

# City of Prior Lake



## **PLTV-15 Government Access Television Operating Policies and Procedures**

# Section 1: Policies

## I: Mission Statement and Goals

Prior Lake Television (PLTV-15) is a valuable tool for providing timely information about government issues to the residents of Prior Lake. As such, the City's goal shall be to focus programming on matters pertaining to public health and safety, local history and related governmental topics of interest to Prior Lake residents.

### Specific goals and objectives of PLTV-15:

- ✓ Increase public awareness and understanding of the structure and functions of Prior Lake government, TV services, resources, activities and issues;
- ✓ Stimulate citizen knowledge about and participation in the City decision-making process;
- ✓ Increase the flow of communications between City residents and their government;
- ✓ Produce quality programming,
- ✓ Provide information about events and issues taking place in Prior Lake;
- ✓ Maximize the effectiveness of cable television as a communication vehicle for City information;
- ✓ Provide programming of only the most up-to-date and timely meetings and shows;
- ✓ Increase viewership by developing alternative means for video/audio communications such as video on demand online.

## II: Definition

The City of Prior Lake and Mediacom Communications Corporation define PLTV-15 as a Government Access Channel as stated in the cable franchise agreement awarded by the City to Mediacom, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 238.084 and pursuant to the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 Section 611 (47 USC 531).

The City of Prior Lake defines Government Access as programming where governmental institutions or their designees are the primary users, having full editorial control over all programming and services.

## III: Channel Identification

Channel name: Prior Lake Television Channel 15

Channel Logo: The logo for PLTV-15 features the text "PLTV-15" in a large, bold, blue font with a yellow outline. The letters are slightly shadowed to give a 3D effect. The "15" is smaller than the "PLTV" part.

#### **IV: Policy Guidelines**

A. General Guidelines for Prior Lake Government Television are as follows:

- ✓ Programming on PLTV- 15 will depict people in a manner which does not discriminate on the basis of political opinions or affiliations, race, color, age, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or disability.
- ✓ Programming on Channel 15 is limited to City of Prior Lake funded or endorsed programs and other government information of interest to City residents. Programming produced by non-profit organizations partnering with the City of Prior Lake is also acceptable.
- ✓ All public meeting coverage is produced to offer viewers access to government deliberations. Public meeting programs will be unedited, gavel-to-gavel coverage.
- ✓ All material submitted is subject to the editorial discretion of the Communications Coordinator and City Manager for technical quality and appropriateness of message in keeping with the stated objectives.
- ✓ The development and inception of video programs by departments is to be done in conjunction with communications department staff.
- ✓ Authority for program lineup rests with the Communications Coordinator and City Manager.
- ✓ Prior Lake Television Channel 15 is a Government Access channel. Any programming submitted for airing that does not meet the exact content requirements described in this document will not be aired.

B. Political programming guidelines for Channel 15 are as follows:

- ✓ PLTV-15 shall not be utilized for promotion of political candidates, political causes, political organizations, political parties, community action committees, ballot issues.
- ✓ This is not to preclude the cablecasting of political debates or candidates meetings where all candidates for a local office representing Prior Lake are invited.
- ✓ Also not precluded shall be the possibility of cablecasting reports by current elected officials regarding the status of issues and other governmental business.
- ✓ PLTV-15 may also cover other governmental, Chamber of Commerce, SCALE and League of Women Voter meetings who partner with the City of Prior Lake and deal with governmental issues.

C. Commercial message/material guidelines for PLTV-15 are as follows:

- ✓ Anything promoting a product or service, with the primary objective of producing a profit for a specific commercial organization or individual may not be aired on PLTV-15.
- ✓ Solicitations by any organization or individual may not be aired on PLTV-15.
- ✓ This is not to preclude the incidental mention of a business or product as part of a program where the primary purpose is to disseminate information of public benefit.
- ✓ Business, individuals and organizations may be acknowledged for assistance in the production of a program or the provision of other means of support.

Religious message/material guidelines for PLTV-15 are as follows:

- ✓ Programming generally considered religious in nature is not allowed.
- ✓ The Prior Lake Communications Department will not produce program material that advocates a particular religious belief.
- ✓ Religious organizations or ideals may be mentioned as incidental information as part of a program.
- ✓ This will not preclude the appearance of a clergy member or individual representing a particular religion as part of a program providing general information.

**V: Funding and Budget Policies**

- ✓ Funding for the operation of PLTV-15 comes from the City of Prior Lake general fund budget which uses funds from the annual franchise fees received as a result of the operation of the cable television system in the City of Prior Lake. Other support may be provided through services such as grants from other agencies and assistance from the cable television franchise holder, as required by the franchise ordinance. PEG fees may also be adopted and assessed to subscribers, as prescribed under the cable franchise ordinance. Incidental revenues may be generated through fees charged for video services, such as copies (dubs) of programs. Fees for making duplicates of programs shall be charged in accordance with the current City of Prior Lake Fee Schedule.
- ✓ Funds received from all previously stated sources will be placed into the general fund budget to assist, in part, cable television operations.
- ✓ The annual Cable Television budget is prepared by City's Communications Department with assistance from the Financial Department and forwarded to the City Manager for revision. The City Manager then forwards a proposal for the final budget to the City Council. The budget provides for equipment repair and replacement in addition to operational costs.

