

Borough of South Plainfield, Middlesex County
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South Plainfield Governmental & Educational Television Station

Standard Operating Procedures

September 10, 2012

South Plainfield Governmental and Educational (G & E) Television Policies and Procedures

Committee

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Mission

The Borough of South Plainfield, in cooperation with community and area resources, including the local school district, will operate an educational and government cable channel (Channel 32) which will feature programming designed to celebrate the diversity of its residents and inform and educate them on topics of local interest in order to help them identify and bond with the community, the schools, its governing institutions and each other.

Objectives

In order to fulfill this mission, the following objectives are established for South Plainfield's Government Access Television Station (henceforth SPTV):

- A. Develop educational and governmental programming to address the needs, concerns and interests of South Plainfield residents;
- B. Broadcast quality programs which are in conformance with community standards;
- C. Foster a cooperative effort between the Borough and community and area resources, including local schools, on projects serving the interests and needs of all Borough residents;
- D. Encourage residents, educational staff and students to be involved in the production and broadcasting of innovative community oriented programming;
- E. Provide a bulletin board which airs notices from government agencies and non-profit organizations in the Borough and neighboring communities which may be of interest or service to Borough residents;
- F. Bring into the homes of persons with disabilities or special needs educational and non-profit programming in order to promote the objective that all residents are an integral part of the community.

Program Source

Program material may emanate from:

- A. SPTV staff.
- B. SPTV volunteer staff.
- C. Municipal and educational organizations.
- D. Residents or non-profit community groups as approved by the SPTV Station Committee.
- E. Sources outside of the South Plainfield Borough submitting content must be in conformance with these policies and procedures.

Editorial Control

- A. The final decisions concerning the editing and broadcasting of a program rest with the South Plainfield Cable Television Committee, or its designee, for all programs from all sources.
- B. SPTV is not obligated to air material submitted from any source or to air productions or bulletin board submissions in their entirety.

Program Content Guidelines

The South Plainfield Cable Television Committee has the right to reject any program or announcement submission deemed in violation of these guidelines or which is, for any reason, deemed not suitable to its mission, or in conformance with its objectives.

The South Plainfield Cable Television Committee will not knowingly broadcast or allow to be broadcast any material that:

- A. Is contrary to local, state, or federal laws.
- B. Violates state or federal law relating to obscenity or profanity that would be offensive to the general viewing public. This specifically includes a prohibition on the airing of those words that the FCC prohibits from being broadcast on over-the-air networks.
- C. Is a direct or indirect presentation of lottery information, gambling, gaming, or games of chance.
- D. Represents a solicitation or appeal for funds other than for SPTV or local non-profit 501(c) 3 organizations.

- E. Is libelous, slanderous or an unlawful invasion of privacy.
- F. Is copyrighted, trademarked, or subject to ownership or royalty rights without necessary releases, licenses or other lawful permission (with a copy of such provided to the Station Manager).
- G. Promotes any single religious belief or represents a portion or all of a religious service conducted by a church or religious organization. This shall not preclude the airing of:
 - 1. A school concert containing religious music;
 - 2. A documentary educational program explaining the beliefs or history of more than one religion;
 - 3. A concert or other musical program conducted in a church setting by a group or individual not affiliated with that church.
- H. Is an advertisement or endorsement by or on behalf of officially announced candidates for public office or that feature one candidate or promote one candidate or group of candidates over another. This shall not preclude the broadcasting of local election coverage consisting of any moderated forum open to all candidates conducted by a public or quasi-public non-partisan organization such as the League of Women Voters or established news media, or a forum conducted pursuant to an agreement of the candidates, and said broadcasting is hereby encouraged by the Borough as in the public interest.
- I. Is conducted in a private business establishment unless it is part of a municipal or non-profit event or a SPTV authorized educational program or series.
- J. Contains any inappropriate spoken or physical behavior that could improperly or unfairly injure, violate or insult persons or groups or is contrary to generally accepted community standards.
- K. Presents demeaning or derogatory comments about, or representations of, individuals or groups based upon race, creed, color, national origin, nationality, ancestry, age, sex (including pregnancy), familial status, marital status, religion, domestic partnership status, civil union status, affectional or sexual orientation, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, genetic information, liability for military status, or mental or physical disability (including perceived disability and AIDS or HIV status). The South Plainfield Borough Cable Television Committee has the right to reject any program or announcement submission deemed in violation of these guidelines or which is, for any reason, deemed not suitable to the objectives of SPTV.

