

MEETING SUMMARY

NPR Illinois Community Advisory Board December 6, 2019

The NPR Illinois Community Advisory Board (CAB) met in Springfield and connected by videoconference to Chicago on Friday, December 6, 2019.

Present in Chicago:	Cindi Canary, Robert Gallo, David Kohn, Lisbeth Leanos, Blake Roderick, George Van Dusen
Present in Springfield:	Deanie Brown, Kathleen Dunn, Jamey Dunn-Thomason, Randy Eccles, Nabih Elhadj, Mary Hansen, William Holland, Bethany Jaeger, Mario Jimenez, Regina Kovach, Phillip Lopez, Rachel Otwell, Barbara Pesch, Megan Pressnall, Kent Redfield, Dick Schuldt
Present by Phone:	Adam Porter
Absent:	John Carpenter, Michel Diaz, Laurence Msall, Stephanie Rhodes, Chuck Scholz, Karen Witter, Corrine Wood

1. Fundraising Development

- a. 100% Board Giving Campaign - 73% of the CAB members have donated to NPR Illinois.
- b. The goal for the December 2019 Fund Drive is \$250,000. \$100,000 in donations remain to be raised by December 31, 2019 to meet this goal. Along with the May Fund Drive goal of \$250,000, the “stretch” goal for the year is \$500,000. Because of changes in funding (eg. The University cut funding by 15% this year), reaching this goal is important along with growing grants and increasing underwriting.
- c. CAB sent a thank you letter to donors last year. Suggestions for this year’s letter were solicited from the Board. Randy suggested combining the thank you letter with information about March “Public Radio Month” which has been moved from 2019’s May “Public Radio Week.” Details of events for “Public Radio Month” are being finalized. Other suggestions were to emphasize how important NPR Illinois is as an independent journalism outlet which “looks over the shoulder of” public officials and consequently serves as a check and balance on what is going on in state and local government. NPR Illinois also helps those listening in Chicago and other areas of Illinois keep connected to what is happening at the Statehouse. There are fewer and fewer news outlets performing this service. One board member expressed that NPR Illinois provides coverage of state and local news that is not embellished.

2. Reminder of Community Advisory Board terms

- a. The following three members’ first terms end on June 30, 2020: Deanie Brown, Laurence Msall, Kent Redfield. These four members’ second terms end on June 30, 2020: Kathleen Dunn, Bethany Jaeger, Adam Porter, and Blake Roderick. Members serve three-year terms and can serve up to three terms.
- b. The following members volunteered to serve on the nominating committee: Nabih Elhadj, Mario Jimenez (Chairman), George Van Dusen, and Jamey Dunn-Thomason. There was a discussion held about the need to bring more diversity to the board.

3. Editorial

- a. Mary Hanson and Rachel Otwell updated the Board on the NPR Illinois/ProPublica series and issues regarding required Mandated Reporters (Responsible Employees) under Title IX for news reporters. Mary was able to address the U of I Board of Trustees to ask that they consider overturning the University’s policy of not providing

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a “news gathering” exemption for reporters. The Board of Trustees have expressed that they understand reporters’ concerns and want to work with NPR. NPR Illinois anticipates they will be meeting with President Killeen to discuss the issues further. In addition, there is increased talk about opening a campus in downtown Springfield for UIS, possibly in collaboration with UIUC and SIUC. There could be benefits to NPR Illinois to be located near the Statehouse including possible expansion of PAR internships and the increased accessibility to state government personnel.

- b. Daisy Contreras has accepted a job covering Election 2020 with WGBH in Boston and her last day at NPR Illinois is today.
- c. NPR Illinois is providing “wall to wall” coverage of the impeachment hearings being held in Washington, D.C. This is important because other local stations are not able to do so.
- d. Preparation for coverage of the 2020 Election is ongoing. Although elections in Illinois are “not as much in play” in 2020, there are issues such as the Governor’s proposed constitutional amendment for a graduated income tax that will be important to cover.
- e. Story ideas - CAB members submitted story ideas prior to and during the meeting. They included the consolidation of local units of government, election security, The Economic Development Council’s proposal for a downtown campus, the legalization of marijuana use and how drug prevention and treatment efforts will be affected, the negative social aspects of legalized sports betting, a preview of the 2020 legislative session, the proposed graduated income tax amendment and the growing burden of property taxes in Illinois, recent reduction in Illinois EPA resources and employees which is exacerbated by a similar reduction in the EPA at the federal level, political and ethics reform in state government, and the 50th anniversary of the Illinois Constitution.
- f. Members were reminded to share NPR Illinois content on social media.

4. Audience Development and Engagement

- a. The former “Public Radio Week” held in May is going to become “Public Radio Month” held in March so events can be spread out over a longer time period to allow staff to better plan and carry out events and hopefully increase participation by NPR Illinois’ audience
- b. Plans for the This I Believe scholarship and essay contest include coordination with Karen Witten and the Rotary Club in moving the event to the Union Theatre at the ALPLM so all of the winners can read their essays at one event. The Governor and the Lt. Governor will be invited to attend.

5. CAB Meeting Schedule

- a. Friday, March 6, 2020, 11:30 – 1:30 p.m., Springfield/Chicago
- b. Friday, June 5, 2020, 11:30 – 1:30, Springfield/Chicago
- c. CAB website: <http://nprillinois.org.topic.community-advisory-board>