

Rough Summary of Pacifica Board Telephone Meeting  
9/19/2001

From Progressive Portal

<<http://www.progressiveportal.org>>

*Note: Quotations should be considered approximate.*

- **New members appointed, new officers elected**
- **Emergency meeting on "Democracy Now!" set for 14 days from today**
- **Ford doesn't allow motion to suspend Utrice Leid**

Over the objections of five members as to the process undertaken, the Pacifica Board in a telephone conference call meeting added new members today and elected new officers. Below is a summary of the meeting, held today (Wed., 9/19/2001, starting 2 p.m. ET, 11 a.m. PT).

I'm sure Pacifica Campaign <<http://www.pacificacampaign.org>> will soon issue further action alerts, and Progressive Portal <<http://www.progressiveportal.org>> will also have some enhanced letter-writing. (Progressive Portal's new letter-writing on Pacifica will likely be delayed for a few days, as we develop responses to the international crisis that rose to the fore with the attacks of Tuesday, Sept. 11.)

## **NEW MEMBERS**

In an unexpected and unusual process, acting chair Ken Ford gave each new member immediate voting rights as they were elected, so they could vote on the subsequent nominations. At the end of the process, the new members were allowed to vote immediately, including on the election of a new chair.

The new members:

**Marion Barry** -- controversial former mayor of Wash., DC

**Dick Gregory** -- comedian, activist, health advocate

**James Ferguson** -- Director of Research and Planning, Council of National Black Churches; Dem. Party activist

**George Barnstone** -- real-estate executive

**Krishna Roy** -- p.r. and marketing executive

If the five can be counted upon to side with the Pacifica majority, and if their election isn't subsequently overturned by court action or otherwise, the majority now has 11, versus five in the minority. That gives the majority the ability to cast two-thirds-majority votes required to amend the by-laws or oust board members. (They had tried in court to oust Pete Bramson, arguing that his term had expired. Ford did not offer to resign given that his term had expired.)

## **NEW OFFICERS**

Farrell became chair; Johns became treasurer; no vote held on vice chair (Ford is now vice chair); Murdock became secretary.

### **Chairperson**

**"Dissidents" Nominate Cagan:** Tom Moran nominated, and Pete Bramson seconded, nomination of Leslie Cagan to be chair of the board.

**"Usurpers" Nominate Farrell:** John Murdock nominated Bob Farrell to be chair. After Ken Ford called for a second, there was a pause. Ford then said that the "parliamentarian" had advised him that it wasn't necessary to second nominations. Asked by Cagan who the "parliamentarian" was, Ford said, "the book, Robert's Rules of Order." (He's correct: <<http://www.bartleby.com/176/66.html>>)

Vote was as follows (Johns had left for another meeting):

Member*	Voted for
*"Dissident"	
Murdock	Farrell
*Bramson	Cagan
Farrell	himself

Ferguson	Farrell
Barry	Farrell (said he's known Farrell 25+ years, good friend)
Lee	Farrell
*Kriegel	[abstain]
*Moran	Cagan
*Robinson	Cagan
Chambers	Farrell (after speaking to Roy's nomination saying we need more women on the board, she voted for the male Chairperson candidate)
*Cagan	herself
Ford	Farrell
Roy	Farrell

(Barnstone was added to the call after the vote.)

### Treasurer

Bramson nominated Robinson. Moran seconded (Ford: unnecessary).

Murdock nominated Johns; he said Chambers (tax accountant) would be qualified but she is overworked. She said she would also support Johns. Chambers endorsed Johns and slammed Robinson as divisive because he has joined the lawsuit against the majority. Chambers is clearly firmly entrenched with the majority, except with regard to Utrice Leid, the former WBAI manager now appointed national Program Director.

