



Emerging Leaders Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 9, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Chair

Date

Members present: Yu Chen, Lauren Greene, Zoe Hardy-Rappmund, Shanise Harris, Drew Lusher, Rachel Martin, Sara McCrea, Serena Murry-Webb, Tameika Serrano, Amanda Shortt, Janae Thompson, Shawana Ward (Virtual), John Wiley

Staff present: Kelsey Backe

Meeting was called to order at 6:07PM

- Tam opened the meeting, checking in with the Board Members on the new meeting structure.
- John shared an ice breaker, what's lighting you up? What's something, big or small, that has been energizing you lately?
- Committee Chairs each shared status updates since the last meeting:
 - Yu provided an update on the social committee:
 - The meet up at Nando's prior to the June Story Exchange event was well attended.
 - There will be an open social at Elation following the Board Meeting.
 - Planning a picnic at the Pogoda on Sunday, August 24th – they anticipate sending information out over the next few weeks.
 - Evaluating volunteer opportunities in October/Early November. Board Members were encouraged to share any suggestions.
 - Zoe gave an update on Play Your Heart Out:
 - The application deadline is July 25th – Zoe will be resending the information with details and requests Board Members send with their network to spread the word.
 - Zoe will be following up with a day/time to review the submissions – all are invited.
 - Lauren shared an update on the Membership Committee:
 - She will be touching base with Kelsey and Tam to develop key points for recruiting new members.
 - Tam updated the group on the Handmade Goods Event:
 - Curate will be hosting an event at the Annex (potentially), which this would complement. Once the event is approved to move forward, a committee will be put together for more planning.
 - John provided a Story Exchange committee update:
 - The final Story Exchange in VA Beach went well and there is enthusiasm for the direction of future events.
 - John will be setting up a Committee meeting over the next few weeks to review next year and potentially plan an Eastern Shore event in late October/Early November.
 - The video from the Norfolk event has been edited – 13 videos total – which will be available on WHRO+ soon. These will include a number on the end card, encouraging people to call and leave their stories.



- Kelsey shared current WHRO Station Updates
 - The first listening sessions in Newport News and Williamsburg happened today (7/9). These are hosted at libraries and are an opportunity to just talk to people about issues that are concerning them, what's happening in their communities, what they'd like to hear more about.
 - Play Your Heart Out has been heavily featured on the radio and TV.
 - Upcoming events:
 - We the People at Yorktown Battlefield on Saturday, September 20th
 - Special Screening of Against the Current at the Hermitage on Tuesday, September 23rd
 - WHRO+ will be going live starting July 16th!
 - It is believed that \$1.8M in federal funding will be rescinded. Leadership has a 3-pronged approach – identifying large donors, dipping in to the Endowment if needed, and making cuts. Everything is on the table, however half of all current station funding is restricted (journalism, education, etc.)
 - Hiring a part-time Community Relations Coordinator and Donor Relations Officer and a Major Gifts Officer in Williamsburg.
- The members shared personal and professional updates for the group.

Adjournment 7:01 PM - Next Meeting September 10, 2025

Upcoming meetings

- September 10, 2025
- December 10, 2025