WHRO CAB Meeting 9-13-22
Meeting Notes by Felicia Mebane
Attendance:
Charlotte Zito, Season Roberts, Robert Rhodes, Rowena Finn, Hoda Zaki, Meghan Higgins, Al Schweitzer, Uday Kumbhammettu, Alison Schoew, Christopher O'Brien, Felicia Mebane, Jevon Baskerville, Margie Wiley, Peg Volk, Stephanie Robinson

WHRO Staff:
Nancy Rogan, Mechelle, Hankerson, Lisa Godley.

Meeting open with welcome from Charlotte and Ice Breaker from Season.
Attendance policy was reviewed.

Current Community Trends/Issues

Lisa

Lisa serves as Senior Producer, Diverse Production and Outreach which includes *Another View*. This week's show will focus on the plight of the black farmer and feature John Boyd, Jr. the founder of the National Black Farmer's Association. On September 29, 2022, she will produce a LIVE show at Fort Monroe centered on Harriet Tubman, who was a nurse at Fort Monroe at one time. Fort Monroe was once a safe harbor for enslaved people pursuing freedom.

Michelle

WHRO recently announced the acquisition of the Virginia Center for Investigative Journalism (VCIJ). The integration with the current WHRO newsroom is underway. VCIJ adds a new editor as a resource for the entire newsroom and focuses on the state. Part of the implementation will focus on how the current newsroom can leverage the Center's perspective and vice versa. This addition will contribute to new, positive branding for WHRO.

A new reporter will join the team in early October. She graduated from high school in Norfolk and currently works in Alaska. Hiring her is part of a strategy to attract early career journalists who learn and grow at WHRO and are likely to become part of a pipeline to larger media markets. One goal is for the industry and the public to recognize WHRO as a launching pad for top notch journalists. The plan is for the new journalist to meet the CAB at its regular December 2022 meeting.

The newsroom is partnering with WTKR and iHeart Radio to produce a series of community conversations focused on school safety that was prompted by a desire to share content. The first, LIVE event occurred last week and was successful despite opportunities for improvements with logistics and participation. A new story that includes a link to a media player that connects to a recording of the event will be available in a few days.

Key features and ideas for the series include:

- Additional topics will include mental health and domestic violence and possibly youth gangs and violence.
- Focus areas include engaging students and empowering participants (not just police officers or elected officials) to take action or pursue solutions.
- The series is not school system specific, though the first event involved Newport News schools.
- Congressman Bobby Scott planned to attend, though not as a panel participant.

Discussion

The CAB fulfills an FCC requirement for public radio stations to have community anchored boards. WHRO's CAB is the station's eyes and ears to the community. CAB members are encouraged to share information and ideas related to their communities and experiences.

Ro: The lineup of programming is great and relevant.

Margie: Is there a plan to invite former gang members to participate in the panel series with WTKR and iHeart radio? Michelle indicated that someone has previously recommended the same idea for the final forum. Nancy Meghan noted a connection to Charm City. ??, which may be an important connection for this last forum.

Uday: In connection to the discussion about the importance of a focus on mental health, Uday noted his leadership on bringing World Culture Festival (https://worldculturefest.org) to Hampton Roads and Nancy's role on the advisory group. The regional launch will be in October followed by sessions focused on religious dialogues and STEM and involving EVMS, ODU and other organizations in Virginia. Felicia will work with WCF organizers, Uday, colleagues at Norfolk State University and others to host a session at NSU in February 2023 focused on mental health.

Alison: It would be great to have a regular feature on the radio that focused on good news, in the spirit of StoryCorps. WHRO could "catch them being good." Michelle noted that Chuck, the program director, has floated a similar idea. A challenge is having an approach that it is sustainable, which may include not having a specific frame or brand. As an example, Michelle recently recorded an audio postcard of a peach picking experience with her nephew.

Ro: One challenge facing this area (and others) is a lack of mental health professionals of color. For example, there are few black, male therapists. The value of this type of diversity is the positive link between shared experiences and culture and positive health care experiences (and outcomes).

- Michelle noted that the VCIJ is working on a story about a lack of physicians of color. As another example of the challenge, Chesapeake Hospitals decided to not provide

additional mental health services in a new facility because of a shortage of physicians to provide the services.

- Margie: In addition to a lack of diversity, there is a shortage of physicians who focus on mental health issues and will see people in person.
- Felicia: Any consideration of mental health services should also focus on community health workers, social workers and others who support services and community outreach and are not physicians or nurses (medical providers).
- Nancy: Maury event on 10/6. Hiding in Plain Sight
- Stephanie: Based on experience working in the VA Department of Juvenile Justice, there are many factors that influence youth violence. And, policies for how juveniles are treated in the justice system shift as political administrations change.
- Jevon: Based on experience as a high school teacher, students' behaviors are reflections of their circumstances. They can be affected by trauma, depression, anxiety, etc. And, while teachers serve in a variety of roles for their students (beyond teaching), they may not be equipped or trained to provide needed support or to focus on prevention. Also, diversity is needed on a variety of factors, including sexual orientation, religion and more.

Charlotte: Everyone is welcome to send additional community issues and reporting or project ideas to her and Nancy. They will share them with WHRO producers.

CAB Overview

Season shared a brief overview of WHRO's history, which started in 1961, and features unique ownership by 21 local school divisions. She also highlighted key duties of CAB members, including sharing ideas, providing feedback, serving as ambassadors and volunteering to support WHRO. She also encouraged members to take advantage of access to events and other opportunities, in part, to promote board cohesion.

Nancy added additional board service information, including the length of a regular term (three years), which can be extended. She also collected signatures indicating that members understand duties and expectations (as described in a document disseminated before the meeting along with an agenda and prior meeting notes) and shared parking passes. Nancy noted excitement for the addition of new members and the opportunity that CAB and ELBOW members have recently had to join WHRO's governing Board.

Charlotte noted that CAB members are expected to attend at least three of the four quarterly meetings in person and to contact her or Nancy in advance when attendance is not possible. She also encouraged everyone to lean into this worthwhile opportunity to contribute to WHRO and have fun. "You get what you give."

Nancy shared the following station updates:

- 10/1 Neptune Festival presenting sponsor. Invitation for board members and their families to walk in the parade dressed in ’50, ‘60s and ‘70s attire.
- 10/6 Maury event
- Launch of FOS?? 10/15
- In the process of redesigning the website. Will have opportunities for volunteers to give feedback. Encourage member to also invite non-CAB members or people not familiar with the website or WHRO.
- Distribution of pins
- Noted the firewall between journalism and the rest of the station. The owners (superintendents), CEO, boards, etc. cannot dictate reporting or new coverage.
- While CAB cannot influence the journalists, members can share information, education on issues, share community priorities and provide possible leads.

Nancy noted a shift to nonprofit journalism as a reaction to a dramatic drop in the number of journalists in this area. WHRO is building an endowment to help ensure journalistic autonomy. She also noted that WHRO is building staff and other resources that will help with promotion to wider audiences, e.g., an improved website, a regular newsletter and regular feeds to other news organizations.

Other Business

Charlotte ended the meeting by thanking everyone in attendance and sharing that she looks forward to seeing folks at future CAB meetings, WHRO events and volunteer opportunities.