

Minutes WBAI LSB Finance Committee 9-20-23

Present: R. Paul Martin (chair), M. Kay Williams (Secretary), Geoffrey Sterne, Noel Jameson, Jim Dingeman, Neale Vos, Michael D.D. White, Jack De Palma, Daryl McPherson, James Sagurton, Matt Mazza, Bruce Grief, Carolyn McIntyre, Mario Mastrandrea, Ale Murphy, Cerene Roberts

Also present: Berthold Reimers (General Manager), Eleanor Elizabeth Forman (ex-officio LSB Member)

Agenda

1. Call to order 7:00 PM ET
2. Adopt agenda (20 minutes)
3. Identify time keeper (2 minutes)
4. Roll Call (5 minutes)
5. Excuse absences (5 minutes)
6. Minutes approval (10 minutes)
7. Treasurer's Report (15 minutes)
8. General Manager's Report on WBAI's finances (20 minutes)
9. General Manager's Presentation of FY24 Budget (60 minutes)
10. Set next meeting date (5 minutes)
11. New Business
12. Adjourn no later than 9:30 PM ET

7:09 pm ET Call to Order, a quorum, the chair, and the secretary being present

7:11 pm ET Motion (R. Paul) To adopt the agenda as read by him. Passed without objection

7:12 pm ET Timekeeper volunteered – Geoffrey Sterne, Accepted without objection.

7:13 pm ET Roll Call (R. Paul) as above

7: 14 pm ET Excuse Absences – R. Paul noted there were no requests to excuse absences

7:15 pm ET Motion (M. Kay Williams) – To accept minutes for 8-16-23 as sent by email. Passed without objection.

7:16 pm ET Treasurer's Report (R. Paul Martin)

Highlights:

- WBAI makes \$2500 per day if no premiums.
- The GM wants to make \$300K per year from PSA's.
- The latest tranche of money from the Bolton Family Trust came through and we paid \$60 K to Central Services, plus some more bills with the help of matching funds.
- We pay \$300K per year in consultants which is more than any other station, but this is less than 10% of our deficit. We had to cut 75% of our staff in 2013 and we need our consultants to keep the station on the air.
- The ED wants a list of our consultants, with job descriptions, and wants to cut \$45K in consultant fees.
- Accounts payable are at \$2 million, with \$888K listed as "urgent." We had a \$257K deficit by May, '23.
- The NFC wants our FY24 budget by 10-24-23.
- All the stations except for KPFT are now running deficits. KPFT is also the only station paying its Central Services fees monthly, however it is also the station with the most repeat programs. What people like about WBAI is our eclectic group of voices. And KPFT will need to purchase a new transmitter soon.
- The ED wants to consolidate all bank accounts into Bank of America. This will make it easier to track finances and make transfers when necessary.

The Committee discussed the Report.

7:30 pm ET General Manager's Report (Berthold Reimers)

Highlights:

- ❖ Report on the Fund Drive – We make less money if we don't use Kathryn Davis as coordinator. However we did make enough to pay two months rent at 388 and this got matched by our donor. If we raise more, he will match more. In general, we used to make \$100 K per Fund Drive, but that has gone down to \$55K-60K per year. We have noted that new premiums. Old or no premiums do not make money.
- ❖ We need to get the pledge line working and volunteers at the station. This would save \$6,700 per month. We need 3 iPads set up with software consistent with ??? guidelines and at the same time loaded with the premium list, same as the Call Center.
- ❖ Calling lapsed donors. To protect privacy of donors, whoever volunteers for this needs to make the calls at the station and the call lists need to be turned in after every volunteer session. Script sheets are also available. This activity needs direct supervision from either himself, the PD, one of the regular volunteers, like Maxine Harrison-Gallman. There is concern that a positive attitude needs to be projected on these calls. We still need 3 Board members to volunteer for this task force.
- ❖ WBAI has 9 consultants. They are all essential. Hiring them was negotiated with the Union before they were hired. They cost 1/5th of what a Union worker doing these jobs would cost and less than other stations are paying for the functions they perform.
 - Chris LaPilusa – manages website, enters premiums, membership, BAI buddy lists, deals with hacking, earns \$30K per year with no benefits. Other stations pay much more for these services.
 - Constant Contact – produces newsletter, manages consistent logos, earns \$1K per mo.
 - Tony Bates – Fund drive training, earns \$3K per mo, along with Blsdale, makes \$20-30K per mo for the station.
 - Leonard Lopate's booker – books 4-5 guests per week, earns \$2K per mo.
 - AM hosts (4 at \$2K per mo) – They were advised they needed to raise money or would not be paid.
 - Mon – got some Union Underwriting
 - Tues – quit
 - Wed – currently free
 - Thurs – currently free
 - Fri – got \$2K grant (related to Beyond the Pale).
 - Board Ops – 1 FT and 4 PT – Fill in Sat and Sun. Need seasoned producers for this. Need to fill in for other board ops when there are family or personal emergencies. If we didn't use consultants for this we would have to pay union wages at \$40 per hour.
 - Matt Mazza – Gets \$360 per month to pay for sending out premiums
 - Cleaner – Gets \$134 per week to clean the station.
- ❖ Current bank account \$9597, however has an additional \$20 K in checks, so will be able to make payroll.
- ❖ Accounts payable are \$1.4 million total, of which we owe 90.3% to the Pacifica National Office.
 - Pacifica Central Services levy, according to the new formula, is \$15,890 per mo. We paid \$10K.
 - 4 Times Square – Owe \$41K for 2.5 months
 - 388 Rent – Owe \$15,900 for 3 mos. We paid 2 and matched 2 after the Fund Drive. It is \$5,300 per month.
 - Call Center – owe \$63K. It is \$6500 per mo.
- ❖ There is an ongoing issue over the fact he uses Quick Book to record financial data for WBAI, while the NFC of the PNB uses Great Plains. Berthold stated he has not had the time to learn Great Plains. Our old Business Manager knew it and made those entries, but the PNB forced him to downsize the payroll and lay off that Business Manager. He prefers Quick Book because it allows him to break down exactly each source of revenue and each vendor needing to be paid, where the categories in Great Plains are more general and don't help him keep close track. Great Plains also do not allow him to enter Chase and Paypal transactions separately. Quick Book also allows him to upload scanned or emailed invoices. 95% of all payments made are accompanied by an invoice. Another example, Great

Plains amalgamates many expenses into “Administrative Expenses,” including even paying someone to clean the station. This makes it look like BAI has inflated “Administrative Expenses.”

- ❖ Producers have been asked to raise at least 10 BAI buddies or \$500. He has consulted our legal counsel re cancelling shows that don’t carry their weight and been told he does have that prerogative.
- ❖ There has been an issue regarding the option on the website for listeners who want to sign up as buddies to say they want their contribution to go to “all programs.” Actually, most listeners are predisposed to pick that option if it is offered. So those contributions should be amortized over all programs. Hence there should be no programs listed without any BAI buddies. Otherwise this option should not be offered. Berthold has considered changing this option to offer people to contribute to pick 4 programs to benefit by their contribution. Since this has been a popular option, he doesn’t want to discourage contributions by eliminating it altogether. And he doesn’t have the time to divide contributions which are not earmarked by all producers.

The Committee discussed the Report.

8:00 pm ET Motion (James Sagurton) To extend the discussion by 10 min. Passed without objection.

8:11 pm ET Motion (Jim Dingeman) To extend the discussion by 20 min. Passed without objection.

8:33 pm ET Motion (Ale Murphy) To extend the discussion by 20 min. Passed without objection.

8:55 pm ET Motion (R. Paul Martin) To extend the discussion by 20 minutes. Passed without objection.

9:15 pm ET General Manager’s Presentation of the FY 24 Budget. This is a preliminary report, not to be passed by the committee today or presented to the LSB or PNB yet.

Highlights:

- Expect to make \$2500 per day vs \$3,250 we made in FY22
- Expect PSA’s to make \$180K per year
- Expect a deficit of \$141K for the year
- Has decreased Consultants by \$35K
- 388 Rent – will stay the same
- 4Times Square – will go up 4% per year
- Fundraising expenses \$6500 per mo, but can decrease if can use volunteers instead of Call Center
- Expect a bequest 20% of sale of a house, still in process
- Grants have been applied for which may come in next year
- Health Benefits will go up 2%
- Union Salaries will rise 0.5%
- Income Loss expenses will be \$137
- Central Services will be \$116K for the yr, \$16,890 per mo, of which \$4282 per mo is for the Archives. But this may change to \$15 K per mo, if formula changes.

The Committee discussed the FY24 Budget Presentation

9:33 pm ET Motion (R. Paul Martin) To extend the discussion 5 min and the time of the meeting 10 minutes. Passed Without Objection.

The Committee continued discussing the FY24 Budget Presentation

9:43 pm ET Set next meeting date (R. Paul Martin) 10-18-23 at 7 pm ET. Passed without objection.

9:44 pm ET New Business

Highlights

- Reminder Atlantic Antic 10-1-23 (Mario Mastrandrea)

Meeting adjourned

Submitted by M. Kay Williams, Secretary