

City of Deer Park

Government Access Channel Policy

Goal

The goal of the City of Deer Park's government access channel is to create a greater awareness of local government and facilitate the community's participation in local events.

Objectives

1. To increase community awareness of City and Deer Park Independent School District (DPISD) services, activities, policies, and programs.
2. To provide program information on community events such as cultural, recreational and historical events.
3. To provide more extensive information on selected City topics and activities not fully covered by existing communication tools.
4. To supplement public safety and disaster preparedness activities and information pertaining to the City of Deer Park.
5. To provide additional community information that serves the interests of the City of Deer Park.
6. To provide general announcements of current government-sponsored events and job listings.

Types of Programming

The Government Access Channel is not a public access channel. The channel may include the following types of programming:

1. Community Bulletin Board – This consists of a series of slides created to provide information related to City or DPISD activities, programs, events and services that the City sponsors or sanctions.
2. Videotape Cablecast – A pre-recorded videotape for promotional or educational purposes. These are not limited to, but may include the following:
 - a. Locally Produced Programs – A pre-recorded videotaped program that is produced by the City to illustrate the programs, facilities, and services of City government. These include, but are not limited to: videotape tours of government facilities such as parks and City facilities, programs that highlight City departments, City recreational and cultural programs, and programs about specific City issues.
 - b. Outside Resource Programs – The City may use outside resources to supplement programming. These will be used at the discretion of the City Manager and will be evaluated for appropriate content and message. Outside programming will encompass educational and informative topics that are appropriate to the public and help facilitate City goals and objectives.
 - c. Public Service Announcements – Pre-recorded videotaped spots announcing events or issues of importance to citizens of Deer Park that are produce by the City or obtained from outside sources. These may include, but are not limited to local, regional, state, and national issues.

Content Restrictions

In keeping with the goals and objectives of the City of Deer Park government access channel to provide educational and governmental programming, certain types of programming are not allowed including, but not limited to the following:

1. Political Use of Government Access Channel – The channel may not be utilized for the promotion or “use” of any elected official or candidate. Specific advertising messages on behalf of or opposing any political candidate or measure on any ballot shall not be permitted.
2. Position Advocacy – Any direct advocacy messages including specific promotional messages on behalf of or opposing any ballot initiative, measure proposal, or items under consideration of the City Council or its commissions or advisory bodies shall not be permitted.
3. Commercialism – There shall be no commercial advertising or other information which promotes the sale of any product or service offered, except for promotional announcements of City sponsored or sanctioned events or approved sponsorship acknowledgments.
4. Lotteries – Advertising of other information concerning any lottery, gift enterprise or similar promotion is prohibited.
5. Promotion of Religion – Programming which directly promotes religious beliefs or religious philosophies shall not be presented on the government access channel.
6. Promotions – Promotional announcement for City sponsored or sanctioned events will be permitted on the City of Deer Park’s government access channel. However, promotional announcements for events, charities, or outside organizations in which the City has no official interest or sponsorship shall not be permitted.
7. Defamatory Material – Subject matter which is defamatory in nature (i.e. slander) shall not be presented on the government access channel.
8. Indecent or Obscene Content – There shall be no presentation of programming content which, in the opinion of the City manager or his/her designee, is indecent, obscene or illegal.
9. Copyright Restrictions – Programs containing copyrighted materials will not be broadcast without proper copyright authorization. Outside agencies submitting programming for broadcast are responsible for obtaining all necessary copyright clearance and shall hold the City, its officers and agents, harmless in any case of copyright infringement.
10. Liability – The City of Deer Park will not be responsible for the accuracy of any information cablecast over the government access channel that was submitted by outside sources.

Editing Policies

All programs are subject to editing. Editing shall not alter the factual content or overall intent of the material being cablecast. Slides and character-generated information shall be edited to provide clarity and to maximize use of the memory and time available.

