

Notes from WPFW Community Advisory Board (CAB) Meeting

7:00 PM, 21 March 2011, at WPFW, 2390 Champlain St. NW 2nd Floor, Washington, DC 20009

Participants:

CAB members:

Bridget Arnwine, Rockville, MD
Carolyn Brown, Forestville, MD
David Vega, Takoma Park, MD
Frank Johnson, College Park, MD
Herman Samuels, Upper Marlboro, MD
Jeremiah Lowery, Washington, DC
Kalonji Olusegun, Silver Spring, MD
Kathy Allen, Washington, DC
Perry Redd, Washington, DC
Ron Benjamin, Greenbelt, MD

WPFW staff members:

John Hughes, General Manager

Guests:

Benito Diaz, Silver Spring, MD
Charles Turner, Washington, DC
Gloria Turner, Fort Washington, MD

Notes:

1. Ms. Brown, noting that a quorum was present, called the meeting to order at 7 PM.
2. The CAB members discussed, modified, and approved the meeting agenda (Attachment 1).
3. The members discussed, modified, and approved the notes from the 24 January 2011 meeting (Attachment 2).
4. Mr. Hughes said:
 - It has been a “fast and furious” 2½ months since his arrival.
 - His “listen and learn tour” is continuing.
 - Short term priority 1 is station certification, performing the due diligence required to ensure that the station is complying with Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules and regulations. FCC compliance is of particular importance because the station's license comes up for renewal this year.
 - Short term priority 2 is team building, including staff, volunteers, the CAB, and the Local Station Board (LSB). He would like to improve the work environment, though this is made more complex because the full time staff has been reduced to half time work schedules. A strategic plan, created by the team, is needed.

- Short term priority 3 is finance and budgeting. The good news in this area is that the recently completed winter fund drive was successful, raising even more money than the fall drive. The bad news is that we still need to improve. The fund drive has been extended as a “soft drive”.
 - Short term priority 4 is technical evaluation. The station prepared and submitted an application to the Department of Commerce for a Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) grant to completely rebuild the station's broadcasting infrastructure, replacing the outmoded analog equipment with current digital devices. Unfortunately, Congress, with the President's consent, zeroed out the PTFP the day after the proposal was submitted. WPFW will survive without the grant; other stations may not. Despite the disappointment, the grant application experience was valuable. In particular, a technical baseline was created for the station. The staff will look for other funding sources that could replace the PTFP grant.
 - Short term priority 5 is station relocation; the current space has to be vacated by July 15, 2012. He, with the assistance of the LSB's station relocation committee, is looking at both short- and long-term solutions. The short-term solution could be moving in with an existing broadcasting and production facility that has excess capacity. The long-term solution is the larger vision that he articulated at the previous meeting. One “interesting and exciting” option that has appeared is space on the University of the District of Columbia's (UDC's) main campus on Connecticut Avenue. He has met with the cognizant UDC vice president, and seen the space, which overlooks Connecticut Avenue. The space would have to be reconfigured to meet the station's needs.
 - The staff is working on a new Web site. The team for the site update is in place. The goal is to have the site operational no later than two weeks before the next fund drive, which begins on May 1.
 - The station has decided to put Al Jazeera English's news service into the WPFW schedule at some level, though how and how much have not been determined. Two of the options under consideration are:
 - Stand alone during the evening news, and
 - Selectively using Al Jazeera material during Spectrum Today in the same manner that Democracy Now! material is currently used.
5. Mr. Olusegun asked when work would begin on the strategic plan. Mr. Hughes replied that work will begin during a station retreat at Busboys and Poets, probably after the Spring fund drive.
 6. Mr. Samuels asked how much the UDC location will cost. Mr. Hughes replied that cost is still to be negotiated. Ms. Brown asked if UDC is considered a short- or a long-term relocation solution. Mr. Hughes replied that it is both. Mr. Vega asked how much influence UDC would have over WPFW if the station was located there. Mr. Hughes replied that the station will continue to be owned and operated by Pacifica; UDC will have no direct influence. However, the station will make an effort to provide opportunities for UDC students, and to serve the UDC community (e.g. by public service announcements). In exchange, the station's rent may be discounted, possibly even free.
 7. Mr. Redd asked how he could work with the Web site team, noting that he is working on Mobile Giving Foundation (donation by cell phone) arrangements. Mr. Hughes recommended that Mr. Redd wait a bit, since the team is just starting up; it took a while to cancel the previous Web site development contract.
 8. Mr. Turner asked if the PTFP grant application could be submitted to other funding sources. Mr. Hughes replied that no alternative sources have been identified yet.
 9. Mr. Hughes said that an event had occurred that forced the station to consider third party liability. The station management determined that WPFW needs to have some oversight over events that make