Electronic Bulletin Board

- A. The bulletin board is a mechanism for airing public announcements or messages that are non-commercial and deemed to be informational to South

Plainfield Borough residents. These messages include the announcement of events or services sponsored or conducted by municipal, educational or non-profit community groups or organizations.

- B. Announcements of events or services sponsored by municipal entities or non-profit community organizations from neighboring communities that may be of interest to South Plainfield residents may be placed on the bulletin board if programming and editing time permit.
- C. All notices must be approved by the South Plainfield Cable Television Committee or designee. SPTV reserves the right to edit any such message.
- D. Personal ads will not be accepted.
- E. Ads for political campaigns will not be accepted.
- F. Announcements may not contain references to:
 - 1. Lotteries, bingo, or other games of chance or;
 - 2. Alcoholic beverages or cash or open bars.
- G. Meetings of non-profit, non-municipal groups may be announced; however announcements of internal organization meetings (e.g., a finance committee of XYZ Club) will not be carried unless subject to Sunshine Laws.
- H. The starting times and locations of religious services conducted by religious organizations within the Borough may be posted on a religious services page.
 - I. All messages should include the name of the event (e.g., a spring bazaar and luncheon) or service (e.g., flu shots), the name of the sponsoring organization, date, time, location, costs and contact person, phone number and website.
- J. The design of the screen including the colors, character fonts, style, and layout of the announcement will be decided by the South Plainfield Cable Television Committee or designee.
- K. Requests must be emailed to sptv@southplainfieldnj.com for approval by the SPTV Committee or designee.
- L. All requests should be received at least two weeks prior to the requested air start date. Acceptance is solely at the discretion of the Committee or designee.
- M. The SPTV Committee, or designee, has the right to reject any message deemed no to be in conformance with these policies or the objectives of SPTV.

Cable Productions

- A. Air time is available solely for the purpose of educational or community programming that is non-commercial and is in conformance with these policies.
 - 1. Educational programming is a program from any municipal, educational or non-profit source designed to inform or instruct viewers about matters which fall within the purview of SPTV objectives.
 - 2. Community programming is a program featuring an activity of a unit of municipal government or an event sponsored by an element of municipal government or a product that is requested for airing by a unit of municipal government to inform, educate or entertain South Plainfield Borough residents on matters that may be of local interest.
- B. All programming shall be reviewed by the SPTV Committee or designee and is subject to editing to ensure that it is in conformance with these policies and scheduling requirements.
- C. An independently produced program is any program that is not produced under the auspices of SPTV. Before airing an independently produced program, the producer must complete and sign a SPTV Producer Agreement and Indemnification Form accepting full responsibility for the program content, saving harmless SPTV and South Plainfield Borough from any loss incurred in the defense of any claim or suit and certifying that the program is in full compliance with these policies. Independent producers developing programs at the request of a unit of South Plainfield Government or the South Plainfield Board of Education must certify on the Producer Agreement Form that SPTV programming has first and unlimited use of the program.
- D. A program and/or recording of a paid performer will only be aired upon receipt and approval by the SPTV Committee and must include a signed Performer Release Form which includes a waiver of any right to compensation from SPTV or Borough of South Plainfield for the broadcast of all or any portion of the performance.
- E. Liability for an unauthorized use of copyrighted or trademarked material shall rest solely with the producer.
- F. The SPTV Committee or designee has the right to reject any program submission if it is deemed not suitable to SPTV objectives or not in compliance with these policies.
- G. Program proposals are required for all independently produced programs. If possible, proposals should be submitted in advance of program production.