Murdock	Johns
*Bramson	Robinson
Farrell	Johns
Ferguson	Johns
Barry	Johns
Lee	Johns
*Kriegel	Robinson
*Moran	Robinson
*Robinson	Robinson
Chambers	Johns
*Cagan	Robinson
Roy	Johns
Barnstone	[abstain]
Ford	Johns

### Secretary

Lee nominated Murdock. Chambers was also going to nominate Murdock. After offering to open Cagan's line, he told the operator to stop, then he No other nomination.

Murdock	Murdock
*Bramson	no
Farrell	Murdock
Ferguson	Murdock
Barry	Murdock
Lee	Murdock
*Kriegel	[abstain]
*Moran	no
*Robinson	[abstain]

Chambers	Murdock
*Cagan	no
Roy	Murdock
Barnstone	[abstain]
Ford	Murdock

## **NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

October 27–28 is next meeting, topics need to be submitted to chair within 7 days of today.

Cagan: Why not voting on vice chair position? Ford said he has not resigned and his term is not up. Should we discuss topics for agenda now or just send them in? Ford: now's good.

Cagan: review paid consultants, contracts; must have thorough, honest discussion of continuing deepening crisis at WBAI -- outrageous that board hasn't grappled with this since last December. Need evaluation process of Executive Director; no evaluation in the 1.5 years since she came on.

Murdock: Thanked Ford. Cagan's issues do need to be addressed; he'll put some issues in writing too. Any suggestions must be put in the form of a resolution that can be voted on.

Chambers?: Agree with Cagan's call to help WBAI. Need personnel committee, including more inclusive and community-responsive method of choosing station general managers.

Barnstone: Agree.

Bramson: What's process to put issues on the agenda?

Ford: Will address that "real quick." Anyone else?

Moran: Unknown location of meeting, time and date without consulting board members. Our issues have been put off, and no call-backs received from Executive Director or Board majority in months.

Ford: Court stipulation says any agenda item SHALL be put on the agenda if submitted in writing by a board member within 7 days of notice of meeting (i.e., 7 days from today).

Murdock: In addition to submitting issues and proposals, please identify information members would like made available, and individuals it may be useful to ask to attend. Helpful to have a telephonic non-voting meeting after items submitted and distributed so we can talk about how to prioritize the agenda, because may be 5 or 6 people submitting the same item.

Moran: Written submission of agenda item was done (by board minority) before this meeting, and were not put on agenda.

Ford: I have not received any such correspondence.

Bramson: I'm looking at email submitting those items.

Ford: Stipulated hard copy, not email. Given email volume we're receiving, a lot are probably lost in transit or filtered out. Do it in written [i.e., paper] format.

Robinson: New members need to be aware they've come into a polarized board. The way this meeting is conducted should be chilling. Governance and management has broken down, network collapsing. Mediating, negotiating cannot be done if we continue to use these means to deal with the present crisis.

Chambers: Also want to see review of Program Director. Have not witnessed any set of events that would lead me to give the new person [Utrice Leid] the benefit of the doubt. Critical issue. Board's viewpoint, preferably as an action item, needs to be clearly, quickly, and pointedly expressed.

## **EMERGENCY MEETING RE "DEMOCRACY NOW!"**

Cagan: Move for emergency meeting right now on this call or ASAP to address "Democracy Now!" crisis. Reiterate

question re October meeting location. MUST BE a full, open, public meeting.

Murdock seconded motion to have emergency meeting to deal with "Democracy Now!" No reason to wait on this, has gone on a long time. Need to have some people to provide background in writing or at the meeting start. Policy issue is involved, board needs to address it.

Moran asked if "we are currently open for business."

Ford ruled the motion out of order.

Barnstone: Fully agree we need to address the issues; we need to get "Democracy Now!" back on the air. "This is just ya-ya land."

Bramson: What will ensure that we will get the requested documents before the next board meeting?

Ford: You have to ask the new chair, Mr. Farrell. Bramson: Let's ask him.

Farrell: I'll speak at the close of the *agenda* [emphasis his] today. I'm getting pressed for time to stay on the line.

