

DRAFT Minutes

WBAI Local Station Board August Meeting

Call to Order

Regular meeting of the WBAI Local Station Board, convened remotely due to coronavirus pandemic. Held via Zoom on August 12, 2020. Link to Zoom video and audio recordings.

Quorum is met at 7:08. Meeting is called to order and presided over by Carolyn McIntyre with Charlotte Albrecht as Secretary. Timekeeper is Amy Wilson.

Link to the [roll call vote record](#). Link to [video recording](#). Link to [audio recording](#).

Agenda

1. Convene meeting.
2. Adopt Agenda. (20 minutes)
3. Roll Call, including verifications respecting telephone attendees. (5 minutes)
4. Excuse absences. (5 minutes)
5. Approve outstanding minutes: [July 8, 2020 \(pdf version\)](#). (5 minutes)
6. Report from Pacifica National Board Directors. (15 minutes) — Alex Steinberg
7. [General Manager's Report](#), including re: budget (45 minutes for report & discussion) — Berthold Reimers
 - Materials: [Fiscal Year 2021 Budget](#), [FY 2021 Budget Assumptions slideshow](#), [Explanation of Discrepancies](#) as requested by Finance Committee.
8. Programming Updates (5 minutes report, 5 minutes Q&A) — Berthold Reimers standing in for Linda Perry
9. [Treasurer's Report](#) (5 Minutes) — R. Paul Martin
10. Voting on [Finance Committee Motions](#) (10 minutes)
11. Report from Fundraising Committee (10 minutes) — Safia Albaiti
12. Resolution: [Resolution of WBAI's Local Station Board to Establish A Formal Partnership with WFMU for Music Use On Air](#)
13. Discussion: Premiums, E-Commerce and Promotional Merchandise.

14. Discussion: High Definition broadcasting capacity, management or terrestrial sidebands. (5 minutes)
15. Update from Radio Committee (2 minutes) — Shawn Rhodes
16. Report on Town Halls. (2 minutes) — Jack DePalma
17. Report of LSB Committee of Inclusion. (2 minutes) — William Heerwagen
18. Report of Community Advisory Board. (2 minutes) — ?
19. Public Comment. (30 minutes, 2 minutes maximum per speaker before next in queue to speak. Must always begin no later than 9:15 PM.)
20. Unfinished Business. (5 minutes)
21. New Business (5 minutes)
22. Adjourn no later than 9:45 PM (EST)

Attendance and Adopting Minutes

Voting Members in attendance: everyone! July minutes are approved with no objections.

Agenda is adopted after some discussion, with 2 against.

Reports

Report from Pacifica National Board Directors. Alex reports back on recent PNB activities.

The three Pacifica bylaws amendments we approved at the last LSB Meeting (see July minutes) passed. 2018 audit was completed and approved by the PNB, will start work on the 2019 audit. KPDK has serious cash flow problems. PNB also authorized legal action against former IED John Vernile.

Alex alerts us that a push for a new Pacifica bylaws referendum by member petition is happening, led by some of the same people who were responsible for the last petition. That one cost Pacifica over \$100,000 and was still voted down by $\frac{2}{3}$ margin. Says that any member can ask to use the Pacifica email list to communicate with members, sent via a third party. So they can use it, but so can we!

Questions & Discussion. Safia: is this in retaliation to the bylaws that changed the threshold? How much will be spent by PNB on legal action? What are we trying to get out of it? Alex: bylaws referendum not directly related to that bylaw. If anything “our” bylaws were a preemptive action, they’ve been planning for awhile. They may ask for proportional representation on PNB but that would screw smaller stations (ex: kpdk would have 5, wbai would have 2). Can’t say much about the other question because of executive sessions. An arbitration would cost more money than legal action though.

R. Paul: Now that the threshold is higher are there plans to vet petition signatures? Alex: They won't get 5% anyway.

King: anything to prepare for now? Alex: we're asking for financial relief for damages and having to engage legal services. Our plans now are to put out an official statement from PNB about positive developments, like debts paid down and loans gained. Dee Dee recommends we make an LSB statement against them, Alex says we will have that opportunity.

General Manager's Report & Programming Updates, including Q&A.

Berthold delivers the [General Manager's Report](#), which we should have had a chance to review along with supplemental materials (see links in agenda). Linda also chimes in. Says listenership has dropped April/May/June but it's picking up again. Listenership of ages 18 - 34 is UP.

Mitch: are those David Rothenburg figures holding? Are station phones not working? Linda: phones are working now. It's a challenge because engineers working remotely can't take listener calls. Berthold: David has been doing different kinds of fundraising, but is still bringing in \$5,000. Predictions also made in advance of the economy opening.

Note: Jack Devine has to take over secretary duty for me while I share my computer screen during Berthold's explanation of the budget.

