

Minutes:

WPFW Local Station Board Meeting

2390 Champlain Street NW, Washington DC 20009

13 March 2007

Meeting convened about 7:50 P.M., Zarinah Shakir serving as Chair.

Members present: Alonzo Brown, Acie Byrd, Gail Dixon, Billy Ray Edwards, Joni Eisenberg, Jane Gatewood, Arturo Griffiths, Anne Hyslop, Ambrose Lane, Luzette King, Dan Logan, Rob Robinson, Thomas Ruffin, Zarinah Shakir, Marcello Tolliver, Gloria Turner, Carol Wolfe.

Absent: Norberto Martinez.

Excused Absences: Jim Brown, Zaccai Free, Ayo Handy-Kendi, Adriane Jemmott, Michelle (“Noodles”) Smith, Hakam Takash.

Also present: Nathaniel Adams, LSB Parliamentarian, Carl Pfluger, LSB Secretary. (Ron Pinchback, WPFW General Manager, who normally attends LSB meetings, was absent due to illness.)

Approval of Agenda: Approved without objection.

Approval of Minutes of February 7th Meeting: With one amendment (by Luzette King, to add the question “where do we go from here?”) approved without objection, as moved by Ambrose Lane and seconded by Acie Byrd.

General Manager’s Report: In Ron’s absence, the LSB reviewed the written report which he had circulated earlier. Main issues included: technical problems affecting the recent fund drive, and the continuing struggle to improve the Station’s infrastructure; upcoming contract negotiations with Democracy Now!; a PNB proposal to hire a consultant to implement a National Programming Policy concerning the production and distribution of our programs; and programs planned to cover demonstrations marking the 4th anniversary of the start of the Iraq War, and possibly of events on May Day. Decisions reported include: Bobby Hill has been appointed as Program Director, and Askia Muhammad as News Director; WPFW has undertaken to host the next PNB meeting (weekend of April 20th-22nd) at the Best Western Hotel at South Capitol & I Street SW.

Joni Eisenberg moved a vote of congratulations to Ron for the hiring of Bobby Hill and Askia Muhammad, which passed without objection.

PNB Reports: Rob Robinson reported that the Licensing & Distribution Committee had met 3 times so far. They are trying to move toward an agreement with unpaid staff to produce and distribute their programs on the Internet and via podcasts; also are looking into High Definition (HD) radio. Thomas Ruffin added that such agreements should also apply to independent producers who might want their material distributed through Pacifica; he offered to submit a written report on the subject. Rob, Thomas, and Ambrose Lane all responded to questions from Dan Logan and Billy Ray Edwards about issues of copyright and ownership of programming; much about these issues still seems to be uncertain and subject to disagreement.

LSB Committee Reports: Zarinah reported that the fundraiser in conjunction with the performance of August Wilson's Jitney had raised \$500, which would go to supporting the planned LSB Retreat. Various events are being planned in conjunction with the Station's 30th anniversary celebrations this year. Ambrose is working on some of that with materials in the Pacifica Archives. Gloria Turner announced plans for a Town Hall meeting at the Oxon Hill Library, Saturday, June 30th, and another some time in September at the Martin Luther King Library. Outreach efforts are also being planned at jazz and blues events in Rosslyn, Silver Spring, the Smithsonian Jazz Café, and the Kennedy Center. At least some of these will, hopefully, be coordinated with April's PNB meeting.

Community Comment: Carletta Fellows invited participation in the 30th Anniversary Task Force, Faye Williams disapproved of the Kennedy Center, and Dorcas Dessasso invited participation with the Citizens' Advisory Board (essential to our good standing with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.)

Programming Committee Election: At the February 21st meeting, members had signed up for both the LSB and PNB Committees (see Appendix 1.) The PNB Programming Committee was the only one for which more than 2 candidates had put themselves forward, requiring (Bylaws, Art. 8, Sec.2) an election according to the Single Transferable Vote method. Jane Gatewood had prepared the ballots, Carl Pfluger distributed them to the members, collected them, placed them in an envelope sealed by Billy Ray Edwards, and undertook to convey them the following day to FairVote in Takoma Park to be counted and tabulated. (Photocopies of the marked ballots were made by Bobby Hill and Carletta Fellows, and entrusted to the Parliamentarian, Nathaniel Adams, as a back-up.) For the Secretary's report of the result, see Appendix 2.

Plans for Upcoming Meetings: Because Zarinah has classes on Wednesdays for part of March & April, the next regular meeting was set for Thursday, April 12th. On the motion of Thomas Ruffin, a Special Executive Session, to discuss confidential personnel issues, was set for March 20th. The PNB meeting is set for the weekend of April 20-22, and it is hoped we will have a meeting with Pacifica's Counsel Dan Siegel on Thursday the 19th, for a definitive briefing on confidentiality policies. The Retreat Task force is still working on finding a location.

Adjournment: Meeting Adjourned about 10:45 P.M.

