

WRKF BOARD MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 3, 2019 5:00 PM
LAMAR ADVERTISING 3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

ATTENDANCE

Board Members Josh Hollins (on the phone), Ross Reilly, Jenee Slocum, Len Aparcar, Mary Kay Carleton (on the phone), Stephanie Tomlinson, Liz Hampton, Rod Naquin, Liz Mangham, Kenneth Noojin, Bob Ritter, Michael Adams, Lance Porter, Julie Baxter Payer, Joe Coussan, and WRKF employees Paul Maasen and Barbara Clark.

Board Chairman Rodd Naquin called the meeting to order at 5:16pm.

PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Stafford Wood moved approval of the previous Board Meeting Minutes (from January 23, 2019 Board meeting), Stephanie Tomlinson seconded. Previous minutes were approved without objection.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no reports from the Personnel or Finance Committees.

Events/Founders Luncheon Committee Report: Stafford Wood

- Reported that Mara Liasson will be the Founders Luncheon Speaker on September 13, 2019.
- Discussed Founders Award; proposed that Mary Ann Sternberg be the recipient of this award, as the award recognizes significant contribution throughout many years, time, talent and treasure given; and that Mary Ann more than qualifies by virtue of her service. By unanimous consent the Board approved that the 2019 WRKF Founders Award should go to Mary Ann Sternberg.
- Suggested that the Board consider adding a second award at the annual luncheon: the Cultural Impact Award, since WRKF is about news *and* entertainment; that bringing in some cultural aspect to the luncheon might recognize classical music listeners' interest as we move towards that classical music space. Discussed that Stafford would write a definition for a Cultural Leadership award, and send around for review and possible nominees.
- Stafford presented that there would not be a head table this coming year.
- There was a discussion of possible rates for sponsorship and tickets, with levels to be: Individual (\$100), and Member (\$80).
- Presented that there would again be table and sponsor letters for signing by board members to invite people to purchase tickets and come to the luncheon.
- There will be twelve (12) tables for VIP, and 30 standard tables, with a maximum of 42 tables, except that if we have sold 42 tables in six (6) weeks, we could add a third room.
- Stafford reported that board member Josh Hollins volunteered to be co-chair this year, and chair the event next year.
- WRKF General Manager Paul Maasen added that Mara Liasson was awaiting final clearance from NPR to speak at the event.

Membership Committee Report: Kenneth Noojin

- Kenneth Noojin noted that the committee had met in February, discussed various events, and focused on the WRKF Spring Member Pledge drive going on right now.
- Kenneth noted that the board member matching fund had yielded very good results, raising over \$2700 dollars from board members alone, inspiring \$6100 in matching contributions.

- General Manager Paul Maasen noted that the station was hovering around 60% of our donors being sustaining members, whereas the national average is about 45% of a station's donors are sustainers. Noted that giving was about 5-10% soft right now, with other stations across the country experiencing a similar trend, perhaps due to tax season.
- WRKF had a goal of seeing 100 new sustaining members during this WRKF Spring Pledge Drive, and currently during the drive had about 75 so far. Discussed how the sustainer member model is a rather new model of support for public radio.
- Noted that the national average is that 5% of listeners make a donation. Board members noted that people give because they are asked, and discussed how Giving Tuesday in the fall had been pretty successful; discussed Give NOLA day, an effort WWNO (sister station) was involved in.
- Board requested that updated member numbers, sustainers, new members etc. after the end of this Spring pledge drive.
- Stafford discussed Google ads, the possibility of a digital year-long advertising campaign, where when you go to wrkf.org, you get an ad saying you should be a sustaining member.
- Board member Len Apgar raised the question of whether we ever do an email/direct appeal to sustaining members to request that they increase their giving, with a form suggesting amounts perhaps, discussing the idea of a board matching pledge that would be available for sustaining members who increase their support.
- Kenneth Noojin noted that listener meet-ups would continue quarterly, and encouraged board members and the station to ask people to bring a friend.