Marilyn doesn't think it's appropriate for Berthold to call out producers in the report. Berthold says he will explain this more later.

John: What is the PPP loan?

Berthold: A loan to make payroll. Receives something 2 million dollars. Part of the relief. WBAI does not have to pay it back and Pacifica expects it to be forgiven or over a 35 year period

Charlotte: What is the demographic information based on? To Linda.

Linda: Based on the Nielsens. She'll deliver a report within the next week or so. Very optimistic about the changes in age and demos, despite the general decline across the industry

Basir: Very much would appreciate the opportunity to look at the data. He made a suggestion to Berthold to have a cell phone in studio. Have you done that?

Berthold: No. But have gotten the air filters in order to get Michael and Reggie back after a conversation with the union

Sharrone: What's happening the premiums?

Berthold: Most of the premiums are coming from Gary. 500 outstanding Gary Null premiums. Shipping out best that the station can. System with Amazon to track the premiums. The push of 5 specific premiums made it easier to ship out this week. Plan to reduce what is being shipped directly from wbai

James: Wants some clarity on David Rothenberg? He was doing 5000 a month without the theater tickets? Is it holding up?

Berthold: Yes.

R Paul: Are some producers being allowed to broadcast live at this time?

Berthold: No. Only the board ops when they're producing their own show. Was considering with Mimi on Monday night. Giovanni does his show without his co-hosts being there. One time he did and was told not anymore. Air filters may make this possible.

Others contend that people are coming into the studio. Berthold says he doesn't know about that.

William: Have any bequests been deposited in the bank? Don't announce until its cashed

Berthold: Not yet

Alex: National Board passed a motion that all the stations have to balance their budgets. Relatively speaking the deficit has shrunken, but there still has to be some cuts. We can't adjust based on expected increases in revenue. There will have to be cuts.

John: What's happening with the station occasionally going off the air?

Linda: Transmitter at Times Square was momentarily down. Also internet issues with streaming. Also two weeks with no phone. Temporary fix for the 6000 piece of equipment on transmitter. Use google phone with workers there. If we had a permanent person then this wouldn't be happening

Jack: Are we compliant? Berthold: Everyone is compliant. James: WBAI was first. Pacifica is all NETA compliant.

Berthold: Proposing 25 days of fundraising per month at an average of \$4,000 a day, so \$100,000 month. \$1,022,325. Website \$4000, buddies \$15000 (but that's an underprojection), underprojection of bequests to \$35000.

Planning out a schedule of preempting for fundraising fairness. But of course would rather people have their own pitch shows. 18 hrs pitching a week ideally, change based on needs. Most important: no one knows whats going on? Says you can go and look at this whenever u want now. \$134,000 in the red with these projections.

Programming report blended into this section. Linda: special on schools coming up - saturday 12 to 4 pm. Trying to make BAI relevant to COVID/nyc discourse. Randy credico back on. Lots of other shows coming on that should be popular. Have enough listeners for CPB funding.

Michael: content based fundraising? Mitch: Johanna doing great job with morning news. Being preempted? Linda: shes usually ok with it. Putting a lot of resources into the morning show and i

actively work with her. Need money for it. People express disappointment tuning something in and it's something else.

Concerns about preempting raised again -- that's what 52 week schedule is for.

Charlotte takes back over as Secretary.

Treasurer's Report. Presented by R. Paul. As he always says, it's [in the written report](#).

Concerns about the \$100,000+ deficits. Paycheck protection plan's 1.2 million dollars is helping the station a lot. Payroll and benefits paid for 2 months, freeing up some cash. Economic Injury Disaster Loan is held up, there's a bureaucratic problem because WBAI & Pacifica applied. Wednesday August 26th is the next finance committee meeting.

Finance Committee Motions. There are four, all in [one document](#). Motions are read aloud. Some suggest voting on them all together but R. Paul and others say that's not wise, we should vote on them separately. Suspended for public comment at 9:15. Upon return, Charlotte motions to postpone voting on these motions to the next LSB meeting. Passes with 12 for, 4 against, 2 absentions.

Report from Fundraising Committee presented by Safia.

Resolution of WBAI's Local Station Board to Establish A Formal Partnership with WFMU for Music Use On Air. Safia presents. Someone (*I missed some of this while screen sharing*) motions to amend the first "whereas" clause instructing Berthold to establish a formal partnership with WFMU to instead recommend that he reach out to discuss potential collaboration. Amendment passes with 9 for, 6 against, 5 abstentions. The resolution as amended then passes with 8 for, 4 against, and 8 abstentions.

The following agenda items are tabled:

- Discussion: Premiums, E-Commerce and Promotional Merchandise.
- Discussion: High Definition broadcasting capacity, management or terrestrial sidebands.
- Update from Radio Committee
- Report on Town Halls
- Report of LSB Committee of Inclusion
- Report of Community Advisory Board