- ✓ Budget estimates will be based on a long-range budgeting scenario developed by staff. The purpose of this scenario is to plan current operating expenses around the need to maintain an equipment reserve fund, guaranteeing the replacement of any essential equipment purchased for the department.
- ✓ All services requested by other governmental partners will be addressed as staff/work schedule permit, and such services will be performed with no charge.

## **V: Material Retention**

- ✓ In accordance with the City of Prior Lake Records Retention Schedule, DVD and tape recordings of the regular meetings of the Prior Lake City Council, Planning Commission and Advisory Committees have a minimum retention period of three months following approval of the meeting minutes. The written minutes shall continue to be the exclusive official record of the Council proceedings and other public hearings in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 138.17 and 138.225, of the Minnesota Records Retention Schedule.

Recordings shall be stored in accordance with the City's approved data retention schedule. Retention may occur for longer periods of time as follow:

- at the request of the City Council;
- at the request of the City Manager;
- at the request of an individual for the sole purpose of ordering a copy from the City;
- if footage is needed for a future production;
- at the discretion of the Communications Coordinator.

- ✓ Master recordings will be retained at Prior Lake City Hall. This storage area is not accessible to the public without assistance of the Communications Coordinator or Cable Technician. Files of programs, raw footage and recordings from other sources will be kept as up-to-date as possible to assist with retrieval.

- ✓ Staff can request DVDs or VHS taped copies of meetings from the Communications Coordinator with a written or verbal request.

## **V: Public Access to Materials**

- ✓ All recordings that are retained by the City of Prior Lake shall be made available for public inspection on City premises upon request. When a request is made, materials will be made available within a reasonable amount of time, but no later than five (5) business days after receipt of the request. If members of the public wish to obtain copies of video recordings, the City may assess reasonable charges to cover the cost of time and material as approved annually in the City Fee Schedule.
- ✓ The programs produced by City staff and seen on PLTV-15 are copyrighted and cannot be rebroadcast by any entity without permission by the City Manager or Communications Coordinator.
- ✓ Upon request, staff will make every effort to accommodate the specific needs of those viewers with disabilities wishing to view programs produced by the City of

Prior Lake. Arrangements can be made in advance to accommodate the requesting citizen's disabilities. There is no charge for these services. Audio headsets are made available at no charge during the live meetings to amplify the audio signal.

## Section 2: Procedures

### **I: City Council Meeting Operating Procedures**

Staff shall provide technical support to the Council, its committees and individual members in the preparation and production of materials for public meetings seen on PLTV-15. Procedures are as follows:

- ✓ Council meetings – All regular City Council meetings will be cablecast live and recorded for replay.
- ✓ Advisory Body Meetings – All regular Parks Advisory Committee and Lake Advisory Committee meetings will be cablecast live and recorded for replay.
- ✓ Council work sessions – work sessions are not normally recorded.

### **II: Public Meeting Recording Procedures**

General program rules:

- ✓ Council desk audio coverage is gavel-to-gavel only. Ambient microphones will not be used to transmit general room noise before or after an actual meeting.
- ✓ Video of the Council Chambers as it fills up or empties is acceptable, but Council microphones are closed. Only wide shots of the room are acceptable before and after a meeting to minimize the possibility of visually editorializing.
- ✓ The presiding officer (the Mayor during a City Council meeting) will exercise as much control as necessary to insure that the public meeting remains a forum for the conducting of business of the City and does not become a forum for individuals who may attempt to utilize the live broadcast for the delivery of inappropriate information to the general public.

Camera Selection:

- ✓ The person speaking will be on camera with the understanding that equipment constraints may require a couple moments to achieve the shot.
- ✓ Individual reaction shots (shots of those not actually speaking or being addressed) are not allowed.
- ✓ Brief wide shots of the room, or of those seated at the dais, are acceptable to break up a long, verbal delivery, or for the technician to prepare the next individual shot.

- ✓ If a person (council member, advisory commission, committee or board member; or podium speaker) is being addressed, a brief shot can be taken of that person in anticipation of that person's response.
- ✓ Anyone speaking to the Council or as part of a public hearing must come up to the podium. The Mayor or presiding officer will be responsible for directing first-time speakers regarding the use of the podium.
- ✓ If a member of the staff seated at the staff desk speaks or responds to a question. That person can be shown on camera. Members of the press must use the podium to address the Council.

