



## FOXBORO CABLE ACCESS

### ANNUAL REPORT

1983

#### ORGANIZATION:

The major objective of Foxboro Cable Access, Inc. is to develop a Foxboro organization dedicated to taking full advantage of the equipment and services provided by Cablevision to support independent, local video productions that would be of interest to Foxboro subscribers. Massachusetts Cablevision, as part of the final License, provided for the "unrestricted use" of four channels on the cable system. They further stipulated that these four channels would be "completely under the control of the Town". Studio facilities, a dedicated mobile van, production equipment, technical assistance and funding were all part of the Cablevision offering.

Accepting the challenge to manage our own access broadcasting is a bold move. Few towns take on this task electing rather to have the Cable operator take the leadership for local programming. Response by Foxboro people to date indicates a willingness to make our local access successful.

Building an organization during 1983 has been frustrated by delays in obtaining studio facilities and equipment. While no time table was specified in the license, Cablevision implied that the local channels would be activated "concurrent with the rest of the system". The delays, while unfortunate, did provide time to try several organizational systems.

An early organization, based on a committee system, helped surface many issues but was difficult to coordinate and was slow to respond. This first organization also pointed out the personal time involvement required. Additionally it showed that operating the access channels was a separate job from producing video tapes.

As a result of these experiences, a new organization has been developed. This organization closely resembles that of a television station and utilizes more formal management structure used by other non-profit organizations. The FCA organization is shown in Figure 1.

The Board of Directors of the company are selected by, and responsible to, both the Board of Selectmen and the subscribers. The Board approves the FCA budget and policy decisions. The President is responsible for the general operation of the access channels and, with the Program Coordinator provided by Cablevision, manages the daily operation of the channels.

The major staff managers (Programming, Production, and Office) provide continuity for the operation. They are each expected to have additional volunteers help carry out their responsibilities. The Program manager provides the weekly schedule for the channels, coordinates the use of the bulletin boards, and develops and maintains the access guidelines. The

Production manager provides a production crew that can be used for taping local programs for organizations that do not have that expertise. The Production manager also is responsible for keeping track of the equipment provided to the Town by Cablevision. Finally, the Office manager supervises volunteers who work to meet general office needs including: video tape library, Channel 8 program messages, file and mail system, and public announcements.

All the positions described above require a time commitment by the individuals involved. This time commitment is similar to that required by people elected or named to major Town positions or committees. A summary of the responsibility and minimum time commitment is given in Figure 2.

The Program Coordinator is a full-time position staffed by Cablevision. Foxboro is fortunate to have Steve Rosenberg in that position as his experience has been helpful and he has very effectively supported the operational philosophy of FCA.

#### FACILITIES:

Foxboro Cable Access now has an office. It is located in the new Cablevision building on North Main St. The building also houses the Regional business office of Cablevision and the Foxboro Studio. Office equipment was purchased and moved into the building during the last week of 1983.

About 90% of the studio and portable equipment has been delivered with about 75% of it installed and operational. Video broadcast is currently limited to channel 8 but will be expanded as required.

The License also called for the upgrading of the television facilities at the High School. All equipment specified in the License has been delivered and installed.

Wiring for the Institutional loop is still underway with about 50% of the locations specified by the Selectmen available for service.

#### OPERATION:

A. Programs: During the summer and fall of 1983 many programs were taped but could not be finalized for broadcast until editing equipment was available. These early efforts provided important chances to practice filming on location. A series of story-hour sessions at the Foxboro Library, the Foxboro Fair, and a program about Conservation Land in Foxboro were shows that were taped and will be on the air shortly. A craft program demonstrating how to make holiday decorations was taped, edited and broadcast for Christmas.

A mobile van, provided for Foxboro use, arrived on Nov. 18 and was immediately put to use taping the Foxboro-Mansfield Thanksgiving football game. This was followed the next weekend by the Foxboro-Dartmouth Super Bowl game. Both games were broadcast on Dec. 6.

