channel that everybody can view in Tucson. You know, I mean it's not nationwide or anything but at least I can be a celebrity in town, I don't have to be a celebrity, not yet. So it's really cool that a we just all get this opportunity and I just hope that a Cox will understand that this is such an important channel to everybody and consider it please and I thank you for keeping it, running it and I just hope that you keep on doing it.

Unidentified female: Can I just interject for a moment and say that these shows are also available on line. People can watch these programs any where in the world. I have a friend in the United Kingdom who can watch programs at Access Tucson.

Ann Strine: Samuel Newsome?

Unidentified Male: He just stepped out.

Ann Strine: Well, we'll go on to the next one then. Russ Dove.

Russ Dove: Thank you I'm Russ Dove. I'll do my best to keep it at five minutes. There's a lot that needs to be discussed here. We know that deregulation is in the federal law in our legislature right now and there's a lot of misinformation out there um and I just don't want us to act like just because there's this perception of competition out there, it isn't. And Cox you guys know there is nothing out there that touches the service you put into my house. You know it just as well as I do. I have a real problem with the overall corporate disregard for me as a human being and this idea of competition with Cox is gonna make it better, I'm sorry, there are a dozen cell phone companies out there and every one of em treat me like I don't matter. Once they've got my contract and what's it's gonna cost me whatever they decide to take from me each month, or a breaking of my contract an exuberant amount of money they, competition's not gonna change it. What Cox needs to do is just recognize how important we the people are, what a symbiotic relation we have and come together, let us be happy with the quality of service that we pay a reasonable price for, even a premium price if the service is premium, and we can get along real well but do not, do not, touch our PEG channels. As a matter of fact, be bold, give us a couple more, we will use em, (unintelligible). Now what the PEG channels provide, I don't know if anybody's noticing or not but we are in a cultural explosion, we are in a cultural meltdown. And the PEG channels at all levels, the only ones that I found that aren't used very much are the community college ones and I don't know why, whether I'm just not lookin at the right time or not, but all the other channels have something on them. I don't always agree with what's there but what I do agree with is it's their right to be there. And I can always see what the other side has to say by looking at them and I've gotta bet even if I don't agree I will learn and I will grow, I will come to a new understanding. So what we need these channels for is for an opportunity for those cultural differences, trust me, I do a show every two weeks and it's a whole lot better than doing drugs or shooting somebody when I'm angry, o.k. I'm sorry it's a reality we've gotta deal with and you take away my ventilation, and I've already done enough drugs, I'm never interested in doing anymore, what does that leave me? I'm a human being and no matter what, you put me under enough pressure and give me no outlets and I will become violent. It is my nature, I'm not threatening anybody, I'm talking about anthropology, o.k.? It's human nature. And so I just touched upon the third point what will happen if you take away the PEG channels, we will take away the ventilation from the people and it's already been touched upon, the creativity, the training, the opportunities and even for this meeting, to see these ladies and hear their beautiful voices was worth sitting down here tonight. And I know that this kind of process and shows are on public access all the time. I'm extremely angry at corporations and should have been obvious from the minute I opened my mouth and I'm extremely angry at Cox for going to our state legislation with their big bucks and their overwhelming lobbyists and I know what kind of pressure we put on our state legislature concerning this matter and I know as is often the case, our legislature didn't hear us. I know that this last primary sent a whole bunch of our legislators looking for new jobs and if we don't get our way in 06 we'll do it again in 08. We aren't that calm, we aren't asleep any longer, more and more people are awake and more and more people are awake today because of Access Tucson. And I think that that point leads us to the City of Tucson and Cox, (unintelligible) Cox is seeking to shut us down and again, I'll promise ya, you take the path of taking away my right to freedom of speech and you've created,