#### Appendix 1

WPFW Committee Membership, as signed up on February 21, 2007

LSB Committees (asterisk indicates member of the corresponding national committee):

Programming: \*Rob Robinson, Alonzo Brown, Michelle (Noodles) Smith, Gail Dixon, Joni Eisenberg, Jim Brown, Norberto Martinez.

Technology: \*Rob Robinson, Michelle (Noodles) Smith, Anne Hyslop, Zarinah Shakir.

Finance: \*Thomas Ruffin, Jane Gatewood.

Development & Outreach: Carol Wolfe, Gloria Turner, Jim Brown, Zarinah Shakir, Ayo Handy

Kendi, Thomas Ruffin, Marcello Tolliver. (Faye Williams and Lamont Nichols, not members of the LSB, also agreed to serve as volunteers.)

Management Assessment & Search: Rob Robinson, Alonzo Brown, Jane Gatewood, Thomas Ruffin (tentative), Marcello Tolliver (tentative.)

Inclusion: Adriane Jemmott, Norberto Martinez, Gail Dixon.

Governance: \*Thomas Ruffin, Adriane Jemmott, Jane Gatewood.

PNB Committees (asterisk indicates Directors, i.e., PNB members):

Audit: \*Ambrose Lane

Technology: \*Rob Robinson, Anne Hyslop, Michelle (Noodles) Smith.

Governance: \*Thomas Ruffin, Jim Brown, Adriane Jemmott.

Elections: \*Ambrose Lane, Jane Gatewood, Carol Wolfe.

Archives: \*Acie Byrd, Alonzo Brown, Marcello Tolliver.

Inclusion: Adriane Jemmott, Norberto Martinez.

Programming: \*Rob Robinson, Billy Ray Edwards, Michelle (Noodles) Smith, Gail Dixon, Adriane Jemmott, Dan Logan.

The Programming Committee was the only one for which more than 2 people volunteered, necessitating an election (held at the March 13th meeting) which was won by Gail Dixon & Dan Logan. Also note that we still have no Delegate Members of the Audit Committee, and no Director Member of the Inclusion Committee.

## Appendix 2

### Report on Programming Committee Election, 14 March 2007

Dear LSB Members,

The FairVote tally has given the 2 LSB seats on the National Programming committee to Gail Dixon and Dan Logan. The tabulation was done between 5 and 6 P.M. today, Wednesday March 14th at the FairVote office in Takoma Park, by Jack Santucci, with occasional consultations with two of his colleagues. For the benefit of those who (like me!) find charts and tables confusing, I'll try to explain the results in plain English, while the process is still fresh in my mind.

Gail was easily elected in the first round, with 7 votes as first choice (5 was the "Quota," or threshold to win.) So in Round 2, her 2 surplus votes were distributed to the next-ranked, at a value of two-sevenths of a vote per transaction. This left Noodles a distant 4th, behind Dan, Adriane, & Billy Ray.

Billy Ray & Adriane were then tied in a dead heat behind Dan, with three & one-seventh votes each. This meant that one of them would have to be eliminated in order to go, in the final round, one-on-one with Dan, but which one? Here is where it became, almost literally, dicey. According to FairVote, the normal way to decide this would be to go back to the previous rounds, and see who had been ahead in the first and second choices; but Billy Ray & Adriane had been tied with each other in each previous round, too. In such cases, there is nothing for it but to decide things the old fashioned way, by a random mechanical act: in this case, literally a coin toss. (The fancy technical word for this, by the way, is “sortition,” and it really was used quite a lot in ancient Greek democracies.) The toss went to Billy Ray, and the final round yielded six and three-sevenths for Dan, two and two-sevenths for Billy Ray. Just to be sure, we also ran (manually, i.e., just counting the paper ballots without entering them in the record) a hypothetical or “simulated” final round with Adriane standing against Dan, & the result would have been the same. In other words, although at the end of round three it looked theoretically possible that either Billy Ray or Adriane could have beaten Dan (because their combined vote was greater than his) that would have required almost all the supporters of one of them making the other their subsequent choice, and that did not happen: both Billy Ray’s and Adriane’s supporters spread their subsequent choices all over the map; so that Dan kept the lead he had gained by the beginning of the final round.

So there it is. An annoyingly complex and confusing process (and especially ill-suited to small groups, where the probability of ties is much greater than it is on a national scale) but I can testify that the counting and tabulating were done fairly and honestly. I will bring the ballots to the next meeting, in case anyone wants to look them over personally. I’ll also bring print-outs of the chart where the numerical results are displayed; and as soon as Jack Santucci emails me the electronic version of that chart, I’ll email it to you as well. And I will also bring Noodles’ ballot (still in its sealed envelope) to return to her in the presence of all. It arrived in my mailbox this morning, but, as the LSB rejected the use of absentee balloting at yesterday’s meeting, I did not open it.

So now, congratulations to Gail and Dan! (Or should it be, as I often say when someone enters into Pacifica office, commiseration & condolences...?)

All best to all,

Carl Pfluger  
LSB Secretary