



## **WJFF Radio Catskill Board of Trustees**

### **Part 1 Meeting Minutes**

**June 23, 2025 at 6:00pm**

Meeting Location: WJFF Liberty, 2758 Rt. 52, Liberty, NY

*Approved on: 8/11/2025*

**Board Members Present:** Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Leif Johansen (remote), Pete Madden, Sally Stuart, Amy Brightfield, Jill Fruchter, Tanya Kalivas, Ilya Marritz

**Board Members Absent:** Dale Blagrove, Krissy Smith, Gerrald Finn

**Staff Present:** Tim Bruno, Mimi Bradley,

**Members of the Public Present:** Sonja Hedlund, Dick Riselin, Brett Hogencamp, Elizabeth Hope Williams(remote, entered at 7:02)

A quorum being present, Sally called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

#### Special thanks to Dick Riesling

Sally welcomed Dick Riseling and invited Barbara Demarest to share an appreciation for his service to WJFF Radio Catskill on the occasion of his completing two terms on the CAB. (See attached.)

Each person present at the meeting introduced themselves to Dick and his partner Sonja.

Public Comment Opportunity

#### President's Welcome and Reflections

**Thank you, thank you, thank you!! We have accomplished so much as a board and staff!**

You are a hard working and highly engaged board!!! Staying focused on our top goals:

- Growing our audience
- Increasing revenues

- Increasing local news and info.

During the last 12 months we have:

- Completed 2 rounds of Bylaw revisions this year
- Gained membership in the Institute for Non-profit News
- Won impressive and much needed foundation grants: Press Forward, StoryCorps and American Press Institute
- Worked diligently and successfully on financial planning and executing on budget. Running a tight ship/staying within our budget during uncertain times, planning and consideration of various scenarios. Reviewing our insurance coverage.
- Completed another smooth and clean audit!
- Vetting and exploring strategic opportunities
- Wonderful outreach and events with so many folks helping
- Strengthening our personnel infrastructure with updated job descriptions and performance evaluations; finding wonderful professional development opportunities for staff.
- 4 Excellence in Broadcasting awards!!!
- Hiring two new staff members, increasing our local news output!!
- Board retreat including SWOT analysis and fundraising discussion and planning
- Recruited 3 exciting, excellent new candidates for the board
- Increasing recognition in the community and at the state level for our work and our role!!
- Providing focused and consistent communications on the threats to public funding for the station
- WJFF enjoys a positive, productive and engaged Board Culture, with everyone sharing their expertise and energy

Many thanks to all, our talented, ambitious, award winning staff, executive committee members and full board, applause, applause.

#### Consent Agenda Items

**MOTION** to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meetings and Committee meetings (Amy/Sally):

1. 5.19.25 BOT Minutes
2. 4.22.25 Executive Committee Minutes
3. 6.12.25 Executive Committee Minutes
4. 3.12.25 Personnel Committee Minutes
5. 04.29.25 Outreach Committee Minutes

**In Favor:** Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Leif Johansen (remote), Pete Madden, Sally Stuart, Amy Brightfield, Jill Fruchter, Tanya Kalivas, Ilya Marritz

**Abstained:** None

**Opposed:** None.

#### General Manager & Staff Update

Tim explained that the rescission package was approved by the House earlier this spring and is now with the Senate. We expect them to take it up after the Fourth of July recess. Everyone can help by signing up for [ProtectMyPublicMedia.org](https://ProtectMyPublicMedia.org). While NYS Senators are expected to oppose rescission, if you know people in other states, please ask them to reach out to their Senators to express their support for public media. Congress must act by July 18th or the rescission request will fail and the funding is guaranteed for fy2026. It is always helpful to contact local representatives offices and express your support for WJFF and public media.

#### Nom and Gov Committee

Gerald Finn has decided to step down from the board and we have three great new candidates for the board.

#### Finance Updates

Katie explained that WJFF has access to a media insurance policy through our new membership in the Institute for Non-profit News.

Assuming the rescission package passes, the worst case scenario for WJFF is that we would not receive the remaining \$130K in grants from the CPB that were included in this year's revenue budget. At this point we have exceeded some revenue projections and the staff has been very mindful of expenses, with that being said, our estimated deficit post-rescission would be roughly \$113K. Our reserves will cover this and we are working to identify additional ways to increase revenues and reduce expenses.

In addition, the FEMA Next Gen Warning System grant funds which were awarded in 2024 continue to be at risk, having been repeatedly revoked or frozen. The funds are currently frozen, and will expire on September 30th if the associated work is not completed and reimbursements are not approved within that timeframe.

As of May 31, the station has \$322K in cash and \$152K in investments. These reserves are healthy and have given us a run way of 21 months without federal support.

Membership is up, potentially as a result of the threat to our funding. We are hopeful that our supporters and community members will show up for us if the rescission package passes, but know that we cannot anticipate membership filling the entire gap that the loss of federal government funding would leave. We will continue to pursue

additional foundation grants, building on our success and momentum from previous grant awards.

Katie reminded the BOT that the mortgage remains our largest debt liability, and that we will want to keep a close eye on rates as well as look for loan refinancing options for non-profits.

The cost of the Media Insurance is more than we budgeted. There was discussion as to whether it is truly needed. What are peer stations doing? As the station moves into more journalistic news reporting rather than softer reporting we need to be mindful of the risks involved.

Katie explained the need for a hold harmless and indemnification clause for non-employees (i.e. volunteers). It acknowledges that the volunteer is responsible for the content they create and is broadcast by WJFF.

**MOTION** to adopt the hold harmless and indemnification clause (Katie/Tanya:  
**In Favor:** Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Leif Johansen (remote), Pete Madden, Sally Stuart, Amy Brightfield, Jill Fruchter, Tanya Kalivas, Ilya Marritz

**Abstained:** None

**Opposed:** None.

#### Personnel Committee Updates

Jeff reported that the Personnel Committee has completed our Wonderful General Managers annual performance review. We are so pleased with how he has grown as a leader not only within the station but in our communities as well. Many thanks to Tim!!!

#### 2025 Board of Trustees Candidate Nomination and Election

Pete led the Board through an introduction to the new candidates to the WJFF Board of Trustees.

**MOTION** to approve the slate of nominees (Matthew Goldman, Brett Hogencamp, Elizabeth Hope Williams) for election to the board of trustees and re-elect current trustees for a second term (Katie Childs and Leif Johansen). (Sally/Amy)

**In Favor:** Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Leif Johansen (remote), Pete Madden, Sally Stuart, Amy Brightfield, Jill Fruchter, Tanya Kalivas, Ilya Marritz

**Abstained:** None

**Opposed:** None

#### Public Comment Opportunity

There was no public comment.

**MOTION** to adjourn the 2024-2025 Board Term at 7:08 pm ( / )

**In Favor:** Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Leif Johansen (remote), Pete Madden, Sally Stuart, Amy Brightfield, Jill Fruchter, Tanya Kalivas, Ilya Marritz

**Abstained:** None

**Opposed:** None

*Submitted by Amy Brightfield*