



**Community Advisory Council  
Strategic Planning  
Thursday June 18, 2020, 3:00 pm  
Virtual Locations**

**Members Present:**

Ron Becker, Pam Horne, Beth Fitzsimmons, Bill Northway, Walter Muellenhagen, Tom Berg, Larry Mawby, John McDonald, Nancy Hoagland, Susan Kettering, Walter Muellenhagen, Isaiah Wunsch, Margaret Pierson, Marica Curran, Isaiah Wunsch

Members not present:

Elara Coleman, Stepie Luyt, Sarah Helge,

**Staff Present:**

Peter Payette, John Roddy, Gretchen Carr, Amanda Sewell,  
Andrew Buchholz, Katie Schlomer

- I. Peter prompted the attendees to think further into the mission of IPR which is to *connect people in northern Michigan to the world and the world to life in northern Michigan*. IPR does this in the following:
  - A. Classical IPR ignites passion for music among people of all ages by celebrating, music, musicians and the INterlochen experience.
  - B. IPR news deepens the public understanding of our world with compelling journalism and storytelling known for depth, accuracy and originality.
  - C. IPR teaches people to craft their own powerful stories and programs to bring new voices to public media.
- II. Peter provided an overview of our strategic challenges facing IPR which includes expanding and growing our audience, developing content that connects with digital audiences, growing our revenue from 1.6 million to 2 million annually, securing long term leadership for News, provide adequate staffing for Classical,

develop consistent points of involvement and deep interaction with our regional community, and determine our commitment to FM and fulfill it. A series of comments and questions preempted Peter's agenda for a formalized discussion. Beth Fitzsimmons mentioned the opportunity to leverage music education over the radio. Ron Becker asked what was the impact of IPR's ability to generate revenue? Marcia Curan commented on seeing advertising of WCMU in Traverse City. Nancy Hoagland inquired whether or not IPR was able to engage with WCMU in conversation. Peter informed the group that he has been active on the State level with the Michigan Broadcasters Association and to be more deliberate on collaboration, coordination and shared service. Peter suggested that a conversation between an ICA Trustee and a CMU regent could be helpful in understanding CMU's decision to encroach on the footprint of IPR. Public Radio Company (<https://www.publicmedia.co/>) would be contracted to analyze the potential for further broadcasting expansion to serve Point Betsie to Manistee.

- III. Peter introduced six discussion points for Classical and split the group into chat rooms. It was requested that the groups respond to the following statements on a 1-5 scale, "5" being strongly agree through a "1" being strongly disagree.
- A. *Classical Music has a limited public appeal and there is not much that IPR can do about that.*
    - 1. Many members responded that exposure to classical music at an early age results in forming an appreciation early on. Because of the well-funded music program at TCAPS, the region's largest public school system, many felt that the exposure to classical music was above average. Average response was a 3-5, neutral to strongly agree.
  - B. *Northern Michigan has the potential to be home to a much more vibrant classical music scene, more like what we see with many indie festivals.*
    - 1. Average response was 3-5, neutral to strongly agree.
  - C. *IPR would present concerts in non-traditional venues to reach people who would otherwise not encounter such music such as the potential performances on Front St. I think this could grow the audience for classical IPR*
    - 1. Members overall agreed strongly and felt there was a good opportunity here. Average response was 4-5, agree to strongly agree.

*D. It is important to present work like that to the public, whether or not it attracts new listeners to Classical IPR.*

1. Many members felt it was important to be fiscally responsible while exposure was very important. Average response was 3, neutral.

*E. Many people just don't know about Classical IPR.*

1. Many felt that education aligns with the ICA mission. We need more data to determine this. Some felt this was due to a generational thing. Average response was a 3, neutral

*F. Ordinary marketing could improve that.*

1. Specifics are important. Who are you trying to reach. Going outdoors is a good thing to try especially during the pandemic. Marketing research is important according. Average response was a 3, neutral.

IV. Discussion continued with the same format for News and Journalism

*A. Northern Michigan is well served by strong newspapers, TV stations and a digital news service in TC and there is not great need for more expensive local journalism.*

1. We need to keep doing what we are doing. There is a need for more local news. There is a need, specifically Native American and Environmental. IPR has done excellent local reporting that is not covered in public papers. Specifically high water levels, pandemic and environment. Are there ways we can leverage national stories and how it is happening locally. Average response was a 1 - Strongly disagree.

*B. IPR should specialize in a few issues and report deeply on those and leave many areas of coverage to other new sources*

1. It needs to remain in depth. We need to cover all news. All local news matters. IPR is the go to source for environmental reporting. Average response was a 2, disagree.

*C. I identify as a resident of northern Michigan and care about what is happening in places like Cheyboygan, the U.P. and Cadillac because of my affiliation with the entire region.*

1. Average response was a 4, agree.

*D. People who are not seasonal residents but spend a number of weeks in the region annually would be interested in high-quality journalism*

1. People who are not seasonal/number of weeks... people who are 'on vacation' care about the news. Average response was agree, 4.

*E. Panel discussions, public lectures and other types of event journalism are not worth doing, Just produce more news.*

1. Many felt this was worth doing. Average response was a 2, disagree.

*F. IPR should put more resources into digital products like podcasts and social media even if it means less news over the radio.*

1. What are the costs? Would this be the change to include younger audiences over time? Many were unsure - 3.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.  
Draft minutes submitted by Gretchen Carr