

WBAI Community Advisory Board Minutes-B

September 25, 2013

Meeting was held in the 60 Wall Street Atrium in Lower Manhattan. It began at 600 PM

Jim Dingeman took minutes

Approximately 50 people came through the meeting at various times

One person brought up that the problem is the premium mess. She has been listening since 1975. She had often paid and bought premiums from the station. Since April 2013 she had brought several premiums and never got any. She had spent a total of \$ 650 for her premiums and she was given an assurance that someone would look directly into

The issue.

One person said that the situation must change and that the premiums not going out for years are intolerable and must cease.

Another person stressed it is critical to get the premiums out on a timely basis. It is essential to try to attend to these matters as soon as possible.

One person stressed that WBAI used to be a vital source of information for them. The Internet has now changed all that completely. You can get information on critical issues instantly and Pacifica has been left in the dust because of that...we must adapt and innovate in order to survive.

Another person asked how is the cost of the premiums arrived at...for example the person said they paid for a \$175 premium that they could have bought cheaper on Amazon...in response one of the CAB members said they usually try to multiply the value by 10 times and what we are really talking about is a thank you gift to the station when you donate. The premium is really a motivational tool to elicit a donation.

Another person felt that we need to relate and help street theater and other performances that are going on throughout the city. We can no longer be exclusive in our lack of support for these efforts. Another felt that WBAI cannot do premiums in the future. That we have to get away from our dependence on that form of financing.

One person objected to being forced to listen to Kate Smith for 4 hours pitching incessantly without a break...this person felt that we should stop playing that cart. Another felt that producers should be pitching just for money. The show itself should be the premium pro or con. We simply become a HSN left version when all we do is sell products all the time.

Another person said that young people listen through androids and iPhones. We do not target them or make any effort to enlist them in our content ...we just give lip service to them.

We also need to reach out to the uber wealthy with leftist tendencies. Why do we not tap into this pool for money?

We should enlist the super wealthy lefties to do fundraisers during Christmas holiday season times or in January when people traditionally give.

One person said we do not give enough attention to the national health care debate and Obama care.

Another stressed we need to seriously put an effort into serious recruitment of big Hollywood names and rich people who support progressive causes.

The next person said that eliminating the news department was a crucial mistake. We should go back to hard hitting reporting and that will attract listeners. Enough of the jibber jabbers.

There are plenty of donors but the journalistic teeth are not so sharp enough
There are 60 murders by the police annually why do we not go into each of these in depth and cover them to bring in new listeners.

We are not reporting anything of serious concern right now after the layoffs and event then it was often questionable.

We need to take on Mort Zuckerman. The issue of employment and unemployment and homelessness these are big issues that we do not cover enough. These will make people listen. The news should not be the Novocain of the masses as Malcolm X said. We need also hard-hitting commentary and we need to go after people like Mort Zuckerman.

The next person brought up the need to be following the Haitian Revolution thoroughly. We need to show the contradictions of what is going on. We need righteous political education from WBAI. There has been a weakening of the message. We need a firm anti imperialist position at all times through the 24 /7 air. This has not happened for some time at WBAI.

Another person said we need wittier people on the air. Andrea Katz should get in touch with celebrities and get them involved to support us.

This person said that their favorite shows were DN, GN, the news, David Rothenberg, and they miss Bernard in the AM

This person then said we need to work with block associations such as in the Bowery or in Bed Stuy for grassroots reporting.

Another said we do not do enough arts programming and we should work collaboratively with Cherry Lane and Greenwich House for that purpose.

People want to hear about what is going on at the grassroots. This person did not like the music shows from 10-12 PM during the weekday.

Another person said why did we have to depend on shows from California. Why do we not get people from our local talent to fill in?

It was pointed out that the local grid has collapsed in terms of listeners and that may be one reason why the use of shows from inside the system was done after the layoffs. Also they needed a new grid rapidly.

We need to look at the donors for NYU and other institutions and hit them up for money was mentioned as a strategy for fundraising.

One person said we should bring intelligent right wing show on the air...we also need young people from high schools involved in programming at wbai.