use of WPFW resources, including on-air announcements. Due to a communication failure, the house parties to benefit WPFW that Mr. Vega and others had planned got caught in the process. There is no issue with the house parties, and Mr. Hughes is looking forward to them. Mr. Vega said that his house party had been put on hold and now will be rescheduled, maybe for June. Mr. Redd stated that he will do the same. Mr. Hughes noted that Jim Byers and Nancy Alonzo were invited to Mr. Vega's party, and that he would like an invitation, too. Ms. Turner said that she is planning a house party under the aegis of the LSB's Outreach and Development Committee (O&DC), and will invite Mr. Hughes. Mr. Hughes noted that the impact of the house parties is magnified, because the CPB partially matches every non-federal dollar raised by the station. The parties are also a good way to get community feedback. Mr. Benjamin asked if a written third party liability policy is in existence; Mr. Hughes replied "Not yet."

10. Mr. Hughes said that the station is planning a "thank-a-thon," a phone bank of programmers calling and thanking listeners who had contributed to their shows during the last fund drive.
11. Ms. Brown proposed that 20 to 30 minutes be set aside at each meeting for listeners (non-CAB members) to speak. She explained that the proposed listener comment period would replace the current CAB practice of allowing non-CAB members to participate in meetings essentially on the same basis as CAB members. Mr. Turner made a corresponding motion, that a listener comment period be put on the agenda of every meeting and allotted the smaller of three minutes per listener speaking or 21 minutes total. The CAB discussed and passed the motion, eight votes for, one vote against, and three abstentions.
12. Ms. Brown proposed that a committee be set up to draft CAB meeting agendas. She explained that the committee, which would have the power to reject proposed agenda items, would replace the current practice of members submitting proposed agenda items to the Secretary, who compiled them into the draft agenda considered at the start of every meeting. Mr. Benjamin said that he believes the proposed process violates the public notice and public meeting requirements of both the CAB Bylaws and the CPB regulations. Ms. Allen said that the time that would be needed by the committee could be used for better things. Mr. Turner said that he prefers the current approach. Ms. Brown subsequently withdrew her proposal until she could study the Bylaws.
13. Ms. Brown proposed that former LSB members, in deference to their knowledge and experience, be offered more speaking and meeting participation opportunities than other non-CAB members. The CAB members discussed the concept and decided against the proposal.
14. The CAB members discussed the comment (Attachment 3) submitted by listener Percidia Norris. Some members concurred with the comment; others did not. It was pointed out that Democracy Now! can be listened to at any time via its Web site. It was agreed that Ms. Norris' comment should be handled in accordance with the station's standard process and CAB Resolution 2009-003: it should be provided to the Program Director for information and consideration, and the listener and CAB should be notified of the comment disposition. Mr. Hughes asked if could notify Ms. Brown rather than the entire CAB; it was decided that that would be acceptable.
15. Ms. Brown proposed the following as activities of the 2011 CAB¹:
 - Participate on the Pledge Team.
 - Participate in the Major Donor Circle (major donors give \$1,000 or more). Mr. Hughes noted that the station was trying to arrange for selected major donors to be able to attend the (very limited audience) jazz concerts being offered at the Turkish Embassy.

¹ Editor's note: The CAB Bylaws say "How these tasks are carried out will be determined by the board at the outset of every year."

- Assist the O&DC, particularly with the Town Hall meeting currently being planned.

Mr. Benjamin requested that drafting a programming policy for the station be added to the list.

16. Ms. Turner thanked the CAB members who contributed to the success of the U Street Jam.
17. Mr. Samuels asked if the station needs to physically be in the District of Columbia. Mr. Hughes replied that the station needs convenient Metro access, acceptable security conditions, and adequate parking.
18. Mr. Vega asked what precipitated Gary Null's departure. Mr. Hughes replied that Mr. Null did not provide any reasons.
19. Mr. Lowery noted that the station has many plans in process, many of which require specialized expertise. He recommended that the station identify people who have relevant expertise and reach out to them, possibly getting free expert service as a result.
20. Ms. Arnwine advised that she had not heard from Ms. Rabiee regarding contacting the new operators of the Howard Theatre. Ms. Arnwine will contact Ms. Rabiee.
21. The next CAB meeting will be at 7 PM on Monday, May 16, 2011.
22. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