excuse me, a Robin Hood, and I know the City a whole lot better than all of you do. You live in your little houses and safety and all that, I live on the street with the people. You don't wanna go there. (Unintelligible) this is the reality of life we live in folks, it's happening all across America and if we deny it, I don't wanna go there. I'm convinced that with your computers, I brought this up with the gentleman at the studio down there, o.k., he's convinced that there's some law saying you can't, can I breathe, that with your computers and with your technology and with the means by which you can turn my box on or off based upon whether I pay my bill or not, your computers know who is tuned in to what station at any given time now whether you queue that or query that or whether you do any type of insider look into that I don't know and I'm not even gonna ask you to answer the question but I know you have the technology to tell me and I would be curious of how the listener ship and viewer ship has gone up on the public access channels because just as the gentleman who does the mime mentioned, I know that in the time that I've been on public access and even more so since 5/16 that I've been on channel 12 every City Council meeting, the number of people who know who I am by my face in the streets of Tucson today and Pima County have grown immensely. There aren't very many places I can go that somebody doesn't walk by and say hey Russ, I am clueless who that person is, we don't have time to talk, we're all busy. But I do know that a lot of people are watching, particularly 12. And I think that the viewer ship on my twice-weekly show, or twice-monthly show is going up also. It's my understanding that it's your intent coming into the negotiations to drastically reduce the PEG channels. Again, I hope that some of the things that I've said will alter your opinion on that and I also, you know again, you guys are gonna do what your gonna do, the (unintelligible) the corporation and you've been getting away with doing that for so long you just think you can. We're all of a sudden irrelevant and I can be a whole lot ruder, I'm doing my best to be diplomatic and kind without skimming over the truth. And I was appreciative to hear, I know that last year the city decided to keep something like \$300,000 for, was it \$300,000, \$200,000, \$300,000 Miguel? Where'd he go?

Miguel Ortega: Right here. Uh, I don't know that.

Russ Dove: It's \$200,000 in the last, the last budget session the budget was greatly reduced for Tucson Access. Now there was enough, we've got enough money to last for another year and so at any rate, understand that there's a lot of people awake and paying attention. I think that I've covered everything, I will only repeat that it would, I would, I would beg Fox, for that you recognize that we are a symbiotic here. I don't believe that competition's gonna help because as I stated cell phones, there's a lot of competition and they're all, I've done business with three of em, I'm two of them (I'm a long term customer) I was seven years with one, I've been two years with another one and just as soon as they got me a contract they treated me like garbage. I do have to say that I can't complain about the quality of technical service that Cox has provided, it's been good. Your signal did go to hell the last upgrade you did so that my DVR holds more space. Thank you.

Ann Strine: Samuel Newsome?

Samuel Newsome: I was told by representatives (unintelligible) that I should not speak tonight (unintelligible). I was drugged down here (unintelligible). First of all I'd like to say I'm a member of Mt. Calvary Baptist Church and Mt. Calvary Baptist Church is celebrating it's 106th anniversary on November the 26th. Final plans are being finalized at this time. It's the oldest African American Church there is in Tucson. Mt. Calvary Baptist which is located on the corner of Lester and Sixth. My boss told me that knows more about me than my wife. I am the president of the Southern Arizona A. Philip Randolph Institute which is one of the political arms of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations better known as the AFL-CIO. We do voter registration as well as education and all various types of community service activity and I have been on Access Tucson and also a couple of other stations but Access Tucson in one type of period or the most. I feel Access Tucson maybe some of you agree with me here (unintelligible) is a viable means for all of the minority groups in this community especially (applause) this is one of the ways that most the African American, Hispanic, Native American can get across their point of view. I see TV as channels 4, 6, pardon me 4 through 18 and 9 does not come down to what you call the neighborhood level. This is one of the things that needs to be really emphasis on, emphasized on is the neighborhood. What is the thinking of the neighborhood, what is the political reasoning, what is the building needs of the neighborhood. We have a (unintelligible) Broadway, Speedway, 22nd Street, Campbell, etc., you know, where's your buses. We need neighborhood buses and I think these can be very well brought forth on Access Tucson to let people know that if you live in the center of Broadway and you live in the center of Broadway and 22nd Street and at the center of Swan and Craycroft you live in the center and they don't have a car, you need some ways to get there. You see what I mean, especially when it rain. And we need some neighborhood buses that go, into the intercity buses that's where I live. Moving on from that point. The State of Arizona need 30,000 building construction workers. And I've been in Tucson since 1955. I see Tucson is a city that is built on top of itself which in other words it moved faster than it is providing viable transportation in a (unintelligible). And I think that one of the shortcomings of seeing major media is to explain to the people of this community that we need viable transportation and additions to that, we need viable people to build the roads, schools, the universities, the hospitals, the shopping centers. We go, we have the dates, we want everybody to go to university to get their PhD. Whose gonna be the plumbers, whose gonna be your carpenters, whose gonna be your mechanics, whose gonna be your oil drillers? The A. Philip Randolph Institute is 100% in favor and behind the issue of lawyers, doctors, preachers, teachers and healing (unintelligible). But if you have looked around in a doctors office and wondered who built the doctor's office, who built the lawyers office, who builds your stoops, who builds your shopping centers, we need to show some appreciation to those individuals who provide your building and your mechanical needs. You need to say thank you. That's all I have to say.

