KUTE Inc.

KSUT Board of Directors

Wednesday, November 13, 2024

Meeting Minutes

Present: Tami Graham – Executive Director, Wade Griffith – President, Kirsten Langmade – Vice President, Robert Ortiz – Secretary, Susan Kearns

Present Via zoom: Eddie Box Jr., Mikki Naranjo joined at 5:48 p.m.

Excused Absence: Gary Skiba, Mike May

Minutes Amendment: Susan Kearns – Kearns misspelling correction made in Minutes.

1. **Call to Order:** 5:26 pm
   a. Agenda Amendment: Add FY25 Budget Draft (After Committee Reports)
   b. Agenda Amendment: Add Board Nominations/Election
2. **Approval of Meeting Agenda:** Motioned to approve by Robert (with amended agenda); Seconded by Kirsten; Unanimously approved.
3. **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (October 9th, 2024):** Motioned to approve as amended by Kirsten; Seconded by Robert; Unanimously approved.
4. **Executive Director Report**
   a. Development
   b. Tribal Radio
   c. Four Corners Public Radio
   d. Tribal Media Center

5. ED Report/Committee Reports:

RIM Core Conference, thanks Eddie Box Jr. for welcome and blessing. Sheila also sang with the Southern Ute Singers. Appreciate your time Eddie, "a great conference," and well attended. The Southern Ute Drum was in attendance, 18-stations represented, KSUT Board members were also in attendance and representation. Appreciate the board and acknowledge that. A lot of those in attendance said it was the best of the RIM Core Conferences they've been to.

Due to Due From hasn't changed much since last meeting. Tami working with Kristen Hudgens on a packet, which will be submitting a packet, for Council packets for submission. From notes and takeaways with Liz Perry. The "Turn Around Plan" will be summarized, for document used in major donor asks and any events KSUT does, to outline where we are and plans to move forward. Draft will be available at the December meeting. Elements of turn-around plan will send out to board, of what will be sent out to Tribal Council.

Wade: How do you feel about the plan?

Tami: “Feel good about it”. A draft for Mark Katz, a 2-page letter framing an ask to Katz family after meeting with Briggen of the Community Foundation. KSUT made an ask last year of $100K ask last year, gave $33,333. Suggested by Briggen to look at overall debt and make 1/3 ask, of $181K. Sent two-page draft to Briggen.

Wade: Input from Briggen is very smart.

Tami: Basic elements from turn-around plan summarize format, for the Katz Family Foundation, strong and compelling case to be made. We are taking it seriously and corrective actions, with hiatus from the festivals next year. Cutting Jill (Davis) back to part-time next year. Budget has been trimmed down and corrective actions are beginning to be in play with FY2025 budget. Sends clear message to prospective donors how seriously we are taking this, organizationally, looking good. Questions?

The Development of the Turn Around Plan was collaboratively developed with the Management team. On the audit, progressing, with new firm, old firm with the merger with MBECPA no longer FZA. Field testing will take place next week.

Four Corners Folk Festival: Meeting with Jill where we are with the festival and putting her down to part-time, putting a wrap on this year’s festival and communications. Planning on two special events: Party in the Park and Fourth of July with the City of Durango. Not planning with any major outdoor concerts. Rest, focus on the core of what we are doing.

Wade: Reminder, festival suspension and half-time are confidential.

Tami: Festival suspension won’t be made until mid-Dec., when normally we would go on sale with early bird tickets. Certain amount of relief of all the work, stress and pressure of making money or losing money. Clear the slate and refocus on the core mission.

Wade: Fall fundraiser?

Tami: Fall Fundraiser went well, about $5K ahead of last year. Renewing, bumping, resulting in monthly increase of sustaining collections by $1K+, over the course of the year that’s and additional $12,200K increase in sustaining membership dollars. Reverses a trend of “plateauing” which we’ve seen throughout Public Radio. Membership dollars plateau to 70% of membership dollars. Nice reversal of trend.

Wade: Discussion of One day drives?

Tami: One day summer drive possibility. Fall pledge drive was in September, moved into October following the festival. We will be moving back into Sept. we’ll get a bump this year. Send out the mailer ahead of the drive, right away people were sending in checks. Could return to a very short mid-winter one day drive.

Wade: Beauty of (fund drive) is “Risk reward” sets up nicely compared to festival. A one-day deal is a nice reminder to catch new people, with a creative hook. “It’s a really great idea”

Reminder: Stock market is through the roof, consider pay back or deploy somewhere else. Consider making a gift to Shanta. Connect in people’s mind and charitable giving. We got some money.

Tami: Holiday, with an all-staff photo for Holiday card. Year-end ask, with holiday card. Targeted, with the stock market. With an email blast, the on-air information.

Susan suggested with distribution, IRA distribution if you have a mandatory IRA distribution.

Wade: One day campaign. Whole wrap around, and my support with the one-day fund raiser, with a cleaver hook.

