

## MINUTES

of the



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

**Friday, August 11, 2023**

via Zoom

**Present:** John McLaughlin, Karmen Bryant, Jeremy Steele, Liz Lambert, Mike Pacheco, Shane O'Neal

**Absent:** Jennifer Ferro, Jeff Pope, Christian Patry

**Staff:** Elise Pepple, Travis Pope, Elena Morlock, Yvonne Lujan, Carlos Morales, Travis Bubenik

### 1. Minutes & Financials

John calls meeting to order at 10:08.

Jeremy moves and Liz seconds to approve May meeting minutes. Motion passes unanimously at 10:09.

Moved to financials at 10:09. Elise begins discussion about financials. We are ahead of our expenses in most of the bigger categories. Q2 expenses for broadcasting were \$30K ahead of what was planned. Studio expenses were ahead of deficits. Expenses are exceeding budget. We are still \$170K ahead in overall support even with us being below in membership and donations. Importantly we are going to come in just a bit behind overall revenue. We will come more into balance at the end of the year. We might be \$20K over in program and expenses. Jeremy discussed one thing that caught his attention, looking at the balance sheet, there is a year over year increase in credit card balance and accounts payable. This can be more of a timing issue of when expenses come in. Showing \$40K more compared to last year. All in all still in a great position from a liquidity standpoint. Elise discusses there is possible a paradigm shift across the industry where grant based income is going to slowly take the lead over membership and major gifts. John motioned and Shane seconded motion to approve financials. Motion passed unanimously at 10:18

## 2. Station Update

At 10:18 Elise begins station update. In the industry we are behind in terms of how we function, the model is 55 yrs old. With PRX, we are being creative about content, but also what should a station look like - enter Station of the Future. How do we as a station function in these times and for the future. Elsie starts a slideshow at 10:20. PRX came out in June. We trend younger than most stations - part of what we are seeing in public media is that there are shortcomings. ie burnout, capacity issues, programming that doesn't meet its audience. We do believe in the power of public radio - some ones are capacity for storytelling, to reach people's feelings, to be dependable - it is still a free public service. What is our unique value as a station? We break traditional models, safe space for innovation. Local news, national news, music. What should we be doing more and less of? We can make long term plans about how the station can best function. Next we will be learning from our audience why we are important to them - audience survey plus series of interviews. PRX will interview listeners and non-listeners. M4B to launch at end of the month. How we make something creative narratively but also from a membership standpoint. Annie, Carlos, Zoe working on so far from care about reproductive access in WTX - and a bigger question on how we produce content for the station.

Elise opens floor for questions beginning at 10:26. Jeeremy asked if this is something you see going beyond a collaboration with PRX - is this a beta that we could expand beyond? Elise stated we are in a year long partnership to come up with the strategies we want to use. Jeremy asked if there was some additional pinned up funding that we could access as this grows? Elise explained she thinks that's one of the experiments right now. We received huge funding for studio initiatives. PRX works with tons of stations and our big grants are Houston and Dallas based foundations. Those foundations aren't funding the local stations, they only fund MPR. What do we learn from that in our future approach to content and fundraising? John asked how is the integration and collaboration with the team in Marfa - how involved are folks with what they are working on. Elise stated we all met with PRX, we were all in the room to discuss and design together as a group. PRX working with both podcast teams and working with management of the station of the future. How do we want to think about a "visitor experience" and how they might interact with the station. There are different teams meeting with PRX and we'll come back together with what we learn. Shane asked what's the timeline? When will the station open again? Elise stated the station is open again. The last phase of PRX is to share what we do with the rest of public radio. PRX collaboration is an almost year long partnership. Last month she was asked by CPB to talk about the future of public broadcasting with other media CEOs.

Elise transitions to fundraising at 10:33. Big initiative but we are also trending down on revenue from M2M. That is okay because we just wanted to engage our supporters. We have some grants which are being wrapped up. Travis and Elise are evaluating how to grow revenue for the station. We are working on hiring a Development Director and we have some great candidates. There are currently three candidates who all have expertise related to development which will be essential to keeping our organization in a strong revenue position. Elise also

shared there will be an internal DEI staff survey. Our management team reflects what public media leadership should look like. We will conduct similar surveys with the board and DJs.

Travis starts at 10:37. In Q2 and Q3, heavy focus has been on operations. One reason we are trending higher in expenses is because broadcasting costs are coming up. How do we prevent small things from becoming big things? We have one team in Midland to take care of KXWT and another team for the rest of the area. In the fall we have some networking changes. We are making sure we have greater security and better reliability for our towers. KRTS is the one we own and we may need to paint or add lights to the tower. We are working on restarting and upgrading our equipment. Elise states that Travis brings expertise to systems and broadcasting. He has responded to all of the needs we have addressed. Painting of the tower and tower lights are a priority but board approval is needed. We can either paint or add LED lights. Jeremy states we are in a good place right now for this project. Jeremy states he would advocate that if there is something we can do to reduce time and effort we should really look into it. He personally likes the LED light idea. He will defer to others on aesthetics. One of the things to consider is also the dark skies initiative for the area. We need to get a bid to get this done. LED solution is probably more cost effective than painting.

Elise covers upcoming events - TransPecos and now Marfa Live from Midland. Shane suggests Centennial Park as a venue for Marfa Live from Midland.

Board moves to executive session at 10:49