Ann Strine: Phil Lopes?

Phil Lopes: Thank you. My names Phil Lopes. I'm a representative of the state legislature and I represent District 27 which is west of here, Westside of Tucson. And as is typical Sam Newsome never does what I tell him to do. I was involved in the issue of

Cox cable in the legislature and that was my second kind of introduction to cable access in Tucson. I had been involved many, many years ago in training the board. It was not my intention to speak tonight, I really came here to listen because I've become quite a fan, if you will, of the PEG channels and I think they ought to be retained. They may need to be increased as well, they certainly ought to be retained. So I really came here to listen but I'm speaking because there's one area that has only be mentioned in passing. One area that I feel strongly that Access Tucson has made a significant contribution and could make a much more significant contribution and that's in the area of what I call civic participation. That's the area of people being involved in the decisions in the policies that affect their community. We usually measure that by the number of people who come out to vote, and that's going in the tank, we usually measure that by people being involved with their community organizations and that's not very strong these days. But there is real benefit for City participation and involvement via Access Tucson. And let me give you some examples. The most recent one was, I'm a candidate again, I'm running for office. I'm a clean elections candidate. (applause) and clean elections requires a debate so Tuesday night we had the debate in my district and there were like 20 people there and I think 18 of em were students that had been assigned by (laughter) I don't know that for a fact but it's what it seemed like. So but what we were able to do during the primary season of clean elections debates, was work out a deal with Sam Behrend and Access Tucson to run those debates on Access Tucson. (Applause) That has enormous potential. We won't discuss why people don't turn out to the debates but the fact that they're on Access Tucson and running again and again I guess, Sam, so the people who are just kinda flipping though channels are able to pick that up so that's one example that I think Access Tucson promotes city participation that is very very important. The second example that I have was I participated again on Access television in a debate on free speech, uh free speech and politics or something, forgotten the name of it. And again that was an opportunity for newspaper people, and politicians to get together and talk about free speech and that I know also ran again and again. So it seems to me that Access Tucson has this enormous potential to be responsive to where our society is now even though turnout for the debates but they watch television so we get em that way. So that that's my message, to retain these channels and to increase that programming that that increases civic participation and as somebody mentioned earlier, promotes our democracy. Thank you.

Ann Strine: Randall Freeman?

Randall Freeman: Yes, I'm Randall Freeman. I'm here in support of Access Tucson. I'm a man, I mean I like diversity and I find great diversity when I tune in those access channels and I hate commercial TV. You know I hate commercials. Well basically all I watch is CSPAN and PBS, and the access channels. And I just find a real delight when I (unintelligible) of Access Tucson. They've got art showcases, native America shows, Hispanic shows, black shows, the June, the Juneteenth broadcast on Access Tucson and I'm also here because C.T. Revere wrote a column uh in the Tucson Citizen claiming that the citizenry was apathetic so I figure I'd just comment give my opinion. I'm all for Access Tucson. Thank you very much.

Ann Strine: Joy Smith?

Joy Smith: Thanks. Well, I only had like five things to say in the beginning and now it's multiplied, I'm sorry, I really feel like I have to get it all out. First of all I'll say this is not to be flip but the Tucson Raging Granny's and WILP the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom have been on Access Tucson so of course we like it a lot but beyond that there are obviously a lot of other reasons and I might well repeat some of the things that people said but I did write it before I heard it so it's not just (unintelligible) copying issue. First of all, I wanna say that um what I have seen is that Cox does keep trying to defund Access Tucson through state legislators. I don't think that that really can be debated. Now I feel, Oh my gosh, I have to be concerned that our good, well informed City Council may be part of a loss of Access Tucson, you know, I don't want our City Council to be part of the loss of Access Tucson. Really glad that these Ward meetings are happening so that we can express our opinion about that. We the people must have independent media. It is the fourth estate that keeps citizens informed, corporate media is not independent. Corporate media wants us to be consumers not citizens. Not informed citizens. Now some of the good programs on Access Tucson have been mentioned, they are very informative, they're very important. I will also mention World Harmony, Can it Happen?, with Stuart Thomas, that's the program we've been on. Just imagine World Harmony for a minute and it's on Access Tucson. A video that I gave to Access Tucson three years ago it's called "Can Corporations be People," And I've heard from many people over the years (unintelligible) that know that I've been connected with a movement to abolish corporate personhood which is what the video is about, that they keep seeing it replayed over and over and apparently, I would say evidently, Access Tucson feels that it's important enough to keep replaying it and I absolutely agree and I hope everybody here has seen "Can Corporations be People?" It's about the bizarre status of corporations supposedly as persons with constitutional protections. Now corporations are not persons. Natural born humans are persons protected by the U.S. Constitution. Independent media is the voice of the persons who are we the people. Democracy dies without informed citizens being ever vigilant to preserve protect and improve it, meaning democracy. Access Tucson is part of the solution for conserving democracy, I'm not conservative but I do believe in conserving. Well, I believe that it needs to be a given that we have independent media like Access Tucson, it's the only one that we have, we darn well better do everything we can to protect it and yes, hopefully multiply it. I think it needs to be a given, I don't believe that we should be spending our valuable time, in effect, begging for it. That's just wrong!