Tami: After the election in 2016, we say a bump in donations, people were concerned then as they are now about free speech, independent media surviving, a lot of sensitivity. Imagine we'll be seeing a bump. More important now than ever to support local independent public media.

Wade: How do we protect with federal over reach?

Tami: Tribal Water Media Fellowship (TMWF). Remarkable films and incredible work from the fellows and with Colton Ashley being on (Fort Lewis College) campus now a couple days out of the week, excited for things to happen for the Tribal Media Center. A few RimCore attendees were able to go and were blown away that KSUT were involved with that project.

Kirsten: Feels like it has grown so much from last year, in the artistry and the storytelling. See it exponentially getting better.

Wade: How do we get more attention on that?

Tami: Conversation of both TMWF and Native Lens Fellowship, to take them on the road. Could we package them and have them shown at the Durango Film Festival – Native Lens ones are. Films of last year's fellows were shown at the Mancos Valley River Film Festival.

Wade: Unrealistic for a Denver Film Festival, a larger scene?

Tami: One of the target areas for Tribal Media Center emerging is Denver, doing an event at Rocky Mountain PBS (RMPBS), through their outreach.

Wade: Strong Native community, Native culture, recognition and honor Native voices, such as Albuquerque, Oklahoma City.

Tami: For Native Lens a great outreach for people to submit films. For TMWF and Native Lens fellowship it's a great opportunity for recruiting fellows, more and more competitive to become a fellow. Four Corners Water Center information for fellowship and available on KSUT website and social media, where the 2024 films and projects will be shown.

Wade: How aware is 9R? This could be very relevant to them. Will talk to Karen Chesser.

Tami: The main focus is our partnership with FLC and RMPBS. Many contractors with Native Lens. Foresee in next FY bringing in another part-time staff person for the TMC.

Robert: I attended to support Colten and KSUT. Cool to see non-Natives speak on Native issues, and their input, on it, from a different perspective. I did speak to a couple presenters, one of the Golden

students, exciting. The other presenter who did the piece on Taos (Taos Pueblo), our water is sacred to us, and with Blue Lake where we get our water from, with a proclamation from President Nixon. Question on how she was going to release that to the public. Neat to see that, remembering carrying pails of water from the river to me grandma's house, with no plumbing. Although limited to the outside the pueblo, there's still no running water or electricity inside the pueblo, that's how they are going to keep it, good to see that. Appreciate the collaboration with FLC and the Native students and the involvement Native aspect all together, exciting to Colton is doing an awesome job. RimCore attendees were blown away. Cool to see that collaboration with FLC, Native Lens, RMPBS and KSUT, would hate to lose that, as it's unique.

Wade: Connection to FLC, prospect Native candidates for the Board?

Kirsten: I started with Native Lens even before I had Dr. Peach as a professor. In my minor, one of the professors asked, as the final was a video, anyone who wants to submit, can submit a video to Native Lens.

Tami: Official MOU with FLC for Colton to have an office space at FLC for a couple days a week. More access to the Indigenous student body through the Native American Center at FLC. With a new director there's new opportunities. Having Colton at the Campus, bridging the gap of KSUT, TMC, and FLC, can open some doors for students to join or former student to join.

Kirsten: Blood Quantum on Native Lens, comments from the conference. I'm from Alaska, if you want to know more about Alaska watch the video, and got some great feedback.

Tami: KSUT is so unique with TMC. Better ways to elevate, we payed Kree Lopez to do a logo for TMC. A lot of opportunity for the TMC.

Tami: Clark Adomaitis' last day with KSUT will be January 15, 2025. We did not get the grant to keep him on board. The original grant funding came from through the Colorado Media Project from a collaborative of Colorado Foundations. Now a Nation-wide collaborative called "Press Forward," big money, put out a call, comparable to funding with KSJD. They funded 90% for small-town newspapers. One non-commercial radio station got funding, KDUF in Paonia. Clark's reporting has been picked up through all Rocky Mountain community radio stations. He will be moving back to New York. Continue to seek funding for that reporter position. Foresee a few reporters. We loved his focus primarily on Indigenous reporting. We will miss his reporting and him as a person. There will be more funding opportunities.

6. Budget Draft:

Tami: FY24 Overall Budget was $2.2M, proposing $1.65M. The major difference is not producing a festival or major concert. Our projected revenue is down $600K, with projected expense last year was $2 million, 78-thousand projected expenses down. We've really cut back, with other pieces: Festival, Expenses and Income, with Jill's salary going from full to part-time and Clark's position although not eliminated, ends as of mid-January. Insurance: Concerned with a 14% increase with health benefits, Anthem determined KSUT is eligible for self-funded plan. Insurance costs will remain flat, and may go down. Barring major claims, potentially going back up next year. But will go with self-funded plan. Contemplating, two employees elected to include spousal benefits, which we've offered. Seriously asking to do a step-down, still offer, with only paying half.

Wade: What is the standard in rural, small market public radio?

Tami: A lot of the stations only offer stipends. Not unusual.

