

Minutes:

WPFW Local Station Board Meeting

2390 Champlain Street NW, Washington, DC 20009

12 July 2006

Quorum declared about 7:50 P.M., Carol Wolfe serving as Chair.

Board Members present at the call to order: Jim Brown, Billy Ray Edwards, Joni Eisenberg, Ambrose Lane, Dan Logan, Norberto Martinez, Kalonji Olusegun, Rob Robinson, Zarinah Shakir, Amanda Sweet, Hakam Takash, Carol Wolfe.

Absent: Cade Campbell, Joe Chiara, Donnie McKethan, Thomas Ruffin.

Excused Absences: Mark Berman, Acie Byrd, Jane Gatewood, Ayo Handy-Kendi, Mark Roberts.

Late Arrivals: Luzette King, Gloria Turner.

Also present: Ron Pinchback, WPFW General Manager, and Carl Pflugler, LSB Secretary.

The LSB officially welcomed Amanda Sweet to her first meeting as a Listener-Member, duly succeeding Sarah Bittle, who had previously resigned.

Approval of Amended Minutes of the June Meeting: Jim Brown so moved, Kalonji Olusegun seconded, the minutes were adopted without objection.

Amendments to the Agenda: At Jim Brown's suggestion, New Business was moved up, to immediately follow the Reports. Joni Eisenberg suggested a memorial tribute to Chris Crowder, with an offer of condolences and a collection for his family. Ambrose so moved, Rob seconded. ("Brother Chris" Crowder, a disabled community activist and mayoral candidate, had addressed the LSB at its last meeting, and shortly afterward was murdered near his home in DC.) This was agreed without objection, and Zarinah Shakir volunteered to forward it to his family. [\$140.00 was sent to Chris's mother Gracie Brown by July 17th.] The General Manager reported that an announcement to the same effect had already been put on the air.

LSB Technology Committee Report, by Zarinah Shakir: Need to define priorities and take inventory of equipment at all 5 stations, so that possible surplus at some station(s) might be sent to other(s). LSB members really ought to become more active here; so far there has been only one national meeting (by phone), and Zarinah was the only participant from WPFW. Jim Brown reports that Sidrack Franklin, our Operations Director, is about 50% done with the inventory for this year. Rob Robinson says that in October 2004, a similar inventory was made in support of a budget request submitted to the National Office, and that then-Executive Director Dan Coughlin promised \$50,000 to WPFW for upgrading technology; we had better make sure we get that money.

LSB Outreach and Development Committee Report, by Zarinah Shakir, with contributions by Jim Brown, Norberto Martinez, Rob Robinson, and Carol Wolfe: There have been many events – blues festivals, jazz festivals, etc. – suitable for presenting WPFW to the surrounding community, but many such opportunities have been missed because of the low level of participation by LSB members. There

should be more systematic and timely communication of such events to all LSB members. The Chair is working on such a calendar, and also suggests that outreach materials should be made readily available at LSB meetings. Meanwhile, such information is generally available from Tiffany Jordan, the Station's Outreach & Development Director. Two upcoming events were specifically noted: the Hispanic Festival on Mount Pleasant Street, September 24th, and the Volunteer Appreciation Awards Ceremony, November the 4th.

General Manager's Report, by Ron Pinchback – who had earlier emailed the text to LSB members, and also distributed printed copies at the meeting, so these Minutes will forgo any attempt at a summary, and simply include his report as an Appendix.

PNB Reports:

Ambrose Lane reported that the PNB has now held 2 training centers on race (motivated by an incident at WBAI) and has formed a committee to study network-wide race and gender issues. Acie Byrd is WPFW's representative on that committee. The National Personnel Committee is formed and functioning. A new job description for the Executive Director's position has been drawn up, as the previous description had deliberately been made impossible, as a means of forcing out the previous ED. They are still working on an evaluation process for the ED. Our election controversy was resolved by invoking Chapter 14 of Robert's Rules of Order.

Rob Robinson, of the Programming Committee, spoke briefly about his proposal for a Programming Policy, but extended discussion was reserved for New Business. Billy Ray Edwards expressed some unhappiness.

New Business:

General Management Evaluation Process, reported by Jim Brown, for the Management Assessment and Search Committee: The MASC had prepared a 10-question evaluation form (with space included for additional questions) to be completed by all LSB members and paid staff, and forwarded to the Executive Director. After 15 minutes of discussion, in which the Members agreed on methods to safeguard the confidentiality and integrity of the process, Hakam Takash moved approval of the form. Seconded by Ambrose Lane, the motion passed, 11-1.

Community Comment: Highlighted by moving tributes to the late lamented Chris Crowder.