Why can't we get money from famous people like Tony benet or Jane Fonda or Susan Sarandon ...Danny Glover should be asked to contribute? We should ask them for money and see if they will support us. We need a SHOCK AND AWE approach to fund raising events. We need to do them more often when we are off regular fundraising. Do one-day specials more frequently.

A person then said we should be doing international collaboration with people in japan and all over the world about the events at Fukushima. We should be making news with our air that will make millions of people pay attention.

We need to focus in on the criminality of politicians and those who rule us. Nobody knows what we are doing and we should change that rapidly...there is too much negative publicity for WBAI.It is often treated as a clownish MAD magazine of the remannats of the sixties.it is not that and we need to take steps to alter that completely.

One person felt that MSNBC has stolen the thunder of Pacifica. It is a masquerade WBAI in action. It is a mile wide and an inch deep in sophistication whereas WBAI is an inch wide and a mile deep in content. We need to alter that.

We need to figure what will grab people and make them listen in the AM and PM drive time to WBAI.

We also need a 24-hour number where people can call the station and leave messages.

Another person said they are sick and tired of not being able to call the station and get a human being on the phone. That needs to change.

One person said people have to be realistic. You cannot go to famous people and suggest that they give money to a sinking ship. We do not want to have happen to us as happened to the LIVING THEATER.

Another person said they listen to the Haiti and Cuba show during the month This person said there should be more segments that are done...8-15 minute sections that can be inserted into the morning show. They need to be seamlessly tied together so audience can build.

There should be the use of the more visible producers and NEW talent to produce a morning show > this person did like the AM music shows and felt they should not be junked.

This person also said that we should have shorter fund drives. 21 days drives people away and makes it hard to listen to.

People stop to listen because of the endless drives...hard-core listeners pledge and then leave which means that occasional listeners then pledge, mainly for health premiums...this makes it triply screwed up when they do not get them because they are then driven away.

Hugh Hamilton was a very NYC oriented show. We need to bring him back in some way although the severance package may prevent that.

The sojourner Truth show is good and not bad in the time slot it is in.

We also need to look into the transmitter costs and options and try to get a cheaper deal instead of the always-escalating Empire State building option.

We also need to look at other community radio stations and see what we are doing...we need to learn what is the most effective marketing strategies that exist out there to spread the word.

Another person said that we are not questioning the product itself. The air. People think erroneously that WBAI is the only place to go.

We need to have WBAI sweat shirts and T-shirts.

Another said we need to get people to volunteer. especially people who own their own home and are retired and do not have much time on their hands. get them to come in and fill the functions of the staff and do all sorts of other work needed to have the station survive.

We also need a new vision and purpose. It was pointed out that the Pacifica mission itself is purpose enough and we should always use it as our guidelines.

We also need to get people to be buddies for WBAI. if we had 20,000 buddies we would have less problems because we would have a steady cash flow.

Another person agreed with need to do smaller segments for air.

One person felt we are not doing enough over the immigrant issue. We need to create space to have illegal immigrants have shows and speak on the air.

The next person said that they are very positive and think the station will survive.

We really need a station that tells people the truth and everybody knows this. We need for example to drive home on the impact of this terrible recession, which still lingers and we can serve the public by doing that. The rise of homelessness is a big issue and we should punch away at it.

Another person said we need to get the youth in and let them do their thing. They need to express their opinions and struggle away. We need to talk to people in the private and public sector locally in NYC who are impacted by everything going on.

We also need to stress what we have accomplished since the creation of WBAI. A lot of good things have happened and Andrew will want to emphasize this with the flashdrive they are going to use in the fundrive.

The problem with this is that the fund drive will need to move quickly into health premiums because money does not come in to WBAI through the shows themselves. That is an objective fact.

One person pointed out the WBAI is between two sports channels ESPN and FAN...we need to take advantage of this with promos that stress sports.

This person then said that Ian Masters is okay but he liked a more hard hitting political edginess to the airtime.

Another person said that she began to listen to Armand De Mille by chance and then explored the rest of the 24/7 schedules.

Mitchell Cohen then announced that he as volunteer coordinator would be looking to get people to come in and help with the phone calls.