**March 2011 Meeting of the WPFW Community Advisory Board
Agenda**

1. Adoption of Agenda
2. Adoption of Minutes from Previous Meeting
3. General Manager's Comments
4. Old Business: None.
5. New Business:
 - a. Third Party Liability
 - b. Governance:
 - i. Community visitors
 - ii. Executive committee
 - iii. Former LSB members
 - c. Listener comment
 - d. Discussion of 2011 CAB plan
 - i. Pledge Team
 - ii. Major Donor Circle
 - iii. LSB's Outreach and Development Committee
 - iv. Town Hall
6. Set Date for Next Meeting (nominal date: Monday, May 16, 2011)
7. Adjourn

Notes from WPFW Community Advisory Board (CAB) Meeting

7:00 PM, 24 January 2011, at WPFW, 2390 Champlain St. NW 2nd Floor, Washington, DC 20009

Participants:

CAB members:

Alvernon Garey, Hyattsville, MD
Bridget Arnwine, Rockville, MD
Carolyn Brown, Forestville, MD
David Vega, Takoma Park, MD
Frank Johnson, College Park, MD
Herman Samuels, Upper Marlboro, MD
Jeremiah Lowery, Washington, DC
Joseph Young, Largo, MD
Kalonji Olusegun, Silver Spring, MD
Kathy Allen, Washington, DC
Mana Rabiee, Washington, DC
Perry Redd, Washington, DC
Rabihah Mateen, Washington, DC
Ron Benjamin, Greenbelt, MD

WPFW staff members:

John Hughes, General Manager

Guests:

Ayo Handy-Kendi, Washington, DC
Jim Brown, Silver Spring, MD

Notes:

1. Ms. Mateen, the Chair of the 2010 CAB, opened the meeting at 7:00 PM with belated greetings of the New Year.
2. The meeting participants discussed, modified, and approved the meeting agenda (Attachment 1).
3. The meeting participants discussed, modified, and approved CAB Resolution 2011-001, **Community Advisory Board Members** (Attachment 2).
4. The CAB members elected Ms. Brown, Mr. Vega, and Mr. Benjamin respectively as chair, vice chair, and secretary of the 2011 CAB.
5. Ms. Brown thanked Ms. Mateen for her service as chair of the 2010 CAB.
6. The CAB members discussed and approved the notes from the 15 November 2010 meeting (Attachment 3).

Attachment 2

7. Mr. Hughes:

- Thanked the WPFW staff, volunteers, and members for the gracious and warm reception that he has received, and said that he is determined to earn the trust that has been placed in him.
- Said that he was formerly with Howard University, where he had the privilege of working with Mr. Brown.
- Said that he is encouraging a “Team WPFW” attitude, in which staff, volunteers, and members alike actively participate rather than just advise. In particular, a “pledge team” has been formed in anticipation of the upcoming pledge drive, 3-19 February. The team meets every Tuesday at 5:00 PM, and is open to all, including Local Station Board (LSB) members, CAB members, staff, and the community.
- Said that he is engaging in a “worldwide listen and learn tour”. He invited people to get on his schedule, or on the schedule of other people on the leadership team, by contacting Gerrie Mahdie, who is maintaining the schedules.
- Said that WPFW has to recognize that radio has changed; this is not our grandparents’ radio market. Even though Washington is the ninth largest radio market in the country, we must redefine our vision in contemporary terms: “our service, anywhere, any place, any time”.
- There is much to do, so we will have to establish priorities, and look at successful models that we can follow. For example:
 - The station’s IT infrastructure is broken.
 - The studio and on-air equipment is ancient and analog, in serious need of overhaul or replacement. Almost all of the equipment will have to be replaced with up to date digital devices when the station moves, if not before.
 - The station needs to get onto a firm financial footing, with less dependence on pledge drives and more on grants.
 - The program schedule needs a top-to-bottom, side-to-side review to ensure that the station’s programming is meeting the needs of the community.
 - We need to raise the profile of the station; it is doing signature work, but too few people know about it. The marketing / promotion / advertising will have to be free or significantly discounted.
 - The station needs to move by November 2012. The new facility has to be identified and prepared, and financing obtained for new equipment and for the move itself. If possible, the new facility should be a multi-use “civic space”, not just a broadcasting facility. The station may obtain rental revenue from the additional uses, and also benefit from synergistic effect of nearby, additional people and events.
 - The station needs a strategic plan; he is leading the charge to develop one. Strategic partnerships with other organizations will be a key part of the plan.

8. Ms. Handy-Kendi and Ms. Mateen said that they have not been able to locate the programming goal information that Mr. Hill had presented to the LSB several years ago. Ms. Handy-Kendi asked for Mr. Brown’s assistance in locating it.

