

WFAE Community Advisory Board (CAB) – Meeting Minutes

Thursday, 13 December 2018, WFAE Station

Attendance

CAB Members: John Lincoln, Tish Stoker Signet, Debbie Sherrie, Sri Nagarajan. WFAE Board Chair Ed Williams; *WFAE Staff:* Joe O'Connor, Robert Koch, Ju-Don Marshall, Joni Deutsch, Renee Rallos. (CAB member Hema Parek was able to join by phone later in the meeting.)

Meeting began at 6 p.m. over dinner

Agenda

1. Welcome – John Lincoln
2. Approval of minutes – John Lincoln
3. Financial Update – Joe O'Connor
4. Queen City PodQuest – Ju-Don Marshall, Joni Deutsch
5. Governing Policy & Application Process Discussion – John Lincoln
6. Terms – John Lincoln
7. StrengthsFinder Recap – John Lincoln
8. 2019 Meeting Dates – John Lincoln
9. Questions

Welcome & Approval of Minutes—John Lincoln

Of the nine members currently on the CAB, only four were present during the beginning of the meeting. Minutes of the previous meeting(s) will be revisited for approval at a later meeting where a quorum are present.

Joe O'Connor: Financial Update

Joe highlighted an array of accomplishments and new projects under way, including: we are ahead by about \$14,000 over budget. Underwriting effort has been down down by one sales person for nine months and we have now hired an excellent *Charlotte Observer* professional, Steve Jameson. And major giving has been ahead during the period.

Reviews indicate that the whole thrust of fund drives —growing the listenership—is attracting new members.

At CAB meeting time, the December pledge drive was still under way and in its finishing) hours. (So both Jeff Bundy and final totals were still outstanding.) However, at that time we were on budget with 925 gifts, \$132,000 against a \$200,000 goal, with high confidence for a Friday finish with \$143,000 by end of the day.

In the context of the past three years, Joe cited meeting goals of increasing by 50%, and putting the funds into dramatically increasing newsroom talent and programming .

Ju-Don Marshall, Joni Deutsch: Queen City PodQuest

Ju-Don reiterated highlights of the Knight grant, including its dedicated purpose of increasing storytelling

capabilities, to frame and introduce Joni's presentation of the new podcast contest.

Queen City PodQuest

Joni detailed that we are now beginning promotions for listeners to submit ideas for original podcasts, with very limited promotions so far, until after the pledge drive. (The new podcast contest, *Queen City PodQuest*, ends January 27.) Even so, we have already had 15 submissions so far on topics including: arts and culture, love and marriage, Latin alternative communities, fictional audio-drama, and conservation efforts. Contest-winning podcasters would actually do the podcast, with coaching, a cash prize plus help with a six-to-eight-episode production. Promotions have been not as much on-air, aiming to broaden participation beyond the bubble of regular NPR listeners, too. Outreach has focused on settings such as university, prison re-entry programs, pushing out to different organizations who can put the call for entries out to their clients. The *QC PodQuest* form is on the WFAE website for submissions. The call is for description of an idea in the rough, plus two minutes or less audio. After the Jan. 27 deadline there will be internal screening first. Participants must be 18 or over, reside in or attend school in listening area, and the content cannot be plagiarizing anything. Following screening the entries will go into a public voting round, planned to go live online to the public in early February along with the photo they submitted, their audio clip and the idea. Each entrant must have a Facebook account (ie. be a real person, not a bot.) The voting is by public preference.

Ju-Don put the PodQuest project in the broader context of our goal of eventually getting more deeply and broadly into the community-education aspect of our WFAE mission. She pointed out that this project is putting skills in the hands of members of the community.

Board Chair Ed Williams, in his fifth year on the WFAE governing board, praised the high level at which the station is now doing so much more with the resources we have at our disposal. He described this as "as exciting a time as there has been in the life of WFAE."

Amplifier,

Ju-Don then introduced discussion of the new local music initiative, again by Joni, who comes from West Virginia Public Broadcasting. Joni explained that *Amplifier* grew out of curiosity about "what is here, what needs to be here?" on the regional music scene. To find out, her team put out a form and link in summer for area musicians to submit their work. There have been over 440 submissions since July. (She had expected 50.) The diversity of response has also been powerful. While we naturally expected to hear from guitarists and singer-songwriters, we have gotten all kinds of entries.

The **Amplifier** daily podcast launched in September for 20 days, featuring interviews with music notables. One was an eclectic classical pianist. Another a longtime Rockstar who calls Charlotte home. Community engagement around it has been great, helping to pull the music community together. Museums are interested in our participating in their music forums, organizations and arts centers, breweries with live music all are wanting to collaborate with us.

Amplifier is underwritten by Ortho Carolina, in their single-largest digital grant. Ju-Don pointed out that, when we prioritize all the things we do as part of our mission, with the ones that are not news-related we aim for clarity on where and how revenues come in. Here is where underwriting, such as that of Ortho Carolina, is a valuable focus.

John Lincoln: Governing Policy & Application Process Discussion

The CAB reviewed and there was consensus approval on a draft of our governance statement that is required by regulation and will go on the website. The group also reviewed a draft of the new CAB member application form, with input from members about how best to get at applicants' strongest areas of expertise and passion. Following useful discussion of both best practices around inclusiveness and diversity in the process, Ed Williams suggested that Secretary Tish Signet draft a summary of questions and concerns that he will then have reviewed for guidance by experts who have helped our and other boards with such recruiting documents and processes.

Tish and others discussed the desire to revisit our excellent CAB strategic plan that was the product of our work with the Lee Institute in 2015. The focus the group agreed is in need of particular review is the plan's two Key Roles with the associated duties of the CAB, and then for us to define priorities and action steps to implement our plan. The group agreed to hold a CAB strategy meeting by tele-conference for this purpose sometime in January. Renee graciously offered to organize this with John Lincoln and communicate with the group on details.

CAB Terms: John Lincoln

Several CAB members had agreed to continue serving on the CAB, regardless of years of tenure, during the transition of station leadership and now to ensure that all of the experienced members do not rotate off at once. Along with escalated recruiting now, we can begin implementing our policy of three-year CAB member terms starting with the July 2019 start of the new term year, and a limit of two terms going forward. Depending on the membership recruiting results, some "veteran" CAB members may possibly roll off of the CAB before their new three-year terms are completed after that. This will depend on whether assuming membership of the group is solid with needed functions covered.

StrengthsFinder Recap: John Lincoln

John provided a high-level summary of our StrengthsFinder roles and functions as a group, adding results for some additional staff and group members and providing new packets of useful information about our results.

2019 Meeting Dates: John Lincoln

Thanks to Renee for scheduling and communicating all CAB meetings for 2019: Feb. 21, May 23, Aug. 22, Dec. 12. All are on Thursdays.

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 8 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,
Tish Stoker Signet
13 December 2018**