

NOTES – iPC-PrOC Meeting, 1-19-06
Peace Center, from approximately 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM

In attendance at least part of the time:

PrOC members: Rodrigo Argueta, Israel Feuer, Sherna Gluck, Jane Hallaren, Alan Minsky, Michael Novick, Lawrence Reyes, and Don White

iPC members: Don Bustany, Tom Camarella, Woodrow Coleman, Arturo Lemus, Michael Novick

PD: Armando Guidino

Part I: PNB Programming Policy

Armando and Alan elaborated on the content and process of development of the national programming document. There was little action on developing the document during the whole first year or more of the existence of the PNB's Programming Committee. Rob Robinson of WPFW took over as chair during its second year, and pushed the process forward. Although some people thought the policy issue was mostly about how to develop and staff Pacifica network broadcasts such as convention coverage (which had been controversial within the network regarding participation of local stations and local programmers), Robinson drafted a much more comprehensive document addressing all programming throughout the network, including by each local station as well as affiliates, both network broadcasts and nationally-produced regular national (syndicated) programming, and many other questions. [Please read the document closely and thoroughly if you have not yet done so!] There was no discussion with constituents or local stations prior to its adoption by the committee, although the committee did include representation from local stations, directly from the LSBs and indirectly via the PNB (composed of local station delegates). It has been presented as a "final draft" for consideration by local stations and adoption by the PNB. The draft is basically what Robinson produced and was adopted by the committee by a substantial majority after they went over it.

It is a very significant document. It defines roles and responsibilities for implementing programming policies locally and nationally; it establishes the position of a national programming coordinator who will oversee all Pacifica programming and implementation of the policies and guidelines, and it provides definitions of national programming, network broadcasting, commissioned programming, as well as outlining key criteria for evaluating programming in an attempt to provide cohesive national standards.

Sherna pointed out that the LSB passed a resolution calling for no action to be taken on approving the document until all LSB's and local station areas had a full discussion, and directing KPFFK delegates to take that to the PNB and lobby other stations to agree. Robinson has been calling repeatedly for individual local feedback from GMs and PDs, and that is not sufficient. There is a need for more than just "input." Don White called for delineation of specific amendments.

It appears that a significant national majority favored adoption of this document in the committee, related to struggles over programming that exist at many of the individual stations apart from KPFK. Some people see WBAI as being in a fiscal crisis related to programming; some want WPFW and KPFT to shift away from mostly music oriented programming, some people want to counter strong staff domination of programming decisions at KPFA. Some people believe the current urgent push for adoption of this policy is in order to create and fill the post of national programming coordinator.

The actual timetable for a response is unclear. The PNB turns over its membership entirely (even if some members are re-elected) so the current PNB has not been seated yet, and thus there is no agenda. They will meet and decide what to put on the agenda and in what order next weekend.

A number of key content issues were identified as troublesome:

- 1) implication that programming will be evaluated by Arbitron ratings and fund-raising ability during fund drives
- 2) centralization of power and authority over all programming and emphasis on more (and more) nationally produced syndicated programming.
- 3) absence of any implementation or recognition of the Pacifica Race & Nationality Policy in the evaluation or development of programming
- 4) absence of any mandate for airing discussions of Pacifica issues on the stations
- 5) Use of Democracy Now! And the proposed Spanish language (inter)national newscasts as “models” for national programming or program development without examining anything concretely about either one, or consideration of alternate models
- 6) implication that the ability of programs to attract listeners able to contribute to network “development” campaigns (that is, big ticket donors) is a criterion for evaluation
- 7) adoption of a policy that the network is the owner or author of all programming for the purposes of syndication, sale, rebroadcast, repurposing etc (directed at creating a revenue stream that will support further national programming efforts)

Tom Camarella and Sherna Gluck proposed ideas on how to proceed that we combined into the following resolution, adopted unanimously:

- 1) that we contact all stations to urge them to demand a full study and discussion of this document throughout the network, as was done with the draft bylaws, prior to adoption;
- 2) that we discuss the document further, at the Programmers meeting Saturday, at the LSB meeting in February, on the air and in a town hall meeting with break-out discussion groups; and that we constitute a local working group from the LSB and PC to concretize and synthesize proposals and amendments from those discussions;
- 3) that the document be web-posted and translated to Spanish (in process);
- 4) that the discussion proceed throughout the network by written submissions addressing specific sections and proposing alternate language and solutions for perceived problems;
- 5) that this implies a timetable that will extend well into March for a thorough national discussion in all signal areas prior to any action by the PNB.

Part II: Permanent Program Council

Through a process of on-going discussion and summation of the Joint meeting of the iPC and PrOC on 1/19/06, we proposed to offer the following for consideration of the LSB discussion on February 25.

It should be noted that the basis of the discussion was a proposal developed by a subcommittee of the iPC chaired by Kimberly King. This proposal was presented at and discussed at several PrOC meetings prior to the joint meeting.

Unless otherwise noted, the recommendations represent the consensus of the joint meeting.

A. Responsibilities:

- a. to make policy recommendations
- b. to propose guidelines and procedures for considering, soliciting and evaluating programming
- c. to evaluate existing and new programming in order to make recommendations to management
- d. to forward all proposals to management (whether positively or negatively assessed)

B. Composition:

Members

The original proposal of the iPC was for 11 listener-sponsors, 9 station representatives (including programmers, producers, and other paid and unpaid staff and collectives members), with the GM, PD, news director, and music/arts director will serve as non-voting members of the council.

Several participants at the Joint meeting proposed adding two LSB members to the council. After some discussion of the objection raised by Novick that this introduced a complication with people responsible for oversee management being in a position to advise management, it was proposed that the LSB elect two non-voting, ex officio members to PC. Feuer objected and felt the two should be only liasons, not members.

These options are offered to the LSB for further discussion and resolution.

Quorum

The Quorum will consist of at least one-third of the voting members from each constituency (listener-sponsors, station). Provision shall be made for alternate members from both constituencies who can sit on the council and vote or count towards the quorum in the absence or resignation of members.

Diversity Requirements

The PC will retain the mandatory ethnic/race and gender diversity requirements of the iPC—at least

50% women and at least 50% people of color.

C. Tenure

Alternatives: two years or three years with staggered terms, for half of the members from each of the two constituencies being selected at each staggered term.

D. The method of selection of PC members

3 alternatives were discussed:

election by constituencies

appointment by management and/or LSB

volunteers

Although no consensus was reached, most participants supported elections. Lawrence Reyes felt this question should be referred to the Governance Committee of the LSB.

[From notes taken by Michael Novick.]