9. Several people noted that fund raising, a key concern of the station, was not on the meeting agenda. Ms. Brown and Ms. Mateen said that the topic had been extensively discussed in previous meetings, and that the need now is to implement the suggestions that had been offered. Mr. Redd recommended

Attachment 2

Mr. Vega as a point of contact. Ms. Handy-Kendi noted that fundraising efforts should be carefully planned, not just thrown together in an uncoordinated reaction to a budget emergency.

10. Mr. Hughes commended Mr. West for his service as Interim General Manager. Mr. Hughes said that the station's leadership team needs a permanent Program Director as soon as possible, and explained that he is working with the LSB to announce and compete the position.
11. The draft letter to Blue Note regarding establishing a working relationship with WPFW on the rebirth of the Howard Theatre was not available. Ms. Rabiee said that she would contact Ms. Sutler about it.
12. Mr. Brown passed out background information (Attachment 4) on the Mobile Giving Foundation (MGF), which makes arrangements so that people can contribute money to charitable organizations by cell phone, by sending a text message to a designated phone number. He said that Dr. Pamela Brewer found out about the MGF, and thought that it might be good for WPFW. He explained that setting up an MGF account for WPFW would require approximately \$1,500 in (currently unbudgeted) upfront funding, and that it would take about three months before the system would begin to work.
 - Ms. Mateen said that cell phone contributions were used extensively in the Haitian earthquake relief effort. Advertising of the capability was free, done by tweeting.
 - Mr. Redd offered to work with Mr. Brown to put together a WPFW MGF mockup.
 - Ms. Allen asked if the MGF concept had been proposed to the LSB's Outreach and Development Committee. Mr. Brown replied that it had, and that the Committee was worried about the upfront resources required. Ms. Allen recommended that funds received via MGF be earmarked for a specific WPFW need, e.g. the new transmitter, and that the MGF capability be advertised on the WPFW Web site.
13. Mr. Johnson briefed the CAB members on the 10-week Leadership and Strategic Planning Certificate Program that he is facilitating at the Community College of the District of Columbia. He promised to email information on the Program to people on the CAB mailing list.
14. The meeting participants discussed the three listener comments (Attachment 5).
 - The participants understood the desire of the listener to hear the Democracy Now! break music without the Public Service Announcements (PSAs) that WPFW often plays over them. However, it was also recognized that Democracy Now! is a popular program, and that playing PSAs during it gives them an audience that they would never get if they were relegated to the beginning or end of the program. It was noted that the music could be heard, unobstructed by the PSAs, by listening to the program on the Democracy Now! Web site. Mr. Hughes said that the staff believes they know who submitted the comment (the listener's name and phone number were cut off in Ms. Pope's voice mail), and said that he would respond to the person.
 - The participants agreed that the second listener comment should be handled via the station's normal process for comments about programs: place a copy in the public file, send one copy to the Program Director, and send a second copy to the programmer involved. The participants were concerned, however, about the statement that several Community Comment hosts were rude to callers. Mr. Redd, recognizing that the rudeness may be a matter of perception rather than intention, recommended that Community Comment hosts say something like "I apologize if I've been rude" in their comments at the end of the show. The meeting members concurred with the idea.
 - The participants recommended that the third listener comment, recommending Millie Ware as a replacement for Zenadiah Gilchrist, be referred to the Program Director for consideration.
15. The meeting participants noted the document (Attachment 6) summarizing the results of the LSB Programming Committee's initial review of the five CAB policy recommendations.

Attachment 2

16. The meeting participants introduced themselves.
17. Mr. Vega said that he continues to recommend that CAB members hold house parties for the benefit of the station, that he will be holding one with the assistance of Mr. Johnson and Mr. Turner, but that he will not coordinate parties. Mr. Hughes, noting that WPFW must be squeaky clean because its license is up for renewal this year, asked that Ms. Jordan be notified of each party, so that the station is aware of everything that is being done in its name.
18. Ms. Handy-Kendi noted that Ms. Jordan occasionally stops proposed fundraising ideas, possibly due to overload. Ms. Mateen recalled that Ms. Jordan told the CAB that she discourages ideas that do not come with sufficient resources, or that are poorly defined.
19. It was agreed that CAB meetings would continue to be nominally scheduled for the third Monday of odd-number months. The next CAB meeting will be at 7 PM on Monday, March 21, 2011.
20. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

P. Norris called on 01/28 and stated her wish that WPFW would return to re-airing Democracy Now at 6pm. She stopped being a member after DN became Spectrum Now.

Attachment 3