Executive Committee Report: Rodd Naquin

- Rodd reported that the committee had met once since the last board meeting, mainly focused on ideas for the founders' luncheon speaker choice.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Paul Maasen

- Update regarding NPR News HUB—LA, MS, AL: Stations are in contact with WRKF on-air personalities such as Cokie Roberts to help NPR and local stations to approach donors, hoping to secure significant funding over the next few months.
- NPR is looking possibly to fund two (2) reporters in Louisiana, with Managing Editors from NPR helping to produce stories. NPR wants three years of funding before beginning the project; noted that this region of the country is very important in healthcare reporting.
- Noted that Regional News Director Patrick Madden is starting May 1st, coming from WAMU in Washington, with his two strongest reporting areas being in politics and investigative reporting. He will be based in New Orleans, overseeing all news personnel from both WWNO and WRKF.
- Noted that May 30, 2019, David Folkenflick will be here in Baton Rouge from 8:30am to noon to speak at a donor breakfast event for WRKF. On Thursday evening, May 30th, he'll be doing OnPoint live in New Orleans at the National WWII Museum, 75th anniversary of D-Day; will record the show before a live audience and it will air the next day as the second hour of On Point for two (2) hours.
- Noted that WRKF's Capitol Access program is doing "dailies" from the capitol, with an official intern from the Manship school included in the mix, and with an office on Press Row in the capitol; reports in the morning, and with spot news coverage for things that develop during the day at the session; also with a Friday wrap-up of the week in the afternoon, and content produced most days morning and afternoon during the session.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Paul Maasen

- 1st Quarter report: Reported that revenue is up 30% over last year, although the membership drive was done a little later last year, so numbers may get closer. Complimented underwriting (Barbara Clark) on increasing that support.
- Programming fees are lower this year than last year, but some of this year's programming fees fell into the first quarter last year, so all in all fairly even.
- Finalizing agreement on NPR Fees owing to be up to date on those.

TRANSMITTER/TRANSMITTER BUILDING/TOWER UPDATE: Paul Maasen

- Awaiting written agreement proposal from LPB to partner with them on their tower; there would be a LETA appropriation for maintenance to the tower for the FY20 fiscal year.
- Montel transmitters is doubling its warranty from 4 years to 8 years, if we order by April 12th, and so we will take advantage of that. Working with a couple possible engineers for the installation.

NEW BUSINESS: Paul Maasen

- Paul Maasen informed the board that there was an opportunity to purchase an FM translator in the area.
- When the station buys the new transmitter, it will allow WRKF to do its HD broadcasts and provide full-time classical service on HD2, but some people would need a special HD radio to receive the broadcast, so a nice combination would be HD and a standard FM broadcast option for the classical music.
- Noted that FCC recently changed the rules so that HD2 broadcast can be rebroadcast on FM translator (a signal on regular FM band, but with low power transmitter, so called a translator). Covers a limited area, but doesn't cost as much as a station would cost.
- The thought would be to move this new translator to WRKF's tower site, which is a little higher than its current location and would give a little more coverage area (roughly 280,000 people).
- Discussed the pricing of full service signal (\$2-\$4 million) vs. translator (\$50,000 to \$200,000).
- Discussed what WRKF would like to keep in its reserves, and the discussion was whether this was a good time to spend any of our reserves on an FM translator. Paul noted that it may require a strong ask to go into the community in order to make this happen.
- Noted that it would be buying a license to broadcast on an FM band, no real estate or property involved, just translating our HD channel onto that FM channel.
- Noted that WRKF is a stand-alone station that doesn't have to rebroadcast anything (highest level of broadcast frequency you can get), whereas a translator has to get an existing station's material and rebroadcast that content.
- Classical radio through CPB, which has blanket agreement for all public broadcasters to pay BMI, ASCAP, on the station's behalf, so no royalty fees, and C-24 24 hour-classical radio from Minnesota Public Radio allows satellite downlink subscription for \$10,000 a year.
- Seemed like a good opportunity to consider, with the content and tower ready to go, could move the translator easily, as WRKF already has an unused antenna on the tower.
- Motion was made by Rodd Naquin, seconded by Stafford Wood, that WRKF move forward with the process for a purchase agreement, to get more information, to come back to the board with information before approving final purchase. Joe Coussan noted he was looking for more information on the metrics of possible listeners to this option, including the number of people who have HD and what we could estimate as the percentage of people who would listen to this

FM band – with 280,000 people in the circle, how many of those would want to hear classical music. Paul noted that the classical music audience is not a huge audience, but it is an extremely loyal audience.

- Board member discussion noted that it was voting on a motion to present a purchase agreement to the seller, and that the board would approve any final purchase agreement before purchase.
- Stafford proposed an amendment to the motion saying that in that purchase agreement it would need to require board approval. This amendment to the motion was seconded by Lance Porter. Amendment and Motion were both unanimously approved by the board.

The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.