

MSPR CAB Minutes 11-19-25

Prepared by Savannah Jackson

Members Present: Savannah Jackson, Alexis Mathews, Rianna Robinson, Itzá Zavala-Garrett, Lousie Mason, Gwen Akers

Members Absent: James Masterson, Adrian Swain, Robert Boram, Tim Simpson

Also Present: Paul Hitchcock, Allison Caudill

1. Welcome at 5:30pm
2. Guest Comments
  - a. Allison Caudill- Thanked members of the board for their volunteer leadership. Recognized that the radio station has impacted the members of the board, campus, and community. Emphasized that we will continue to provide quality programming and enrich the lives of students in face of uncertainty and challenges.
3. Old Business
  - a. CAB Meeting Minutes
    - i. Spelling correction: Host of Bluegrass Diversion is Becki Alfrey.
    - ii. Motion to approved by Rianna Robinson. Seconded by Lousie Mason. Unanimous.
  - b. Quarterly Program Report
    - i. Motion to Approve by Louise Mason. Seconded by Itzá Zavala-Garrett. Unanimous.
  - c. CPB
    - i. Currently operating on a minimal staff around 30; essentially is closed. Funding has ceased, and they are currently tying up all loose ends.
  - d. Public Media Company Bridge Fund
    - i. No update yet; Paul is expecting to hear from them in the coming weeks.
  - e. Transmitter
    - i. Quotes will be updated after settling the bridge fund. They will be looking at various models similar to those discussed at last month's meeting. Hoping to have something in place by July 1, 2026, depending on funding.
    - ii. MSPR is currently broadcasting via their second backup transmitter.
  - f. WMKY 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary
    - i. Benefit Concert- A benefit concert organized by Robinson was held on October 5<sup>th</sup> at the Stargazer Lounge. Four-hour concert with four

bands. Numerous local businesses donated gift cards for raffles. Raised an extra \$200 from raffle. Roughly 150 attendees; total \$1552 raised.

- ii. Open House Oct 18<sup>th</sup>. Well attended.
- iii. Social Media- 55 total social media posts sharing 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary information and photos.

#### 4. New Business

- a. CAB Business 2026 Officers
  - i. Chair- Alexis Mathews.
  - ii. Vice Chair- Robinson suggested that this be tabled until February. Unanimously approved.
  - iii. Secretary- Savannah Jackson volunteered. Unanimously approved.
- b. MSPR Fall Fundraiser
  - i. Most they've ever raised in any fundraiser time frame. Largely a grassroots effort and supported by alumni gifts.
  - ii. Mason emphasized the importance of the station on the community shown by these numbers; due to the precarious position public radio has been placed in, many people are stepping up to support it.
  - iii. Robinson discussed stories that emphasized the importance of radio for disseminating information, particularly in crises, demonstrated through various individual testimonies she utilized in her research presentation for Justice Festival 2025.
  - iv. Caudill said that the Foundation will continue annual fundraising efforts in ALRD's plans. They are looking at new recurring gifts for increased sustainability. MSPR's fund was one of the most popular for new recurring gifts in recent fundraising efforts.
- c. Holiday Specials (Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas)
- d. Programming and Operations

Paul discussed how the radio wants to emphasize the student experience and supporting students' experiential education.

- i. Associated Press: MSPR will be dropping their membership. They spent \$10,000 yearly to utilize Associated Press, which is mostly national articles.
- ii. Memberships: African American Public Radio Consortium, Public Radio Exchange, WFMT Radio Network. The radio will keep their membership for these because of free weekend shows that come from these services.

iii. Programs: Jazz Happening Now, Jazz Network, Latino USA, The World. WMKY is looking at replacing these programs to cut costs. One potential replacement is BBC World News.

iv. NPR: Potentially replacing NPR with BBC World News. All Things Considered and other regular NPR programs would be replaced. BBC World News would allow more 24/7 programming/less repeats. Paul also said that NPR doesn't provide new yearly holiday specials.

There was a discussion of American Public Media vs NPR:

1. Getting rid of Associated Press and NPR would save \$96,000. This exceeds the money that WMKY used to get from CPB and would be a very fiscally responsible decision.
2. We will stay members through Sept 30<sup>th</sup> 2026.
3. Some of the Public Radio Satellite System (PRSS) programming will be moving over to Public Media Infrastructure due to CPB changes.
4. Transitioning away from membership with NPR will give WMKY more discretion on what to include on their website. This can enhance student experiences by giving student media more internal discretion.
5. Some programming changes will be rolled out in February.
6. Caudill emphasized the importance of feedback from the CAB in how messaging will go out about these changes to ensure transparency and effectiveness. PR planning, donor messages, press releases, etc.
7. Mason said that she is glad we have this option so that we can be more feasible in being open for the long term.
8. Robinson said that every small rural station is having to make these decisions; she thinks BBC is an equal or greater news product than NPR and we should communicate that.
9. We are the only station in Kentucky on the list of 150 stations most likely to close.
10. A PR plan will be brought to the board in February so that we are careful in how we roll this out.

v. Student Internships

1. Want to create more opportunities for students. They want to be more project-driven so students can own their completed projects, such as feature work and storytelling instead of just newscasts.

2. This would focus more on internships and practicum style experiences instead of work studies. They would do everything from the idea to production to posting and own their final project. This would help students develop a portfolio. They also wouldn't have to wait to post like with newscasts.
3. We want to focus on MSU's campus as well as Rowan and surrounding counties. More events, raw audio, etc.
4. This shift helps the university from an academic affairs perspective by offering more interdisciplinary opportunities and expanding the LevelUp program.
5. The station may cut down on student staffing to save up the budget. The tentative idea is to cut the paid student budget by 2/3rds.
6. Caudill recognized Paul for his forward-thinking leadership.

5. Open Discussion
  - a. Paul Hitchcock recognized Robinson for her leadership. Robinson said it was her privilege and honor to serve as chair of the board and give back during this time of crisis. She credits the radio station with the beginning and foundations of her career.
  - b. Zavala-Garrett said that MSU LevelUp translations will continue, and that the Spanish Club will also be collaborating with the public library.
6. Closing Comments
7. Next Meeting

January the 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm

Motion to adjourn by Savannah Jackson, Seconded by Louise Mason. Unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm