

4 January 2022

**MEMO TO:** Rep. Mary Hooper, Chair, and Members of Vermont House Appropriations Committee

**RE:** FY22 Budget Adjustment Recommendations in Support of Vermont Access Network (VAN) Request

Thank you Madame Chair and members of the Vermont House Appropriations Committee. My name is Melinda Moulton and I am testifying in my capacity as the CEO of Main Street Landing and a Resident of Huntington, Vermont.

For over 21 years I have had the privilege of producing, directing, and leading my "On The Waterfront" Television Show at Town Meeting TV in Burlington Vermont. I have interviewed over 260 Vermonters sharing their stories of selfless service, brilliant creativity, and entrepreneurship...from visionaries to legendaries to change-makers.

This year I am embarking on a new show "Moments with Melinda" where I am interviewing Vermonters doing what they do best - which is to inspire and educate us. This is what Town Meeting TV and public access TV does for Vermont - it educates and provides experiences for its viewers. Because of Town Meeting TV and its "motherhood", CCTV, we stay up-to-date and connected, aware, and engaged.

I have a deep and profoundly strong belief in public access television because it supports our democracy and protects our humanity - I am testifying to support Vermont Access Network's FY22 (Adjustment) and FY23 legislative budget requests to support public, educational and government (PEG) access services in Vermont. Town Meeting TV makes a meaningful difference in the lives of folks living in Chittenden County and my shows are distributed around the State so Town Meeting TV does have a state-wide reach.

Like its counterparts, Town Meeting TV is struggling with the rapid decline of cable revenue (its primary funding source) and steady increase in expenses. While the staff works to generate revenue from local government and philanthropic sources, the rate of cable revenue decline is steady and threatens service delivery.

I strongly support VAN's Legislative request for FY22 Budget Adjustment of \$300,000 as well as their FY23 Request for \$600,000. This bridge funding supports these essential services and I hope you will consider this request as part of your budget process.

Thank you, Madame Chair, for taking my testimony and I hope that the House Appropriations Committee embraces the value of Town Meeting TV's role in keeping citizens abreast of all the civic happenings that deeply affect their lives.

With respect and hope,  
Melinda L. Moulton