

**NPR Illinois
Community Advisory Board Meeting
June 8, 2021 Meeting Notes**

ATTENDEES

Deanie Brown, Sean Crawford, Jamie Dunn-Thomason, Randy Eccles, Bob Gallo, Nice Garcia, Bill Holland, Mario Jimenez, Regina Kovach, Molly Lamb, Lisbeth Leanos, Raychel McBride, Adam Porter, Kent Redfield, Chuck Scholz, Richard Schuldt, George Van Dusen and Karen Witter.

Chair Karen Witter welcomed everyone to the Zoom meeting. Minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

CORINNE WOOD

Karen Witter reflected on longtime board member Corinne Wood and her service. She encouraged the Advisory Board to donate to NPR Illinois in honor of her.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

Jamey Dunn-Thomason, Chair of the Nominating Committee, shared the nominees. Natalie Beck, Decatur IL - CEO of The Community Foundation of Macon County, Kelly Glass, Champaign, IL - Editor for Courier Newsroom, Nikita Richards, Bloomington IL - Community Relations Manager for the city of Bloomington, Christina M. Shutt, Springfield IL - Executive Director at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. The proposed new members were elected to the board for three year terms beginning July 1, 2021. This was an official board action moved, seconded, and approved by the board. Additionally, two members, Cindi Canary and Karen Witter, agreed to serve another term and they were re-elected as part of the slate of new members.

Nabih Elhaj recently resigned from the board due to other commitments. Karen thanked Nabih for his service. Raychel McBride announced that she will be moving out of state and is resigning from the board later this summer.

New officers were also elected. Karen Witter's term as Chair expires July 1. Megan Pressnall, Vice-Chair, is unable to serve as Chair due to family issues. Bethany Jaeger agreed to serve one year as Chair, and Adam Porter agreed to serve as Vice-Chair, and Karen Witter will serve on the executive committee as Immediate Past Chair. The board voted to elect Bethany Jaeger as Chair and Adam as Vice-Chair for one year terms beginning July 1, 2021.

Raychel McBride commented that several of the new board members would be good additions to the DEI committee.

It was agreed that Jamey Dunn-Thomason will send CAB members bios of all the new members.

DEI COMMITTEE

Randy updated the Advisory Board about the DEI initiative. He stated that the committee will be meeting every third Tuesday of each month at 5:15 pm. The committee consists of CAB members Mario Jimenez, Monique Garcia, and Raychel McBride along with NPR Illinois staff members Bea Bonner, Mary Hansen, Maureen McKinney, and Randy Eccles. The committee will review a quarterly survey of staff to gauge station culture.

The UIS legal department asserted that the university 's diversity statement should be the station's and that changes would have to be worked through with the university. He stated that NPR updated their diversity source list. The committee will be responsible to give the CAB an update what has been done each quarter.

UNIVERSITY FUNDING CHANGES

Randy Eccles and Molly Lamb provided final status of the three-year transition plan which will require the station to be free of UIS cash support in five years, receiving \$100,000 less each year from the university. He stated that it is signed off. Randy said that during this period and after, major gifts and planned giving will be critically important and the UIS Office of Advancement - Vice Chancellor Jeff Lorber and Assistant Vice Chancellor Lisa Whelpley will assist with meeting the increasing fundraising requirements of the station during the station's transition toward financial independence. Advisory Board members expressed their serious concerns and questions related to moving away from University Board funding in a very short period. They stated that they are not happy at all that the station is the only unit that University is cutting the funds from. They also indicated that this plan should have been shared with the CAB by the university before it was already decided.

Bob Gallo has deep concern about the lack of communication with AARP, a major NPR IL supporter, about the elimination of state funding.

Members discussed how the cuts relate to staffing – a concern about the number of reporters. Randy indicated at peak, there were 8 journalists three years ago, and now there are 4.5 FTEs. After candidates are interviewed this month for a second statehouse reporter there will be 5.5 journalist FTEs.

FUNDRAISING

Nice Garcia shared the updates about the spring drive. She stated that the drive concept *-For every \$300 donation to NPR Illinois from a donor during the drive, NPR Illinois will provide 10 complimentary announcements to the nonprofit the donor designates to share their mission on-air-* has received a very positive feedback from the community and appreciation from all the non-profits. She also stated that although the final amount raised would not be clear before the end of the fiscal year, it is expected to be around \$420k.

Board Giving – Karen emphasized that 100% board participation is a “powerful statement” that helps in fundraising efforts. Nice stated that current CAB giving for FY2021 is at 62% and she will be contacting the board members for the full participation.

COMPLIANCE

Randy stated that CAB is charged by NPR Illinois' Corporation for Public Broadcasting Community Service Grant to report to the UI Board of Trustees once a year about how it is performing in programming, serving the community, and major policy decisions. It can include the DEI issues, launch of Community Voices, content of the station. Karen recommended that the Executive Committee draft a letter and send it for reviews to the board before forwarding through the administration.

The CAB discussed issues to include this annual report. Given the significant concerns about the elimination of state cash support, the CAB will address this issue in its recommendations. Chair Karen Witter asked CAB members to send her any specific comments they recommended be addressed in the letter by Monday, June 14, 2021. She agreed to work with the rest of the Executive Committee on a draft which will be sent to the full board for review and approval. The goal is to complete this by the end of June.

NEXT MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for September 7, but Deannie Brown noted that is during Rosh Hashanah, and consideration should be given to rescheduling the meeting for another date. The next meeting is now rescheduled for September 14, 2021, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.