Ann Strine: Miguel, you do that one (unintelligible)

Miguel Ortega: O.k., so I have something from a Halsey Taylor and so I'm just gonna read this to you real quickly.

"I need to leave at 6:45 p.m. I respectfully request my City Council person or a City representative to read my written comments aloud for the record." So I'm gonna do that for her. "Access Tucson broadcasts programming such as arts and cultural events as well as health-related, all of which is limited if one chooses not to attend in person, or is

unable to attend for varying reasons. It's educational value is undeniable for audiences and television production staff alike. The economic advantage to countless nonprofits in Tucson who cannot afford, nor are funded for marketing themselves on network television. (Unintelligible) Access Tucson is the sole outlet for individuals and groups to air viewpoints that express grassroots projects and ideas."

Miguel Ortega: And let me take this opportunity since I know we're about to wrap up, we've got one more message, to thank you all for coming. Before we say goodbye I just wanted to just recognize some folks, I wanna thank Ann Strine from the IT Department for helping putting this on, I want to also recognize some of the folks who are here now, what's really important and beautiful about our community is we have, we're having, that we have this type of dialog to begin with and I want to recognize first some of the folks from Cox including Anne Doris, Molina Contrera, and Mike DiMaria. I'd like to recognize Sam Behrend whose Executive Director of Access Tucson. Representative Lopez who just spoke (unintelligible) and then Mary Canty with TUSD, I think was here but I think she left early, same thank you, thank you for your effort for coming as well and also some of the Cox employees who are here, thank you for attending and recognize that you know what, we are all here in this community want to better this community and these negotiations, let's be successful, for everyone involved and what's really important it should be, really think about this act, we have to all be successful, each component has to be successful, Cox needs to be successful, Access Tucson, Channel 12, everyone needs to be successful, that's what it's all about. And Cox employees, you have hard-working families, you know provide a great service and we recognize that, o.k., I know that a Karin would want me to emphasize that that it's just, this town, this place we love is very important, is very unique and (intelligible) voices that we are able to do what we do so thank you very much for continuing to participate and keep this democracy, thing called democracy alive. Thank you.

Ann Strine: I do have one more who asked to speak? Lisa Jones?

Lisa Jones: Thank you. Just a quickie. I'm now doing this with two hats. One is, the first hat is I, as a producer at Access Tucson and I wanna say, that Access Tucson just did a survey and one of the things that got found was that more people vote who watch Access Tucson than those people who watch the local network stations. And the community participation is alive and well, I have a little schedule here, my show's Political Perspectives. We did an in-depth thing on three of the propositions and you're not gonna find on the other stations, you're not gonna find it so I wanted to just let you know that. The other hat than I have on and I'm doin a switch here as I'm also chair of the Access Tucson Board of Directors. A couple of things, I wanna say with all my heart thank you everyone who has spoken on behalf of not only Access Tucson but TUSD, Sunnyside, PEG, it's terribly important and I wanna tell you about something the Access Tucson Board of Directors did, maybe a couple of years ago but I kind of lose track of time. We had some money that was left over from years earlier from something called the LO grants and it's a long story and (unintelligible) and it's gone places and the City of Tucson basically said hey you're budget's being cut, you need to use those grants, it's gone on (unintelligible) anyway. But Marty Canty with TUSD came to the Access Board

