

WRKF BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JULY 17, 2019 5:00 PM
LAMAR ADVERTISING 3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

ATTENDANCE

Board Members in attendance: Bob Ritter, Josh Hollins by phone, Liz Mangham, Liz Hampton, Ross Reilly, Stephanie Tomlinson, Rodd Naquin, Jenee Slocum, Kenneth Noojin, Julie Baxter Payer.

WRKF employees in attendance: Paul Maasen, Barbara Clark, Gwen Palagi.

Board Chairman Rodd Naquin called the July board meeting to order at 5:13pm. There was a lack of a quorum to approve the previous board meeting minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no reports from the Personnel or Finance Committees.

Events/Founders Luncheon Committee Report:

The board received an update on the 2019 Founders Luncheon from Barbara Clarke.

- So far, 29 tables had been sold, plus some individual tickets, with some \$50,000 committed so far. The station is looking at some community partnerships, social media promotion, and board members were encouraged to buy tickets early.

Membership Committee Report:

The board received an update from Robyn Merrick and Gwen Palagi.

- The committee met about a month ago, and indicated that Spring Memberfest surpassed the \$75,000 goal by just a bit. The station is very grateful to its members and the public for the strong rallying and support to help the station.
- The board contributed \$3270 to board bump, which was a great help and could be used strategically throughout both phases of campaign to encourage and model support.
- Gwen and Robyn noted that WRKF's 40th anniversary is coming up January 18 2020, which happens to fall on a Saturday. The station is looking at possible programs to plan around that date.
- Gwen discussed the peer-to-peer campaign, "Plus One", where we are asking members to please recruit one person you know who is not yet giving, and encourage a donation, and the station will give you both a thank-you gift, and you and your plus-one can come to a party for you. This may be a fall campaign idea. (Fall Campaign will be September 18-27).
- The station is looking back through the archives to find people to interview who have been involved with the station from its start and going forward.

Executive Committee Report:

Rodd Naquin noted that the Executive Committee conference call was comprised of an update on the Founders Luncheon planning at that time, and touched on a couple of items Paul Maasen will update later in the board meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Paul Maasen gave the President's Report.

Hurricane Barry News Update

- Paul gave kudos to the staff for their work over the Hurricane Barry weekend. The staff was able to bring in the weather reports on two-ways – when the host has a conversation with the weather reporter, a first of WRKF News in recent years. WRKF reporters covered the Hurricane Barry news conferences, produced spot news pieces, created and aired on Saturday a region-wide show – a live program which aired in New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Lafayette simultaneously – with Karen Henderson in Baton Rouge, Karl Engel in New Orleans, interviews with government officials and more. Paul gave credit to the new Regional News Director Patrick Madden for making that happen, and that Karen did a great job with the live reporting. Paul complimented the good service to listeners around the area, and lots of information got out. It was proof of concept that we can do these types of live informative shows.

Translator Update

- More research from previous discussion regarding possible translator purchase revealed this would not be an option for WRKF. It was simply not the right time to go forward with this.

Studio Renovation Update

- Paul noted that the new control board had been purchased for the studio and will be installed August 2019.

Transmitter Update

- Paul noted that the studio remodeling and transmitter are expected to go in in the month of August. The transmitter has shipped and is currently at TSG's building, to be installed at LPB's Tower.

Tower Update

- Paul noted that LPB had sent draft agreement for going into their transmitter building and WRKF is working to finalize fee and license terms for placing the transmitter on LPB's tower.

Public Super-regional Meeting Update

- This meeting is coming up in October, with a venue on Canal Street, where station general managers, NPR board members from the country. Some 300 people are expected to attend this conference.
- The board discussed the question of whether there would always be divisions between traditional radio and podcasts, or would an entity be simply an audio producer. Paul noted that radio is now a term for content, not a type of delivery. Public radio does very well at audio radio storytelling, knowing how to produce that type of content. Broadcasting is just one of the platforms where public radio can excel. Public radio stations often receive inquiries from people producing podcasts, coming to ask how to better produce podcasts. Paul noted how important it is to teach audio storytelling, and that, while younger people may not think radio, they are thinking audio storytelling. The board discussed whether WRKF might be the brains behind a podcast incubator in Baton Rouge, where people can come and learn the skill, which could be used in different forums. How can WRKF strengthen the station financially while serving the community with this storytelling skill? Could we outsource storytelling through an

incubator like that? Could WRKF Productions be the producer to produce audio storytelling content, producing multi-part podcast series on topics or issues of local interest? The board discussed whether there could be a productions arm of WRKF.

Update on NPR Media Reporter David Folkenflik breakfast

- Paul noted that David was super personable, easy to work with, gracious, the perfect guest for listeners and donors who attended the breakfast.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Paul Maasen gave the financial report.

- Paul reported that the CPB 2018 audit went well, approving the payment of WRKF's grants. The station has settled all old outstanding debts to NPR. Paul noted that this year's station finances were doing well.
- Paul complimented WRKF Membership Director Gwen Palagi on her work this year. Paul noted that across the country, most stations are reporting membership down 3-10% this year, possibly as a result of a combination of tax law changes and some uncertainty out there in the public.
- Paul noted that the CPB grant will show up later in the year in the finances.
- Paul reported that underwriting sales are going well, working together with WWNO (New Orleans public radio, and with KRVS (Red River Radio). Paul noted that WRKF is selling more multi-market items, packaging programs together.
- Paul noted that the station's fiscal reserves are just above \$650,000, but that the station still needs to pay for the transmitter (roughly \$150,000). The station aims to keep \$300,000 in reserves at all times. Paul noted that the station seems poised to continue to do well fiscally this year.

There was no new business raised by board members. The board meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.