



WJFF Radio Catskill Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes for September 29th, 2025 at 6:00pm

Meeting Location (Radio Catskill, WJFF Liberty, 2758 Rt. 52, Liberty, NY)

Approved on 11/10/25

Board Members Present: Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Amy Brightfield (remote), Dale Blagrove (remote), Katie Childs (remote), Barb Demarest, Jill Fruchter (remote), Brett Hogencamp, Leif Johansen, Pete Madden, Ilya Marritz (remote), Elizabeth Hope Williams

Board Members Absent: Tanya Kalivas, Matthew Goldman

Staff Present: Tim Bruno (remote), Mimi Bradley

A quorum being present, Pete called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

MOTION to approve the Minutes in the consent agenda of the following meetings (Almquist/Demarest):

- 8/11/25 BOT Minutes
- 8/11/25 Personnel Committee Minutes
- 8/25/25 Outreach Committee Minutes
- 9/11/25 Finance Committee Minutes
- 9/17/25 Executive Committee Minutes
- 9/22/25 Outreach Committee Minutes

IN FAVOR: Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Amy Brightfield, Dale Blagrove, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Jill Fruchter, Brett Hogencamp, Leif Johansen, Pete Madden, Ilya Marritz, Elizabeth Hope Williams

OPPOSED: none

Tim Bruno presented the General Manager Report. They have been looking at how to trim the schedule to make savings with careful consideration. The savings from three shows that will be dropped which will amount to around \$16,000 savings for the fiscal year 2026. Tim presented the new schedule. David Dann will be filling in for Living Jazz through Q4. This has been met with mostly positive feedback from public.

Leif thanked Tim for keeping the schedule rock solid, and keeping local, regional news with high quality programming for our community.

Tim said that the staff went to the New York State Broadcasters Association (NYSBA) awards in Binghamton where we received 5 new awards.

Outstanding Public Affairs Program or Series – The Local Edition (Jason Dole and Patricio Robayo)

Outstanding Spot News – Correctional Officers Strike over Unsafe Conditions (Patricio Robayo)

Outstanding Interview – Some NYSEG Customers Taking Drastic Measures to Lower Bills (Kimberley Izar)

Outstanding Election Coverage – Election Night 2024 (Patricio Robayo and Jason Dole)

Serving New York Award – One Small Step Campaign (Isabel Braverman, Judy Balaban, and Ronald Kelson)

These are very well deserved.

The newly installed transmitter has a test this week. The Honesdale studio is being decommissioned this week. Equipment from the studio will be coming back to the station in Liberty.

Election Coverage Plan: with so many local elections, we are focusing on key/contentious races and are cooperating with Spotlight PA. We are not going to have a comprehensive voting guide like we did last year, but will have one in a more condensed form, which should be up on the website by the end of the week.

Mimi updated the board on fundraising efforts and the upcoming Fall Fund Drive, which is already looking very strong. She detailed the upcoming events calendar, which includes:

10/12 events: Double Down on Radio Catskill at The Arnold House from 2-5pm. It will be family-friendly and have free food and activities.

WJFFest at New Memories from 5pm-9pm with several local bands performing and 100% of the proceeds going to the station.

10/18 - live music in-studio at WJFF.

10/26 12-4pm – Wallenpaupack Brewing Company, Hawley, PA, Pints for Public Radio

11/1 - Apple Pie Palooza-ween at the Catskill Brewery. Kassie and the brewery have been very generous. We will need a lot of hands to help.

11/6 - Private dinner at the Black Walnut in Callicoon.

11/29 – WJFF Annual Music Sale – We are trying to get some funding through the Sullivan County Visitors' Association.

Mimi feels we've reached so many different communities in so many ways, which has been terrific.

Katie presented the board the September 2025 Treasurer's report. The new transmitter is in place, and the generator has been installed. We have received all grant funding for them. The station received an additional \$14k from the CPB closing fund. Health care plans have been approved and finalized. We have increased the contribution to staff from \$850 to \$900/month, which was approved by the Finance and Personnel committees.