All proposals should:

1. Include a justification indicating how it relates to the objectives of SPTV, its potential value to the community, its goals, and target audience.
 2. Be accompanied by a certification that the producer has read these policies and that the program will be in compliance with them.
 3. Be submitted at least 21 days in advance of the proposed airing time. If the program does not accompany the proposal, the earliest airing will be at least 21 days after receipt of the program to allow time for editing and scheduling. These time frames may be modified by the SPTV Committee in accordance with production or broadcast needs.
 4. Proposal requirements may be waived when a program is produced at the request of the SPTV Station Manager or designee.
- H. All media submissions must be in an acceptable format (DVD or MPEG2), properly labeled and contain program title and length, name of producer and sponsoring organization and the home and work telephone numbers of the producer.
- I. SPTV is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged DVDs or other media submissions.
- J. All media must be picked up by the sender within 21 days of airing. After such time has elapsed, the media will be discarded by SPTV.
- K. A broadcast of a meeting of any municipal policy making or advisory body, commission or board will only be edited to the extent that formal breaks in the meeting or any regulated profanities or obscenities are deleted. Requests to delete comments or other portions of the meeting will not be honored.
- L. Persons acting in the capacity of a SPTV production team member creating a recording or other media on behalf of SPTV shall complete a "Work for Hire Agreement" form acknowledging the "work for hire" capacity and agreeing that any created media is the sole property of SPTV.

Sponsorship

- A. SPTV may accept sponsorship or support for all programs or services broadcast on or furnished by SPTV.

- B. A sponsor may donate money, equipment, operational supplies, programming or services toward general SPTV operations or toward a specific SPTV production, service or broadcast function. Such donations become the sole property of SPTV.
- C. Monies donated to SPTV shall be placed in a fund dedicated to the operations of SPTV. In the event that SPTV ceases operations, all remaining funds and all equipment owned by SPTV shall be turned over to the Borough of South Plainfield and/or the South Plainfield Board of Education.
- D. Sponsorship does not convey any right to the sponsor or donor to censor, alter, or influence program content.
- E. Program providers or sponsors may not advertise on SPTV by the use of commercials as that term is traditionally used in advertising. Programs or bulletin board submissions containing material deemed by the SPTV Committee to be commercial in the traditional sense may be rejected or edited to conform to these policies.
- F. Sponsorship announcements are not commercials and cannot be used to persuade or influence viewers, to advocate for public issues or candidates or as a call to action.
- G. The SPTV Committee, under advisement from the Borough Administrator and Board of Education Business Office, is authorized to establish rates for broadcasts, programming and services. Monies donated toward general SPTV operations and equipment, operational supplies, programming or services donated to SPTV are not covered by these rate limitations and may be acknowledged in bulletin board slides as the SPTV Committee deems appropriate. Rates established within these maximums by SPTV shall be published in the same manner applicable to the announcements of public meetings.
- H. Sponsorship announcements may be produced by the sponsor or SPTV in a format and on media established by the SPTV Committee. Control over content rests solely with the SPTV Committee or designee.
- I. Volunteers or organizations securing sponsorships, donations, or support for SPTV operations may not receive any form of compensation for this service.
- J. Sponsors have the opportunity to be the exclusive sponsor of a program by contributing the full sponsorship rate.
- K. Sponsorship of a particular program may emanate from more than one of the same kind of business.

- L. The costs of cable productions or bulletin board operations may be underwritten in whole or in part by corporations, businesses, non-profit organizations or individuals. Such support may be acknowledged as follows:
1. When a program is funded, the program may contain, for each funding source, a 20 second billboard within a 30 minute time slot (e.g., "This program was made possible in part by XYZ Restaurant"). Alternatively, acknowledgement could be a 10 second billboard display at the start and the conclusion of the program. The billboard can only display name, address, logo, picture of the facility of a corporation, business or non-profit organization and other data deemed appropriate by the SPTV Station Manager.
 2. When the bulletin board operation is underwritten, a notation acknowledging the sponsor may appear at the base of the bulletin board, technology permitting, for a period of time determined by the SPTV Station Manager. Moreover a billboard display acknowledging this support may be carried at least once during each bulletin board cycle.
 3. Acknowledgements of donations or support may take the form of a congratulatory or memorial message as requested by the contributor.
- M. The SPTV Committee has the right to make appeals for funding or support for SPTV operations or programming.

