

January 8, 2013 WBAI Community Advisory Board Meeting

Held at WBAI RADIO Station...meeting began at 615 PM.

The meeting began with a discussion of the move...The details are unclear but it seems that the station will be moving into two locations...The first is CCNY where we will be sharing the signal with the student radio. The second is a free lease as essentially a homeless shelter for Non Profits that are affected by Sandy. We have a 6-month free lease at that location. In all these cases it is our understanding that we have to move in 6 months. So we have a critical situation that must be resolved with moving into a new location by the summer. The temporary savings we understand to be shaving about 32 K in monthly costs from the present 37 K we are paying. The amount that they want for the rent at CCNY appears to be 5 K. But, we still have very large expenses in general with the 40-50 K costs at the transmitter that are fixed costs and we have the difficulty that this cost is a fixed cost that allows us to broadcast a 50,000 watt signal in a 50 mile radius. Any reduction of that signal would shatter an already precarious situation where we have lost listenership due to the disaster of Hurricane Sandy. It is hard to tell how much we have lost but we had a fundraiser disrupted and probably have a growing set of costs associated from the fall of revenues.

One person raised the question of advertising and that we had to figure out how to get the signal heard. We need to advertise the station and we need to think of all sorts of ways to do this. This person suggested that PALM CARDS be produced. Perhaps 10-20,000 of them, and those teams of people distribute them and give them out. This has to be a systematic and ongoing phenomena and perhaps teams of volunteers who man the phones during the marathons can be enlisted for this provide labor for the distribution of these...This should be done every two months and maybe we can work with the OWS printing shop some reasonable rates. We should vary the way they look.

Another person suggested that we have an art contest for an effective logo for WBAI...Pay the person \$500 for a winner with art professors and graphic artists deciding what is good or bad. The reason is we might discover some amazing logo that has a broad appeal and can be effective for PR and fundraising purposes. Another person added that when he ran a company they used a method similar to that to come up with an effective logo. They found when they used it in advertising that it effectively pulled 2-3 times more people to inquire about the business than simply written text. Similar methods may be used with this in a T SHIRT. People would respond to this and say what a cool look.

Another suggested that we simply expand the membership in between drives with \$ 1 memberships. This would help bring new people in and then we could get them in as buddies as the next step. The WBAI buddy program is a new name to an old concept but any additional revenue is great.

Another person suggested that we advertise in the NATION or the NYT. The NYT it was pointed out is expensive...could be 50 K a page or higher but the NATION is a natural audience. The key thing is to expand the audience that is listening to the station.

The issue of commercials was raised. What is wrong with taking commercials from right on health products and does it violate the California Charter? Nobody knew the answer to that but it seems that this is important to explore. Commercials like Planned Parenthood or the ECLU are a good idea. The main problem with that is that such ads are aiming for membership and we already have plenty of avenues where membership is being drawn.

Some felt that Berthold is avoiding talking about expenses. There seems to be an elaborate avoidance by him to talk about fixed costs in any meaningful fashion. One person outright said that Berthold is incompetent. Another person condemned Kathy as incompetent and viewed Tony and Andrea as both ineffective. In response it was emphasized that people can simply ask Berthold what is going on and Andrea helped get the 4 WFC free spaces while some feel that if Tony were still here the fund raising drives would be more robust.

Another person brought up politics in New Jersey and especially in Newark. It was felt that WBAI was not doing enough to handle these issues and that Hugh Hamilton should be taking advantage of this. It was pointed out that at least 20% of our listeners are in New Jersey. One person pointed out how at WNYC RADIO in the prime time shows they COMSCIOUSLY take callers from New Jersey and explore New Jersey issues. We do the same but maybe we need to look at that more carefully.

Another person said the website stinks and it is only nepotism in practice with Andrea's brother in charge. This person said that we need to work harder to make sure the website is more robust. Another person pointed out that in order to move effectively into the 21st century with the new broadcast technology we need to perhaps reconfigure our paid staff. We need to have full time web people who can also engage in social media. This would include the ability to train people.

The issue of Governor Christie was raised again. If we vigorously pursued stories in New Jersey we could garnish more support. Christie has been cited as a possible Presidential candidate. We need to show how he has used SANDY to obfuscate opinion about him. That would help build audience.

One person felt we do not do enough to cover the Charter school issue. This needs to be looked at more vigorously. We need to bring in local journalists from NYC and NJ to cover these issues. This brings up another question. The rigidity of the grid and how to have specials done.

We may need to think as we reduce costs to open up afternoon drive time to new shows. This may mean moving a paid host into the morning show time slot to beef it

up. Five new prime time drive shows in the PM will allow us to experiment with new shows and maybe find new mixes that work.

A person brought up the question that the issue of privatizing water is a big deal nationally and internationally. Everyone agree and felt we should do a show called H2o that explored these issues that whole day. They felt that it being sold and resold like mortgages is an important thing to explore with a mass public audience.

One person complained that Esther Armah seems to only be doing self-serving promotion all the time about herself. A lot of producers engage in that all the time.

Another person felt we should have well publicized Public affairs events co organized with local activists in various boroughs on a regular basis. They should focus in on local issues.

The website was brought up by another person. This person felt it was not user friendly. They cannot find things easily. They also cannot find the listing for station events. On the theme page you cannot easily find this information. The person felt that the listeners were not being respected. There is a need to do many more things that can make it more user friendly.

Another person said that the re broadcasting turns them off. Why is it being done? It was pointed out that this may increase even more up at CCNY for a while because of the difficulty of doing things up there. People will have to learn about a new environment.

Another person felt that the fundraisers should include in between and 1 week low key pitching by all shows to see how many shows get financial support on their own merits...This would be an interesting test of how fiscally independent the shows are with out premiums.

Finally, another person said that they want to know why someone is one for twenty years and cannot be replaced. Who controls the airways, the producers or the network?