Susan: We got a stipend for years. We did a plan, basically paying 80% of the lowest cost Silver Plan. Prior to that, we got a stipend, wasn't based on age, not a fair offset, but a good improvement.

Tami: What we offer is really strong compared with other stations in Colorado. Possibly changing the employee contribution amount from 90% to 75%. Finding ways to save money but taking care of our employees.

Wade: As stated, "this is a point in time" but to get back to fiscal strength, otherwise more will be lost. Short term pain for long term gain. It's unpleasant, but support you (Tami) in having to take these measures. Got to balance the budget.

Robert: When will staff be made aware of the changes.

Tami: Have talked to Management team. Spousal changes will be made soon so people will have time to plan. Would like to tell them prior to Thanksgiving while it is still Open Enrollment.

Tami: Net Revenue Expense: Still looking at net projection of $55K current. How do we reflect our turn-around fund raising in the budget. Robb (Brantley) advocates to create a separate code, to clearly communicate with BOD, what's our regular Operational Fundraising and how's our Debt Reduction fund raising. Proposal as part of the FY25 Budget Draft.

Wade: Capturing in FY25 budget, additional fund raising for Operations.

Tami: No fund raising in development budget, projecting expenses for regular Major Donor event.

Wade: Project conservatively estimate the profit.

Tami: Underwriting, Pledges and Membership: We Projected $530K at mid-year, revised down to $475K total for all membership, sustainers, regular annual gifts, major donors, legacy givers. Doesn't include debt reduction, under an Income, and Expense Line. New codes created for KSUT specific to fundraising specific to debt reduction. Similar to Reporting on Capital Campaign, to be reflected in final budget.

Wade: Underwriting, reduced about 10%?

Tami: Underwriting is reduced. Jessica, this is the first year she did not reach her full goal, based her $410K on 7% on her actual of this year, to be conservative. Look at Sponsorship Revenue Number is down from last year, we roll contribution from RMPM, and partnership with Native Lens in Sponsorship Revenue. Increase in special events, good plan to increase sponsorship for Party in the Park and Fourth of July, as well as digital ad revenue. Customizable app for both signals. New ways at increased revenue, with growing trends, digital is the future of sales.

Tamie: Grant Revenue CPB – 50K increase from last year – $330K will be the biggest grant we will receive. Based on the Community Service Grant (CSG Grant), Public Media funding for public media, big

increase this year. Based on our own fund raising, allocation of funds distributed for "rural public stations and minority controlled" public radio stations.

Wade: Salary from $657K and $621K is half a year's salary?

Tami: Jill's salary going down to half time and Clark not being here for portion of the fiscal year after January 15. No cuts, flat lined for everybody's salaries.

Wade: Questions, this is just informational on Draft budget, not the final budget.

Susan: How did you bring some of the things down so low? Under expenses, Mileage reimbursement. Advocate for staff who work festivals, mileage reimbursement. Meals and Entertainment? Hospitality tent for the festivals. Eliminating Catering, expenses are remarkable.

Wade: A lot of progress, none of us want to see people's benefits affected, hours or job affected negatively. Yet, to stay in good graces with the Tribe, to show big donor to be fiscally responsible. Thank you.

7. Board Nominations and Elections for Officer positions:

a. Officers: President, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Bylaws for Directors and Officers read by Robert, (see KSUT bylaws).

Secretary: Open the floor for Nominations.

Robert: Ask to step down as secretary.

Susan: Robert nominates Susan.

Tami: Procedural suggestion would be to discuss and someone to make a nomination on the slate of officers.

Wade: Check and update terms in the office as a KSUT BOD.

Kirsten: Nominates Wade as President for second term. Wade accepts nomination.

Wade: Nominates Kirsten to continue as Vice President. Kirsten accepts nomination.

Wade: Nominates Mike May to remain as Treasurer.

Tami: Mike has made aware upon accepting a position on the Board, of his absence due to his work. Mike does a great job and asks great questions. "I need the Board to be cognizant and present."

Wade: We should prospect an accountant for the KSUT BOD. We have a slate. Wade as President, Kirsten as Vice President, Susan as Secretary and mike as Treasurer. Do we have any objections to the slate as presented? Is there a motion to accept the slate?

Motioned to accept the Slate of Officers as presented by Kirsten; Seconded by Robert; Unanimously approved.

8. Open Board Seat:

Kirsten: Did we ever hear back from Tim Croes for the Finance Committee.

Tami: Tim appreciated the ask, but declined.

Wade: We need to find a finance guru.

Tami: The Tribe has the option to appoint a Liaison, to the KSUT BOD. Does not have to be a Council member, A non-voting member, a person that has a financial background, track and attend board meetings, about debt reduction.

Tami: Tribal member Open House. Touched base with Sheila, about the Tribal member Open House, as a way to recruit a tribal member board member, after the holidays.

Reminder: Dec. 5: Holiday party.

9. **Next Meeting Date:** Wednesday, December 11th; 5:30pm

10. **Adjourn:** 6:58 p.m. Motioned to approve as amended by Robert; Seconded by Kirsten; Unanimously approved.