Use of Equipment

Use of City-owned equipment and related production facilities and equipment shall be restricted to City use and operation thereof to City employees, officers or approved agents of the City. Loaning of equipment for personal use shall not be permitted or authorized. All programming produced by the City staff shall be deemed property of the City. Programs produced by contract agents of the City shall be the property of the City and shall not be sold or commercially distributed without written authorization of the City.

Sponsorship Policies

The City of Deer Park will accept sponsorship of programming which meets the intended goals and objectives of the government access channel and is consistent with the Sponsorship Guidelines set forth in the agreement between the City and TelVue Virtual Television Networks (see attached). Video footage during a sponsorship acknowledgement may include a logo, name, and/or address of a sponsor.

Record Retention

Cablecast content shall not be considered an official record of the City of Deer Park. All videotapes shall be the property of the City of Deer Park. It shall be a general policy not to retain videotapes of staff produced programs, meetings, and events. At any time, tapes may be reused and the original material erased at the discretion of the government access channel manager.

Use During Emergencies

Government use of the channel during emergencies and disasters as determined by the City Manager has absolute priority over other programming. During such emergencies or disasters, the channel shall be permitted to accept live and/or taped video or audio information from other governmental or non-governmental entities when such announcements are deemed to provide important public information pertaining to the emergency or disaster or other condition requiring protection of the public health, safety and welfare.

SPONSORSHIP GUIDELINES

Overview:

TVTN provides a service to its access channel affiliates in which it provides the automated access channel and content at reduced charges or no charge by locating third party businesses and organizations to underwrite the TVTN costs in return for an on-air acknowledgement of their efforts that are run on the channel (visual and audio announcements of about 15 seconds). Payments are made directly to TVTN, and cover the cost of the TVTN and sponsorship services being provided to the access channel operator (Municipality, school or other).

Conditions of sponsorship

Cable operators, in most cases, will concur with third party sponsorship of channels along with acknowledgements, provided the cable company considers the announcements non-commercial. Municipalities will accept sponsorship of their channels if they meet standards and practices of the community. Therefore TVTN tries to satisfy both groups by locating third parties which meet community standards and satisfy the cable company's non-commercial nature of the channel (though the cable company rarely spells out what that means)

In order to meet these requirements TVTN has set out guidelines that are similar to those followed by non-commercial broadcast stations (which are still regulated by the FCC) We call the guidelines the "PBS (Public Broadcasting System) guidelines" which are summarized and quoted herein.

Sponsorship Acknowledgment Guidelines (PBS):

Permissible:

1. Name of product(s) and/or service(s)
2. Company location
3. Number of years in business
4. E-mail address or website (preferably visually depicted)
5. Telephone number
6. Non-promotional, value-neutral descriptions of products or services
7. Use of well-known mottos or slogans
8. Signature music or appropriate sound effects as a means of enhancing visual and voice-over

9. Use of well-known mottos or slogans that are non-promotional in nature
10. Signature music or appropriate sound effects as a means of enhancing visual and voice-over that are non-promotional in nature

Non-Permissible:

1. Overt promotion of products or services
2. Price reference
3. Call to action or inducement to buy
4. Comparative or qualitative descriptions of products or services
5. Third-party reviews (from newspapers, magazines, etc.)

Standards and Practices

Most channels will not accept sponsorships from the following:

1. Liquor stores or bars or other establishments whose primary business is the sale of alcohol. (Restaurants that serve alcohol excluded, provided alcohol is not mentioned in the acknowledgement.)
2. Any manufacturer or distributor of beer, alcohol or tobacco.
3. Any entity that promotes the use or sale of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia.
4. Adult bookstores, adult movie houses and video dealers or strip clubs or any entity that provides adult-oriented content or products by mail-order or through the internet.
5. Political parties, lobbying groups, political action committees or cause-based organizations.
6. Any illegal or off shore gambling entity or entity that provides information that enables or can be associated with illegal gambling.
7. Manufacturers or sellers of firearms, ammunition, gun repairs, accessories, targets, stun guns, tear or pepper gas dispensers, and rifle and pistol ranges. Retailers who sell other products not firearm-related can be sponsors provided they do not promote firearm related products (for example, department stores and sporting goods stores).