Four channels have been designated for use by Foxboro. Channel 8 is the primary channel for playback of programs. The other 3 channels will start out as "bulletin board" channels and will expand to video programming as the number of programs increase.

**B. Bulletin Boards:** Bulletin Board channels provide continuous information displayed as pages of text messages on the screen. The messages are created by using keyboards provided by Cablevision. These keyboards can be used remotely and access the channels through a telephone connection.

Two of these channels have already started posting messages. Channel 8, when not showing video programs, is being used to display program and FCA announcements. A second keyboard has been placed in the Town Clerk's office and is being used to present information concerning Town Government on Channel 6.

The two additional channels will begin early in 1984. A keyboard at the School Department offices will be used to prepare school related announcements on Channel 2. The fourth keyboard will be located at the Council on Human Services office on Chestnut St. A group of volunteers will maintain the bulletin board for Channel 5 which will carry Public Service announcements for the many independent clubs and organizations in Foxboro. Figure 3 is the Channel listing for Foxboro.

**C. High School/Training:** FCA has helped establish a video program at the High School by providing \$2000 to support a part-time aide in the A/V department. Cablevision has also supported this program by providing engineering services for the TV studio at the school and a training program for both students and faculty.

General training sessions, provided by Cablevision, have been underway since August 1983. People taking the first courses are already active in FCA activities. There are currently 3 training programs in operation attended by people who attended the FCA public meeting in October. Courses are open to any Foxboro resident and new programs will be announced early in 1984.

**D. Selectmen Report:** In June of 1983 FCA provided the Selectmen with a report on the first year of the cable license. That report showed that construction of the subscriber system was "substantially complete" as called for in the license with two streets having underground utilities still under construction. The report also indicated non-compliance with the license terms in respect to the offering of TV-antenna switch devices to subscribers. This last issue remained unresolved until December 1983.

**E. Logo Contest:** During the fall a logo contest was held to create interest in the access channels and to provide unique graphic displays for use with local programs. Winners will be announced at the Annual Meeting and all entries will be on display at the Open House in January.

FINANCIAL

Cablevision provided FCA with initial funding of over \$17,000. These funds are part of the license agreement and should represent 5% of Cablevision receipts in Foxboro. The level of \$17,000 was an advance based on an estimate of Cablevision's first year's receipts and will be adjusted over the next five years. The major use of the funds has been to establish the office operation and purchase some additional video equipment not provided by the License. A copy of the Financial statement is given in Figure 4.

FUTURE:

The coming year should see an expanding interest in local programming. The challenge faced by FCA will be to control this growth. Control is required to assure providing opportunity to the most people while not stifling the creative talent within Foxboro.