Katie presented the Board investment options and recommendations: At the 2025 budget pace, we are 75% up in YTD cash. Total cash and investments are just under \$497,000. We have more cash than the amount that is protected by the FDIC in one account.

There are three options we can put the cash towards:

1. Pay down mortgage
2. Put funds towards a conservative investment (money market, CDs) managed by CFOS (Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan)
3. CFOS endowment fund based on the stock market

Katie is recommending putting the cash in a money market account with a variable rate (currently 4.3% yield) for funds over \$250,000 in checking.

MOTION to set up a CFOS money market account with a variable rate for funds over \$250,000 in checking (Childs/Brightfield)

IN FAVOR: Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Amy Brightfield, Dale Blagrove, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Jill Fruchter, Brett Hogencamp, Leif Johansen, Pete Madden, Ilya Marritz, Elizabeth Hope Williams

OPPOSED: none

Katie said that if we meet all our Fall Fund Drive goals, and for the Music Sale, and Year End Appeal, our financial runway will keep the station funded through June 2029 with no substantive changes. She called for us to budget for it in Strategic Planning.

Katie asked the board to contribute to a significant board challenge for the Fall Fund Drive; Katie will send out a survey of what everyone can contribute.

For 2026 budget planning, Tim, Mimi, and Katie have already begun working on the first draft. On November 10th, Katie will present the budget for board review. There will be a

special Finance Committee meeting on 11/20. We will be working with two budget models: one continuing service at current levels and one with expanded coverage.

The majority, if not all, hourly employees will be moving to salaried levels. We will need to have updated job descriptions for all.

Jeff gave the Board updates from the Personnel Committee. They are meeting with the health insurance broker Stacey Goodenough tomorrow; we have gone through United Health Care directly. Stacey said she has other plans that reduce costs and have more flexibility. She is going to compare options as if we go through a broker. Tim will be involved in the meeting. If she gives us an exceptionally good plan, then we will need to set up a new special meeting to approve the plans and keep everything on our timeline. Jeff will give an update after the meeting.

Jeff has the Job Description Review & Overtime Policy on his agenda and will look at it this week.

Libel Insurance Update – Tim said we are still waiting on two people to sign the paperwork.

MOTION to enter a closed session discuss a confidential matter – (Childs/Johansen) at 7:01pm

IN FAVOR: Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Amy Brightfield, Dale Blagrove, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Jill Fruchter, Brett Hogencamp, Leif Johansen, Pete Madden, Ilya Marritz, Elizabeth Hope Williams

OPPOSED: none

MOTION to exit a closed session discuss a confidential matter – (Childs/Johansen) at 7:18pm

IN FAVOR: Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Amy Brightfield, Dale Blagrove, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Jill Fruchter, Brett Hogencamp, Leif Johansen, Pete Madden, Ilya Marritz, Elizabeth Hope Williams

OPPOSED: none

Ilya updated the board on Nom and Gov regarding the nomination of Yael Feinerman. He is going to schedule an interview level call with the Board/station employees.

Barb updated the Board on the nomination of Margo Seibert to the CAB.

MOTION to elect Margo Seibert to the CAB – (Demarest/Almquist)

IN FAVOR: Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Amy Brightfield, Dale Blagrove, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Jill Fruchter, Brett Hogencamp, Leif Johansen, Pete Madden, Ilya Marritz, Elizabeth Hope Williams

OPPOSED: none

Dale requested that one more board member join the Audit Committee.

Leif is working on a high-level strategic plan, still working out the details, with planning centered on the timeframe beyond 2026. Goal to vote on it at the December BOT meeting. He plans to have a draft next month.

Katie wanted the board to think about larger fundraiser ideas that the board can execute and which wouldn't take up more employee time.

MOTION to adjourn at 7:36 pm

Submitted by Donald Almquist