

WCBU Associate Board meeting minutes

November 13, 2019

Board members present:

President Ambra Haake

Bill Shock

Jennifer Essig

John Lamb

Diane Hahn

Others present: WCBU General Manager R.C. McBride. Individual Giving Director Jennifer Armstrong

Ms. Haake called the meeting to order at 4:08 P.M.

Minutes were approved for July and September board meetings.

Facilities:

General Manager R.C. McBride reported that broadcast started Live! From Morgan Hall beginning the prior week. On November 7, 2019 an email sharing the move information and some new programming changes was shared. The move created some problems with transmission that staff is working to rectify. Some broadcast strength issues were noted that could not be completely resolved due to a drop from 500 MHz to 50 MHz. The Bradley IT Department is aware of this issue and has not been able to offer solutions. The server for WCBU is located now in Normal due to the eventual demolition of Jobst Hall.

Programming, Staffing and Funding:

RIS (Reader Information service) was moved and is currently down temporarily, probably until early December 2019. R.C. felt this was a service that needed to be reviewed and audited for actual usage. It is staffed 24/7 with about 35 volunteers to provide reading services of news items. There is an estimated 250 users. Current funding for it is provided by a grant that expires 6-30-2020.

WCBU finances are in order at present and the loan made to WCBU by WGLT should be repaid to WGLT by the end of the year.

There is a potential for hiring three reporters if finances stay stable. The corporate support position candidates are being narrowed down and potential hiring should occur soon.

Underwriters have been stable for the most part and only one underwriter dropped their support. Most underwriters have been positive about the changes and transition.

R.C. mentioned his management priorities are for; the loan repayment, placing five local staff for WCBU and ongoing fundraising now that the move is nearly completed.

There was discussion about CAB recommendations for programming and how it can be balanced with covering local issues for the Greater Peoria area as WGLT does for the Bloomington Normal market. Some programs are shared by both WCBU and WGLT at present due to funding issues and better pricing for two stations media buys. There had not been negative feedback about the shows that have been dropped. Some shows that have been dropped due to funding could be added back if sponsors become available for specific programs.

These companies have renewed as sponsors for specific shows or overall support: CEFCU for Marketplace, Laurie Adams Country Financial for the TED Talk and David Vaughn investments has increased their support. Unland and Mackinaw Valley Vineyard will be renewing support in 2020. Other current underwriters and new underwriters will be contacted by the new Corporate Support person once hiring is complete.

Individual giving reflects 385 pledges of \$84,000 and cash received is \$46,000. Bradley ended their payroll deductions at the end of October and there are about 20 people that will be contacted regarding this change. There are also about 13 community members using EFT that have been sent a paper letter to change their withdrawal information.

There have been 24 vehicle donations since last June.

Old Business:

WCBU Community Advisory Board revised Bylaws were reviewed and approved. Thank you to John Lamb for his revising and editing work.

The board members discussed how to grow our support with new community members and sponsors. It was discussed that to get more diversity in the group people could be approached from many groups such as small businesses, young professionals, Farm Bureau members, healthcare, arts partners, legal and education fields. Joe and Michelle Richey were suggested as community art supporters. John is developing a form for potential board members to use an application for service, Sarah is assisting with this project. The board needs to focus on how to help fill our 15 board positions and also locate people that will become strong supporters that may not be currently involved..

New Business:

New Officers were voted on and approved; Jennifer Robin, Nominating Chair and Diane Hahn, Recording Secretary.

The potential was discussed that if Bradley in the future would put the FCC license up for sale that WGLT/Illinois State has the right of first refusal to obtain the license by submitting a matching bid.

There was no tour of the new facility.

Ms. Haake adjourned the meeting at 5:00 P.M.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 8, 2020 at 4P.M. at the Bradley Global Communications Center Reading Room 103.