

Testimony of Jasmine White, CEO of MCM 4/7/26 1:30 pm

GOOD AFTERNOON, COUNCIL PRESIDENT FANI-GONZÁLEZ AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

I AM JASMINE WHITE, CEO OF MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY MEDIA.

I'M HONORED TO BE HERE TODAY REPRESENTING MCM, THE COUNTY'S ONLY NONPROFIT, NON-COMMERCIAL PUBLIC ACCESS MEDIA ORGANIZATION.

OUR MISSION TO USE MEDIA TO CONNECT PEOPLE AND INSPIRE THEM TO LIVE THEIR BEST LIVES IS NO SMALL TASK, BUT IT IS ESPECIALLY CRITICAL AT A TIME WHEN MEDIA IS OFTEN USED TO SOW DIVISION, AMPLIFY HATRED, AND PULL PEOPLE APART.

AT A TIME WHEN MANY MEDIA OUTLETS ARE UNDER PRESSURE AND SHIFTING THEIR PRIORITIES TO RESPOND TO A NATIONAL AGENDA, MCM REMAINS COMMITTED TO TRUSTED HYPERLOCAL JOURNALISM, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AND MEDIA TRAINING THAT DIRECTLY SERVE THIS COMMUNITY.

WE STRONGLY BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF COMMUNITY-BASED STORYTELLING THAT KEEP RESIDENTS INFORMED AND CONNECTED. AS COMMUNICATION NEEDS ACROSS THE COUNTY CONTINUE TO GROW, MCM ENSURES THAT LOCAL

VOICES ARE HEARD AND VITAL PUBLIC INFORMATION REMAINS ACCESSIBLE.

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, I'VE SHARED WITH THIS COUNCIL THAT DECLINING CABLE FRANCHISE REVENUES REQUIRE US TO THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY MEDIA.

THAT REALITY HAS NOT CHANGED. IN FACT, IT HAS BECOME MORE URGENT.

CORD-CUTTING CONTINUES TO REDUCE THE REVENUE THAT HAS HISTORICALLY SUPPORTED MCM'S WORK, EVEN AS THE NEED FOR LOCAL NEWS COVERAGE, DIGITAL ACCESS, AND MULTI-CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT CONTINUES TO GROW.

THAT IS WHY MCM IS FOCUSED NOW MORE THAN EVER ON OUR FUTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY.

WE ARE NOT STANDING STILL.

OUR FY27 WORKPLAN IS A STRONG STEP TOWARD CONSOLIDATING CHANNEL OPERATIONS AND CREATING A MORE MODERN AND EFFICIENT SERVICE MODEL.

I'VE APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK ONE-ON-ONE WITH NEARLY EVERY COUNCILMEMBER TO HEAR YOUR IDEAS AND **THINK TOGETHER** ABOUT THE PATH FORWARD.

THE LEGACY CABLE FUNDING STRUCTURE IS NO LONGER ENOUGH TO MEET THIS MOMENT, BUT MCM IS DOING THE HARD WORK NOW TO BUILD WHAT COMES NEXT.

WE ARE NO LONGER REARRANGING FURNITURE ON THE TITANIC, WE ARE BUILDING A WHOLE NEW BOAT.

THE UNDERREPRESENTATION OF COMMUNITY VOICES AND THE NEED FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ARE NOT JUST MCM ISSUES -

THEY ARE COUNTY ISSUES THAT REQUIRE COMMUNITY-CENTERED SOLUTIONS WITH COUNTY LEADERSHIP INPUT AND SUPPORT.

I AM CONFIDENT THAT MCM IS MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION TO MAKE THE NECESSARY CHANGES THAT REFLECT THE INNOVATION, CREATIVITY, AND RESILIENCE THAT ARE SYNONYMOUS WITH THIS DIVERSE COMMUNITY.

THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL, COMMUNITY MEDIA IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPENDS ON...

INNOVATION,

DIGITAL ACCESS AND EQUITY,

LOCAL RELEVANCE,

AND PREPARING PEOPLE TO CREATE AND PARTICIPATE IN MEDIA RESPONSIBLY.

NEXT YEAR, WE WILL BE CHARTING A NEW COURSE,  
BUT WE ARE DOING SO WITH PURPOSE, VISION, AND  
A DEEP COMMITMENT TO OUR MISSION.

I RESPECTFULLY ASK FOR THE COUNCIL'S  
CONTINUED SUPPORT AS WE WORK TOGETHER TO  
BUILD A MORE SUSTAINABLE, RESPONSIVE, AND  
COMMUNITY-CENTERED FUTURE FOR MEDIA IN  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CONSIDERATION.