FIGURE 1

FOXBORO CABLE ACCESS

ORGANIZATION

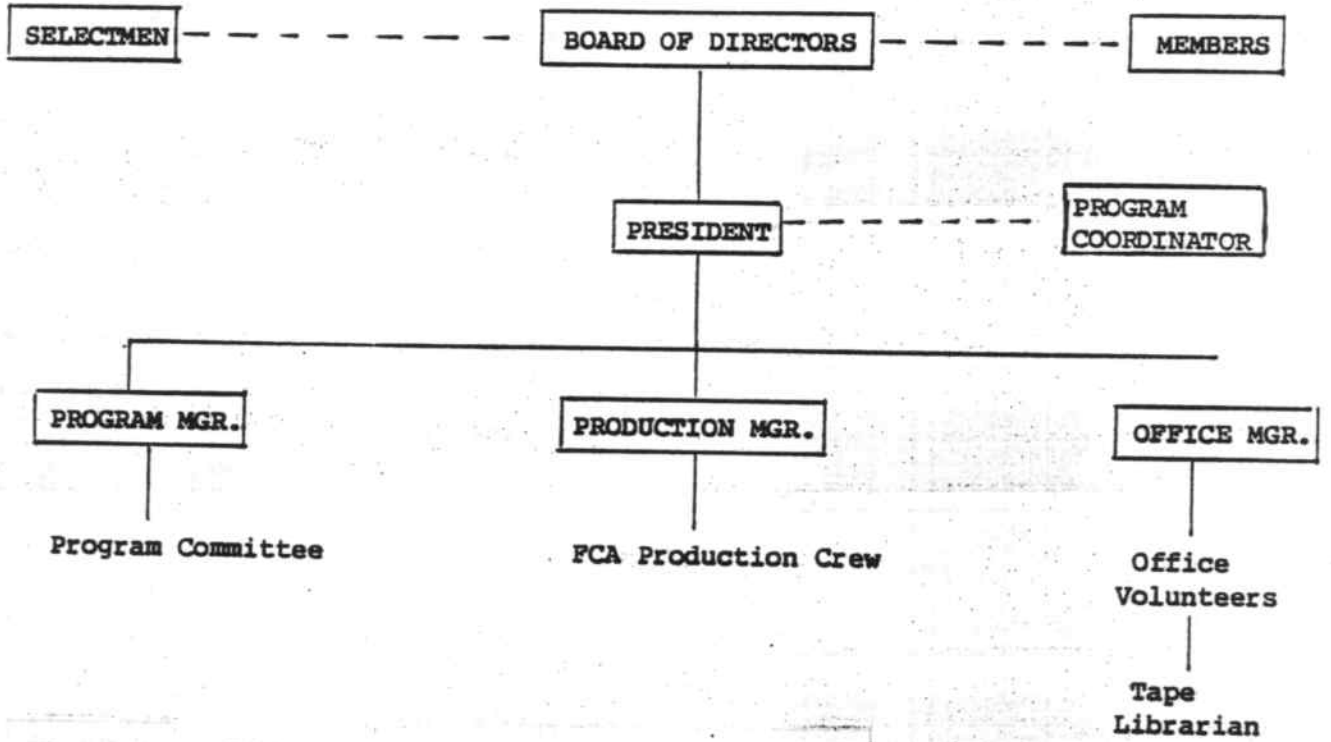


FIGURE 2

FOXBORO CABLE ACCESS

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>	<u>MINIMUM TIME COMMITMENT</u>
Director	Budget approval Procedure approval FCA Objectives Major Policy decisions	1 meeting/mo. 1 office visit/wk.
President	FCA operations	1 meeting/wk 2-3 office visit/wk
Program Mgr.	Access Rules Program review Program scheduling Keyboard usage	1 meeting/wk 2-3 office visit/wk
Production Mgr.	FCA Production Crew Equipment inventory	1 meeting/wk 2-3 office visit/wk
Office Mgr.	Office operation Mail/message system Tape Library Publicity	1 meeting/wk 2-3 office visit/wk

FIGURE 3

FOXBORO CABLE ACCESS

CHANNEL LISTINGS

<u>CHANNEL</u>	<u>USE</u>	<u>KEYBOARD USER</u>
2	Education	School Department
5	Public Service	Fox. Human Services
6	Town Government	Town Clerk office
8	FCA Programming	FCA Office Mgr.

Foxboro Cable Access  
Financial Statement  
Jan 1, 1983 - Dec. 31, 1983

Assets on Hand 12-31-82

Income:

General Funding:	\$17,070.15
Interest:	\$ 1,206.87

Expense:

Video Equipment:	\$ 672.48
Office Furniture/Fixtures	\$ 979.49
Royalties:	\$ 450.00
Production Expenses:	\$ 232.64
Travel/Meetings:	\$ 217.97
Office:	\$ 687.12
Memberships:	\$ 65.00
Fees & Service Charges:	\$ 78.75

Net Surplus (Deficit) of 1983 \$14,893.57

Assets on Hand 12-31-83 \$14,893.57