WFIT Community Advisory Board Meeting
March 25, 2024
WFIT Studios
Absent: Nancy Gardner

After Introductions, General Manager Stephen Yasko presented an overview of the station. He explained the purpose of the Community Advisory Board including the requirements for such a board from The Corporation for Public Broadcasting. He explained that CAB members are ambassadors to the community able to bring back specific and general comments about the station, the community and what the needs the community has that can be filled by WFIT.

Mr. Yasko then went over the latest ratings for the station. He explained how the numbers are generated by Neilson and talked about how these are some of the highest audience estimates the station has received. He was asked if taking Democracy Now! Off the schedule had any affect on these numbers. He explained that the 9 am hour is generating more listening with music in that hour.

He then explained the budget and how stations receive funding from CPB. He explained the stations highest expenses including payroll and the NPR Programming Fee. There were several questions about the size of the station and if the signal area could be expanded. He explained that this would be difficult to do and would require a large amount of money to either buy a station and could incur large legal bills as well.

Mr. Yasko went on to talk about the fund drive and that it exceeded goal by 8%. A discussion ensued about how to attract younger listeners and more first-time members. While everyone acknowledged that WFIT's current programming is good and generates both listening and revenue, there were questions and a discussion about integrating programming and music aimed at younger listeners.

Questions about how the stations endowment is funded and how much it generates for station use. Mr. Yasko explained how endowments are handled at the University and how funds from membership drives are diverted to the endowment.

The group agreed that hiring a new membership manager would help detangle the station's gift processing and membership programs.

Mr. Yasko then talked about how the station engages with the community including the Sonic Waves Festival, the station's commitment to Space Coast Musicians especially thorough Keller Radio. A discussion ensued about how WFIT could incorporate more local news into the schedule perhaps by hiring a reporter or two. Mr. Yasko talked about how Brevard is a news dessert with very little in-depth local news present in print or on the air. He talked about how much it might coast to add news staff and that this would have to be grant funded as the station operates on a small budget that doesn’t allow for extra positions at this time.
The discussion turned to programming. Mr. Yasko talked about investing in new hardware and software to reduce on-air errors and other technical glitches which the group said was noticeable from time to time. Consistency of presentation was also discussed as there were noticeable differences between all the programs.

A discussion of branding and awareness grew out of these questions and how to make sure that all of Brevard County knows about WFIT weather or not they are heavy listeners to the station. Mr. Yasko explained the station is just starting to engage in strategic planning discussions to pursue this goal. It was also talked about how to get WFIT’s staff more integrated with the greater public radio community of stations so staff members could be better informed of best practices and what strategies and tactics are successful at other stations.

The group committed to introducing Mr. Yasko and WFIT to a wider group of businesspeople and individuals to grow underwriting revenue and major donor revenue. The group would like to meet even more times a year with the next meeting taking place in mid to late May.

Submitted:
Stephen Yasko
General Manager