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Saturday, March 8, 2003

PV on the Net, Council Breathe Life Back into Channel

By Josh Cohen
News Staff Writer

RPV — For a moment, it appeared as if the proposed Rancho Palos Verdes Educational Channel would black out before it began. But thanks to support from the City Council and PV on the Net, the show will go on.

Tuesday, council members authorized the expenditure of \$45,000 to refurbish a building near City Hall for use as a studio, purchase production equipment and pay for operating costs. In addition, PV on the Net pledged to provide \$50,000 in production and editing equipment.

"PV on the Net has pretty sophisticated video-editing and post-production programs, as well as cameras and lighting," said PV on the Net Director Ted Vegvari. "We can produce a final product with titles and animation. We have about \$50,000 in equipment, and we are going to use that equipment and dedicate it for use at the new facility.

"We're providing the city free services, and if we have out-of-pocket expenses, I'm sure the city would be willing to cover those," he continued. "But overall, we're going to be

trying our best to provide free services to the city."

The brainchild of councilmen John McTaggart and Peter Gardiner, the educational access channel aims to be a big hit with students and interns interested in the fields of video production and editing. Gardiner said local schools and Cox cable don't provide enough opportunities for students interested in those fields.

The idea was embraced by RPV officials but nearly fell by the wayside when council members, reacting to state budget cuts, considered redirecting the project's funding to other services.

But, as the channel's producer and director, Gabriella Holt, originally surmised, the costs to run the operation were much less than previously considered. Initially, start-up figures were estimated at \$125,000, with an additional \$70,000 needed for annual operating costs.

Vegvari said PV on the Net will provide interns to operate production and editing equipment. To recoup costs, PV on the Net will charge businesses and organizations for video production.

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Holt said free or cheap programming is available from many sources, from public service announcements to local colleges, such as Los Angeles Harbor College, which runs its own television studio. Control of the channel's programming is purely the city's.

Vegvari said the channel's start-up date is still "a bit of a gray area," but estimated completion of the studio refurbishment by June. A test broadcast, perhaps featuring a community bulletin board on Channel 33, could hit Peninsula homes by April.

PV on the Net is looking for high school and college-aged interns interested in video production and editing. For information, visit www.palosverdes.com/video-internship.