#### Preparation of Graphics:

- ✓ All those scheduled on the agenda will be asked if they require additional media support at staff's earliest convenience. If media support is requested, the presenter must contact the communications coordinator or cable technician by phone or email no less than one business day prior to the meeting or public hearing and schedule time before the public meeting to learn equipment function and use. Additional media support includes:
  - VHS, DVD or video file playback.
  - PowerPoints, computer photos or graphic slides
  - Large graphic displays or blueprints.
  - Direct hookup with a laptop computer.
- ✓ Staff requests for additional media support should be made to the communications coordinator or cable tech no later than one business day prior to the public meeting.
- ✓ Staff members wishing assistance in preparing new materials for presentation should have their materials and instructions to the Communications Coordinator one week in advance of the meeting date.
- ✓ Staff requesting video production support must allow for additional production time based on the difficulty of production. A meeting with the communications coordinator is necessary to determine how long the production process will take.

#### Use of Graphics:

- ✓ City staff has control over the zoom, brightness and focus of the document camera at the staff desk. The presenter must direct staff to zoom or change the graphic. The Mayor or presiding officer is responsible for reminding staff to adjust color, brightness or focus.
- ✓ During discussion, those seated at the dais can call for any presented graphic, or packet item to be displayed on the document camera at the staff desk, or request that any presented graphic slide or illustration be redisplayed by the presenter. During the

short delay in retrieving and displaying the desired information, they are urged to continue their discussion.

**Council Monitors and Large Overhead Plasma Displays:**

- ✓ Council monitors and two of the large plasma displays are to be used for the display of document camera items, video or laptop presentations. A live feed of the meeting's outbound video, without graphics, is displayed on two large plasma monitors in the chambers. Audio and video with graphics is available in the lobby on the large plasma screen near the front desk.
- ✓ Monitor images will generally include the output of the overhead camera, computer graphics or video playback.
- ✓ The default image will be a blank screen, or City logo/flag at the beginning of a meeting.

**III: General Cable TV Studio (Control Room) Procedures**

**General Rules:**

- ✓ No one other than the communications coordinator and cable technician is allowed in the studio during the taping and live broadcast of a public meeting. Walking into the studio is not allowed once the meeting is in progress.
- ✓ Nothing may be removed from the studio during evening meetings when responsible staff members are not present.

**Duplication (public requests):**

- ✓ Upon a verbal or written request for a program or taped meeting, the person shall provide appropriate rewritable media to the communications coordinator (example, blank DVD). For convenience, appropriate media can be purchased from the City of Prior Lake at the time of duplication.
- ✓ Payment for duplication of programs is required prior to copying. Staff will not review and locate for copying only a portion of a meeting. Staff will provide a complete copy and the viewer is responsible for locating the item. Staff will not custom edit programs or recordings of meetings.
- ✓ The tape duplication fee will be waived for those who appear on a program. This includes, but is not limited to, guests and participants of interview programs produced by the City of Prior Lake.
- ✓ Copies of programs will be provided as soon as possible after the request is received. If a program is to be mailed, a postage and handling fee must be paid at the time of ordering.
- ✓ All fees mentioned are set on an annual basis by the *City of Prior Lake Schedule of Fees*.

Duplication (council and staff):

- ✓ Upon receiving a request, a copy of the program and meeting will be made available to any Council member or staff member. This copy is for review and should be returned if not needed after viewing. Council members or staff members may also request a single permanent copy.
- ✓ Council members or staff members must make a written request to the City Manager to arrange for larger volume requests of duplication or a distribution of materials (three or more separate meetings or programs or copies of such).

Requests for Assistance:

Internal requests for full video production assistance will be handled using the following procedures.

- ✓ Requests for assistance can be obtained from the Communications Coordinator.
- ✓ The Communications Coordinator will schedule production time, equipment and promotion.
- ✓ Projects are generally handled on a first-come first-served basis, with scheduled items taking priority over last-minute requests.
- ✓ Only trained personnel or specially designated volunteers are allowed to operate the audio/video equipment.
- ✓ Program content will be a primary responsibility of the department requesting assistance.

Channel Time:

The scheduling of program air times is the direct responsibility of the communications coordinator and can be altered, rearranged, cancelled or added at any time to suit the needs of the City of Prior Lake. The scheduling of a program only takes place after it has been determined that the program meets all programming guidelines.

- ✓ Live Programming has the highest priority in scheduling. Meetings or other live events that meet the criteria to be cablecast will displace any regularly scheduled taped rebroadcast. The Communications Coordinator will ensure that live program schedules are displayed on PLTV-15.
- ✓ Regular Programming will be given regular time slots around which special programs will be scheduled. A current programming schedule is available on the City's website. Programming is subject to change at any time by the communications coordinator, due particularly to the wide variance in public meeting duration. The following document is an example of the manner in which regular programming is standardized: