

Red River Community Advisory Board Meeting Notes

July 19, 2023 – 12:00noon

ATTENDING

LSUS Chancellor, Robert Smith, Angie White, Jeana Paul-Urena, Andrew Bendursky, Jesse Gillmore, Elton Richie, Kermit Poling, Henry Edwards, Troy Jones

Via Zoom: Joe Kane, Anne Gremillion, Mary Decker

CALL TO ORDER

Jesse G: called the meeting the order at 12:12 pm.

Minutes of May 18, 2023 approved, motioned by John G, 2nd by Elton., no disputes

Introductions:

Introduction of Chancellor:

Kermit introduced and welcomed new LSUS Chancellor Robert Smith

New Board Members

Jesse G: warmly welcomed new board members Jeana Paul-Urena and Angie White.

STAFF REPORTS

Kermit Poling, General Manager

1. Kermit spoke to Chuck Smith's retirement effective July 31, 2023. He explained that interviews were proceeding smoothly for a replacement and that there were several strong candidates. He is considering applicants with experience in news or with news organizations. A retirement reception is planned for July 26th at the station and John Gayle will send information and invitations. John asked if others were willing to assist in underwriting the cost of the reception. Elton Richey and Jesse Gilmore offered to split cost. We some money from Community Foundation, Wed 26 at 7PM.

2. Kermit addressed the storm damage to the transmitter and GPS units of KDAQ which control the operations and the receipt and installation of the replacement equipment. Ultimately all transmitters will be replaced. The transmitter at Dry Prong also went down due to the GPS issue. A new GPS is on order.

New KDAQ transmitter has been installed. GPS signal caused early problems, but we resolved that with a new unit and now the HD signal has four times the power compared to the prior transmitter. Same kind of transmitter (smaller version) in Tyler providing excellent signal. We are in the process of replacing all the transmitters.

Jesse G: Noel Foundation responds well to inclusiveness. Invite them to Chuck's farewell.

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3. Storms knocked out Alexandria GPS antenna and effectively shut down the HD signal. We are installing a new unit within the week to get Alex back on air.
4. KSCL – We are waiting for FTC approval. We have a good source for programming through the Public Radio Exchange. In addition, keep the programming for this station more focused and localized than the HD 4 channel. Only format of its kind in our area.
5. We have Alternative Rock on HD 4 channel with programming from a source called “Snuck.”
6. RRR App: now available. We have several underwriters for the app.
7. Grambling Translator: Kermit briefly reviewed the history of the Translator at Grambling, noting:
 - Staffing issues at Grambling have hindered operations. The university has a problem assigning a competent, dedicated person to keep the engineering and maintenance of the transmitter. However, there is a new interim engineer onboard
 - Grambling had allowed the Louisiana National Guard to conduct military maneuvers on the property where the tower is located and in the course of the maneuvers there was damage to the guide wires securing the tower. The CFO at Grambling was ill-informed, did not understand the obligation to repair the tower, and had not authorized the repairs at this point.
 - We have met with them, but we haven’t been able yet to get the new components installed on their antenna. The antenna is now damaged, and we are waiting for the antenna to be stabilized, which is the responsibility of the university. Consequently, the tower, though currently stabilized has not yet been repaired. Presently the station is off the air.
 - Kermit related that he anticipates the situation will soon resolve and the repairs will be made.

Henry Edwards, Membership Coordinator

Henry advised our summer fund drive was cut short due to the storms that came through and causing major electrical black-outs for several day in the Shreveport Bossier area

He advised New T-Shirts are in and will be offered at the \$120.00 contribution level

Thanks to all who helped with the Fund Drive.

OLD BUSINESS

Jesse G: Friends of RRR? Has this been filed? What is the status?

Anne G: We may already have such an entity.

There was discussion of the Friends of Red River Radio Non-profit. Efforts to create the organization had apparently and inexplicably stalled. Troy Jones pointed out there was a previous non-profit formed for this reason, that was no longer active. Troy did a quick check of the secretary of state website confirmed that a non-profit corporation named “Friends of Red River Radio, had indeed been formed, but was dormant. Further inspection of the records on file with the Secretary of State indicate the corporation was formed on May 28, 1996, but voluntarily dissolved on February 17, 1997.

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Elton noted that it may be easier and more expeditious to simply revive this corporation than to try to create a new entity from whole cloth. A copy of the Louisiana Secretary of State records is attached to these minutes.

Jesse G: Great. I will look into reactivating that entity.

NEW BUSINESS

Jesse spoke about the need for the CAB to assist station staff with fundraising and donations.

Jesse G: How can the board help with the fund drives. Calls diminishing. Can we get new voices.

Anne G: Why is this happening?

Kermit P: It's true that call ins are down across the country. NPR cut 10% of their staff and recently has been repeating news stories. Kermit noted that there is a drop in donation activity across all public radio. He further noted that now that we have the RRR App up and functioning, that efforts will now be organized to monetize the App.

Anne G: The Baton Rouge Advocate has come to our area and I noticed the Community Foundation supports the Advocate. Perhaps RRR can help facilitate a cooperative agreement with the Advocate the way the public radio stations in Texas are working in conjunction with the Texas Standard.

Elton: Should we re-activate a sub-committee or create one to support development.

Jeana P-U: Can we better push donations via the app, making it more present on the app as opposed to the small donate button? Can we push fund drives via social media?

Troy: When you come on air, tell people via your social media.

Mary D: Can we get out to the outlying communities more often with in-person visits from staff and board members?

John G: Program Committee or Content Development Committee is needed to support staff efforts.

Jesse G: We will create or revive the needed committees and send an email to the board soliciting participants.

Kermit also discussed the possibility of pulling news stories in from The Texas Standard.

There was further general discussion of ideas for increasing station funding through events or social media.

Jesse advised that we have several standing committees that we need to revive and staff. He advised he would send an email soliciting committee membership.

Jesse made a motion to adjourn and Elton 2nd the motion which passed.

Jesse G: motion to adjourn. 2nd by Elton. No disputes.

Next Meeting Schedule for September 21, 2023