Williamsburg Advisory Council
Monday, August 1, 2022

Members Present: Leslie Bowie, Leslie Coe, Sean Driscoll, Judy Knudson, Al Louer, Sylvia Payne, Megan Rhyne, Patricia Rublein, John Shulson, and Jim White

Staff Present: Tom Burton, Sydney Felker, Kate Pringle, Nancy Rogan, and Bert Schmidt

I. WELCOME – Judy Knudson called the meeting to order.

II. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS – Bert Schmidt reported that the Chairman of the Board is now Bruce Jacobson, who is based in Williamsburg. He shared that a three-to-five-year strategic plan will be developed for the station starting this fall and that Scott Duncan will facilitate. He announced that WHRO has acquired the Virginia Center of Investigative Journalism, bringing us from four to six staff members in our newsroom. There are plans to advertise for three more positions in the newsroom, with the intention of having nine journalists on staff by the end of this calendar year. WHRO has also started a major giving campaign for journalism so that we can operate with an endowment model for the journalism department. Bert reported that eMediaVA has jumped from $1 million to $1.5 million in support and that the station will meet with the Virginia Department of Education to coordinate the creation and production of content. He shared that as part of the station's DEI efforts, we have recently completed a pay equity study. He also announced that WHRO was named a top place to work in Hampton Roads for the fourth year in a row.

III. DEVELOPMENT REPORT – Tom Burton reported that membership met its goal for this fiscal year, but barely, and that underwriting did not meet its goal. The station had a surplus overall, but it was not provided by Development. He stated that with changes in the media landscape, we are seeing the beginnings of some issues, but it will take time to see if members are renewing or not. He also stated that this fall, for the first time in media history, more people will consume programming digitally than on televisions, and that this will impact how we conduct pledge going forward. He shared that the station's customer relationship management software is currently in transition to new software and should be up and running by mid-October.

IV. CONTENT REPORT – Nancy Rogan shared that Crizti Walsh has joined the station as a radio announcer and that the station is currently hiring for two positions—audience editor and general assignment reporter. She also shared that Curate has started recording its seventh season and that a new Ken Burns documentary premieres on September 18. Regarding local community events, WHRO will be hosting a classical open mic night in the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg on November 19. She also shared that WHRO recently came in first place in several categories at the Virginia Association of Broadcasters Awards, including a Best in Investigative Reporting award for Buried History: First Baptist Church.

V. FUTURE MEETINGS – The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 14, 2022. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.