Murdock: I insist on an emergency meeting. By-laws Art 4 Sec 2 -- special meetings can be called by majority vote of full board. Board is on the phone. Nothing forecloses deciding to have an emergency meeting. Move again to set a date for an emergency phone meeting.

Ford: This was not on the agenda, it's something the chair will have to address.

Moran: Issues intertwined with that: behavior of interim general manager [Leid], executive director [Bessie Wash] during that time -- need to address those.

Robinson: Agree with Barnstone. "DN!" needs to be on the air. Some people want it off the air permanently. We should be clear whether that's part of the discussion.

Ford: We all want it back on the air, no one more than I. But there are issues the attorneys and union are working on. This is the Executive Director's issue. Chair will probably get in touch with you as to how this will be resolved.

Robinson: This is policy, not operational.

Bramson: Call the question, to vote on calling an emergency meeting. (Chambers wanted to second, but was not needed.)

Barnstone: ASAP.

Farrell: He mentioned a "peace initiative" that he discussed with all but two current board issues. Would be emotionally satisfying now to set a date to discuss "DN!" but to do so without setting context, seeing nature of what is in place in terms of discussions, suits, bargaining-unit priorities. Ask the courtesy of the board to let me do that as one of the first things I do as new chair. Give officers to look at the range of things put before the board and put them in some sense of order and priority. Asking for a "no" vote.

Barnstone: Need to have meeting ASAP. Get "DN!" back on the air.

Cagan: Understand Farrell, but this is not a new problem. Setting an emergency meeting doesn't undercut Farrell's authority to create context, have other items, etc.

Ferguson: Any legal matters regarding "DN!"? Ford: Yes. Ferguson: Any labor union input? A formal response? Ford: Grievances, lawyers on both sides trying to work out this issue, and I'd hate for us to encumber the process now.

Murdock: Support Cagan's point -- we can schedule the meeting today, give Farrell time to get organized. (Mentioned 10 days or 2 weeks.) Everyone on this board should know what's going on with "DN!" and we have no clear report from anybody. Appalling. I don't know what I would decide, but all of us need to know what's going on. We all should get a report in next 4-5 days.

Farrell: Guided by the will of the organization. If majority wants meeting, we'll have it.

Murdock: Restated question to move to hold emergency meeting 14 days from today. At least 3 days prior to meeting,

receive information needed to be informed re issues surrounding "DN!" not being on the air.

Murdock            yes  
\*Bramson            yes  
Farrell             [abstained]  
Ferguson            yes  
Barry                yes? hard to tell what he said  
Lee                  [apparently had left]  
\*Kriegel             yes  
\*Moran                yes  
\*Robinson            yes (think two weeks is an "extensive" amount of time)  
Chambers            yes (want to get detailed reports  
                          in 1 week from Exec. Dir.  
                          as well as a similar report  
                          from "DN!" -- 2 weeks is long)  
\*Cagan                yes  
Roy                    yes (but 2 weeks okay; don't see  
                          difference 7 days would make)  
Barnstone            yes (2 weeks is too long)  
Ford                  [abstain, "following the lead of  
                          the chair"]

Kriegel had to leave.

Farrell asked for closing statement, but his line had disconnected. Someone whispered, "Now entertain a motion to adjourn." Ford: "I will now entertain a motion to adjourn."

Murdock moved to adjourn. Ford seconded. Someone whispered "without objection." Ford: "And without objection hopefully."

#### **MOTION TO SUSPEND UTRICE LEID QUASHED**

Moran: Move that we direct the Executive Director to suspend Utrice Leid until we have the meeting.

Farrell returned.

Ford: Motion out of order.

Moran: Why?

Ford: Not on agenda. Not given adequate information ahead of time to put on agenda for discussion.

Moran: We moved on another motion that was not on the agenda.

Ford: Motion is out of order and we adjourn. (Didn't give Farrell his opportunity to make closing statement.)

# Take action!

Write letters regarding  
Pacifica radio network  
(and on a range of other progressive issues)

*at Progressive Portal*

<http://www.progressiveportal.org>

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