Old Business:

LSB Committee Memberships: The Members reviewed the tentative list on the June Minutes and confirmed their final choices, which were recorded. The Secretary shall forward this list to the WPFW Website for posting.

Programming Policy: The most recent draft of this document had been sent out to the LSB by the Programming Committee just two days before the LSB meeting. Kalonji Olusegun proposed a resolution, seconded by Luzette King, that the Committee should meet to work further on it, and that the LSB Members should communicate any opinions they have about it to Programming Committee

Chair Dan Logan within two weeks. After 15 minutes of reiteration, the motion passed, 11-1.

LSB Show: In principle, everyone agrees that some sort of regular on-air Report to the Listeners is desirable, but past experience has shown it is easily prone to abuses: especially offering a platform for exhibitionist grandstanding, personal attacks, and unfair advantages to incumbent candidates in LSB elections. Such a show will require firm structure and policy guidelines to keep it on point. Joni Eisenberg proposed a resolution directing the Programming Committee to design such a structure, hopefully to be adopted by the LSB at its August meeting, so that the show may be on the air later in August. Seconded by Jim Brown, the motion passed, 11-0.

LSB Burnout: This topic was proposed by Billy Ray Edwards, who spoke on it for about five minutes.

Adjournment: About 10:15 P.M., Hakam Takash moved to adjourn. Seconded by Ambrose Lane. Passed, 7-1.

Agenda Items never discussed: 2007 Budget Preparations, and Zarinah's resolution on LSB absenteeism.

APPENDIX

WPFW MANAGER'S REPORT JULY 2006

by Ron Pinchback

To begin this report, I want to congratulate Tiffany Jordan and the WPFW development team for their work in putting together the most successful "WPFW Yard Sale" ever. Their efforts generated over \$10,000 for that day, a new station record for such events. Fantastic results from a fantastic staff.

WPFW is currently engaged in restructuring itself operationally and programmatically. During this period between pledge drives we are taking the opportunity to address our staffing needs and make some changes to the schedule. We are doing this over the summer to position the station for its next membership drive in late October. The spring drive fell short by approximately \$60,000 and these steps are being taken to reduce the likelihood of it happening again.

I have begun the process of restructuring the paid staff. Two positions, the Music Director and Announcer are being eliminated. The music director position will be replaced with a Cultural Affairs & Arts Coordinator. The goal is to improve our ability to serve the culture and arts community in addition to enhancing the station's music offerings. Another objective is to facilitate the creative infusion of music, culture and arts into public affairs programs.

There will be other staffing adjustments and additions in the weeks to come including a news director, website coordinator and volunteer coordinator. I have requested the search for a Program Director be expedited by the MASC committee of the LSB. We will do all we can to have all the new personnel in place by October 1st. It will be important to the upcoming membership drive to have these positions filled by then.

Programmatically, I am holding meetings with the Program Committee of the LSB to discuss ideas about adding new public affairs programs and schedule changes. The selection of any new public affairs programs will be based on priorities established by the program committee. The purpose of rearranging some components of the schedule is to increase listenership and revenue in certain areas. We also have to consider and make space available for possible new program initiatives from Pacifica.

Financially, WPFW continues to operate in the black despite not making its spring pledge goals. We have submitted a preliminary budget to Pacifica showing a current revenue surplus of \$17,000 while maintaining our one month reserve of \$156,000. We do anticipate some adjustments to the 07 budget before it becomes final. Increased payroll due to union mandated raises, and the addition of new employees, will have the most affect on our budget.

Operationally, we have had some challenges at our transmitter site due to the recent heavy rains. We did not have flooding but the excess moisture affected our primary T1 transmission line. This has resulted in periodic signal disruptions. We have addressed the issue with Verizon, and the necessary repairs have been made. American University has also agreed to assess and repair some issues they are responsible for at the transmitter site including security of the facility.

We are in the process of completing the transformation of studio D into a community accessible production studio. New production computers are being installed with an interphase to the control board and a new phone system will be placed in that studio as well. The project will be finished before the end of July.

The station is also replacing the staff computers. This has become a necessity because the current units are aging, slow and prone to lock ups. We have upgraded the station's printer as well. The new printer will permit the station to produce printed materials we otherwise would have to outsource. The development department requested the upgrade because of their intent to enhance its capabilities while controlling costs. The more we can produce in house the more we save and improve unit efficiency as well as productivity.

On a final note, the evaluation of me as station manager has begun. The first phase of that evaluation took place on June 28th by phone with the Executive Director, Greg Guma. The MASC committee has initiated its evaluation also. Evaluation forms have been issued to the paid staff. The entire process should be completed by September.