Program Scheduling

- A. All program scheduling will be approved by the SPTV Committee
- B. Subject to the Committee adjustments, broadcast priorities will be as follows:
1. Live events (e.g., school sports or musical programs).
 2. South Plainfield Borough Council meetings.
 3. Board of Education meetings.
 4. South Plainfield Borough sponsored events.
 5. South Plainfield Borough government commission, board, and committee meetings.
 6. Other programs of specific community interest approved for broadcast

by the SPTV Committee.

- C. The SPTV Committee will attempt to broadcast live or recorded Council, School Board or South Plainfield government commission, board, and committee meetings or sponsored events as requested, personnel and equipment availability permitting. When such resources are limited, priorities for live broadcasting or recording will be in accordance with subsection B above.
- D. Emergency management announcements made by the Emergency Management Officials of the Borough will be broadcast on a priority basis overriding all other scheduling decisions.

Facilities and Equipment

- A. SPTV is a local, non-profit cable access Television production and broadcast operation wholly owned and operated by the Borough of South Plainfield.
- B. SPTV broadcasting will emanate from the South Plainfield High School.
- C. Access to SPTV editing or storage areas in South Plainfield High School will be subject to BOE policies.
- D. Access to South Plainfield High School facilities for the purpose of recording or producing activities or events is strictly under the jurisdiction of the BOE.
- E. Equipment and supplies purchased by or donated to SPTV will remain the sole property of SPTV regardless of its location.
- F. Access to the broadcast equipment located at the cable insertion point in the South Plainfield High School will be strictly limited to persons updating programming and scheduling or performing maintenance on such equipment as approved by the SPTV Committee.
- G. SPTV equipment may only be used for the production or recording of events or activities approved by the Committee, its designee. Access to this equipment should be available to SPTV production team members.
- H. Any equipment that is damaged or malfunctions must be reported by the person using the equipment at the time of the incident on a SPTV Incident Report Form. The form must be submitted to the SPTV Committee.

Production Team

- A. The SPTV committee may establish a volunteer group, the SPTV Production Team, to assist in the production and broadcasting of SPTV programming.
- B. Volunteers may be of any age; however persons under the age of 18 must have a SPTV Student Release Form signed by a parent or guardian providing consent for them to participate in SPTV production or broadcast activities.
- C. Persons volunteering shall complete a "Work for Hire Agreement" Form acknowledging that when they are performing services for SPTV in the capacity of a production team member they will be considered to be in a work for hire capacity and agreeing that any media created while working in that capacity is the property of SPTV.
- D. Production team members may be involved in activities such as filming, editing, writing, narrating, interviewing, bulletin board creation, program development, and scheduling.
- E. Training and/or certification processes for the use of equipment by production team members or others will be determined by SPTV Committee or designee.
- F. When using station facilities, equipment, resources, or property, production team members may only tape or perform other services for activities or events approved by the SPTV Committee or designee.
- G. Volunteer staff shall be provided with proper photo identification issued by the Committee under rules authorized by the Borough of South Plainfield.

Technical Standards

- A. All media submitted must be in a format approved by the SPTV Committee or designee.
- B. All media submitted for broadcast will be reviewed for technical quality standards and may be rejected for airing if deemed by the SPTV Committee or designee to not meet broadcast technical standards.
- C. VHS tapes will not be accepted. Such tapes must be converted to a DVD format.
- D. Media submitted to air in a 30-minute or a 60-minute time slot should be 28:30 or 58:30 minutes in length respectively. Only submissions meeting general production standards will be accepted. Submissions that include

dropped audio, inconsistent or excessive camera motion, or programs that contain "raw" (unedited footage) will not be accepted for broadcasting.

- E. Submissions not meeting one or more of the above mentioned technical standards may be rejected by the Committee or its designee.

Technology Purchases

- A. The SPTV Committee or designee, with the approval of the Borough Administrator and the Board of Education Business Office, may purchase equipment, operational supplies, programming and/or services required to carry out and meet the objectives of SPTV.
- B. Equipment purchased will be capable of broadcasting to a server via MPEG2, MPEG4 and Video Streaming format.
- C. All purchases will be made in accordance with South Plainfield Borough and Board of Education purchasing policies and procedures and subject to available appropriations.