of Directors and asked us at that time, the TUSD, Sunnyside wasn't part of it either, was dark, the studio was not (unintelligible) it was dark. It was a bunch of, well like a closet, like a dark closet and Access Tucson Board of Directors voted to give TUSD \$25,000 to light their studio. I loved hearing the positive comments about TUSD, I believe in the Arts too and I think they should be there, the PEG channels, all of the PEG channels are incredibly important and that goes for the U of A, for Pima Community College, for TUSD and Sunnyside. And Access Tucson believes in it, the Board of Directors believed in it, which is why we supported TUSD in getting the studio lit. We believe in people having a voice and the vitality in the community that the PEG, and PEG stands for public, education and government and that includes also Channel 12. These are vital ways that we all can speak to each other and listen to each other in this community. They are vitally important and I also applaud those of you who said we even need more channels, I think it's critically that the channels are not cut back. Tucson is a growing city, a growing metropolitan area. Keep the faith about this, it's really important that of this to each other. We all have things to say, we've proved it tonight. Thank you all very much.

Ann Strine: And thank you all for coming. We really appreciate your comments. We have them all and we will be organizing them to present to council. Yes, there's a question in the back?

Unidentified Male: You allowed (unintelligible) late?

Ann Strine: Do you have a speaker form? If you have one, please let me know. I didn't have any more forms so I wasn't calling on anyone else.

Unidentified Male: (Unidentified male). Is that it, the one back here?

Ann Strine: I'm sorry. Yeah, the second page. Thank you. O.k., we'll call on you who is Mike McGarry:

Mike McGarry: I'm a carpenter, I work all day so I'm not dressed nicely. (unintelligible) to come here without having my supper cause I think this is important. I think the Access Channels are right. And I think it's a small price to pay for a business like Cox to provide those channels and more channels and to fund them fully. And I think the funding that was taken away a few years ago should be restored. I think it promotes active citizens, I've heard that over and over here today and I more to see more of that in my community. I've lived in Toledo, Ohio, Phoenix and here. This is the only place I know about Access. In all those places, the cable companies have a bad reputation for poor service and high cost to customers. So, I think Cox and I noticed a printout here a suggestion for Cox and all cable channels that they provide free service of at least all the local channels and the community channels. I think if they provided that kind of service to every household that does have a hookup it would take them nothing just to turn it on. If people wanted it, they could pay their installation fee to bring the cable to their homes. It would generate more business for them for their other channels. I think they should be more generous rather than trying to take every little bit away from people instead they should promote citizenship. It would promote more business for

them too. So I'm really offended by them even thinking that, oh we can give them channels for a few years and then we'll em away and we're gonna put some crap on. Those other channels, those commercial channels, there is so much junk on there. I don't wanna see it, I don't watch it. I watch PBS, I watch Access, I watch Cspan. I wanna be informed. I wanna know what's goin on. I wanna be a participant in my community and Access helps that and I know that's what I want.

Ann Strine: Anyone else?

Suzanne Trappman: I have one thing to say. I've been raised here and I live here in the (unintelligible) apartments. My name is Suzanne Trappman. I just want to say that in the age of communication, I mean what, that's what our whole world is now, it's trying to increase communication between people. It is a real step backwards to think of shutting down of good sources, I think. As well as being unneighborly.

Mary Jane Overall: Yes, Hi. I'll make this brief but I just wanted to sort of confirm and reaffirm everything that people have been saying tonight. I am a producer of a show called "15 Minutes." It's on the arts. And I began my education in video through a community cable station in Washington, D.C. and ultimately with those skills I was able to travel oversees so if you're interested in other jobs, you can definitely get them. And I admire what you're doing with your school with television and this is why I think Access Tucson is just dynamite for young people in terms of education. When I got back to the United States, having Access Tucson there was just fantastic because I can keep up my skills, meet people. I work in the Arts so I got to meet a lot of the artists in town. And five days ago I got a job with NBC so (applause). It does, it offers incredible educational opportunities for young people and the staff there is dynamite. They know what they're doing, they have great technology (applause) and the other thing is for the Arts, in terms of the Arts community, Access Tucson has been there 100%. They shows that we have there, I mean the artists that have been on my program are had an alternative space that they could use, that means they don't have to pay a huge commission, they get incredible exposure to everbody in the community, young, old, from every walk of life. And as far as cross-cultural collaborations, that's something that I find, or feel very strongly about. Through Access Tucson you get everyone, from every walk of life having the opportunity to say what they wanna say. We can learn about the Hispanic community, the Native American community, all of the communities here in this town and that's so valuable and again, resonates freedom of speech. So you know I sort of say to Cox is like you want to give them extra money, I think you should give them a real resource, something that is so valuable to our community which is so obvious from tonight and that resource, of course, is Access Tucson.

(Applause)

Ann Strine: Thank you all.

(Applause)

