



WJFF Radio Catskill Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

October 17, 2024 at 6:00pm

Meeting Location (Online Meeting / WJFF Liberty, 2758 Rt. 52, Liberty, NY)

Approved on: 11/18/2024

Board Members Present: Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes (joined at 6:08), Dale Blagrove, Amy Brightfield (remote), Katie Childs, Barb Demarest (remote), Gerard Finn, Jill Fruchter, Leif Johansen (remote), Tanya Kalivas, Pete Madden, Ilya Marritz, Heather Quaintance, Krissy Smith, Sally Stuart

Board Members Absent:

Staff Present: Mimi, Tim

Members of the Public Present: Doug Rodgers joined at 6:03

A quorum being present, Sally called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

General Overview: (Sally) Board meetings will be more frequent in the upcoming months; we're meeting every month for the next three months. The process of putting together the budget is in progress. There will be some proposed revisions to the bylaws coming up. Leif has been involved in developing and preparing to put the next strategic plan together.

Public Comment: Doug

He disagrees with the way NPR is covering the war in Gaza; he feels their coverage skews in favor of the Israeli side and encourages WJFF to consider finding alternative news sources other than NPR; and hopes that WJFF will consider removing NPR.

MOTION to approve the Minutes of the following meetings:

- BOT Minutes 8.22.24*
- Outreach committee minutes 10.1.24
- Finance committee minutes 10.9.24
- Strategic planning work group minutes 9.25.24

*With a change, the reason for the closed session in the Board of Trustees Meeting was to discuss "proprietary information". (Sally/Amy)

In Favor: All

Abstained: None

Opposed: None

Press Forward Grant: (Tim/Mimi) We've been awarded \$100K in general operating support over two years 2025-2026. There were over 900 applications and 205 local newsrooms were selected. 40% of the grants went to nonprofit organizations, 20% went to rural groups and only 7% went to radio stations. The River Reporter also received a grant.

Tim plans to use it to hire an additional reporter(s) and shore up general operations. A press release will go out after the fund drive. We were contacted by Current for comment; we provided basic info; they asked for a photo of someone reporting. We gave a photo of Jason interviewing the original photographer for Woodstock. The grant allows us to decide what to use the funds from the grant for. The fact that WJFF received this grant will help us with other fundraising and appeal to potential major donors who have indicated interest; it's a big endorsement for WJFF. Pete is meeting with two potential big donors in the coming weeks.

Event Updates (Mimi) *The Community Awards* event netted \$10K, which is \$1K more than last year. We sold 9 more ads than last year but the ads were smaller and sold for a lower price level. The fact that it was the first event of the season in the area helped its success. Everyone commented on it being fun and lovely and the honorees gave us lots of visibility on their social media platforms.

Apple Pie Palooza was the most successful one yet! A successful strategy was to ask for a 'round up donation' at checkout. The weather was good and the event took place earlier in the day; both of which helped its success.

Music sale: It's the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend and we're still looking for donation items.

One small step listening party. Arnold House, Sunday Dec. 8.

The outreach committee is tasked with coming up with volunteer outreach events.

Fall Fund Drive is a bit sluggish so far. The final day is Fri Oct 25 and we'll have live DJs in the studios. We need people in-office early next week to do donor calls.

Programming update (Tim) We have a lot of election coverage coming up. We're covering local and state races very extensively.

Patricio for being selected for a writing workshop for journalists of color from the Poynter Institute.

WJFF interns: Jason is teaching BOCES audio production interns Tues and Thurs noon to 2. More interns are in on Mondays and Wednesdays; They're going to help with development items and the website.

Plan for election night: There will be a special Local Edition from 6 to 7. Our Election Night coverage will include check-ins with our partners at the Time-Union, The River Reporter and NY Focus. We are enlisting more people to help us with content and coverage that night.

Treasurer's Report (Katie)

For our cash and assets as of Sept 30 (not including Apple Pie Palooza), see the documents in the finance committee folder on the board server. A few highlights: We have Assets of \$345K. Our account with the Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan is doing well. We're 3% ahead of our expenditure budget; 5% ahead of budget for income. We have \$270,000 left to make this year to hit income goals; \$97,000 comes from CPB grant. The Press Forward grant is for 2025-2026

It's budget season; call to the committees to make sure we're considering everything; any expected expenditures from committees need to be in to the treasurer and finance committee. We will be approving the budget at the December 16th BOT meeting. The question was raised: Is there a goal for the endowment where it becomes sustainable money to draw from? Right now it's a rainy day/reserve fund. We are putting together what that target should be for the endowment and putting that into the strategic plan. Sally mentioned that it's recommended that nonprofits have 6 months of operating cash.

We want to utilize the money from the Press Forward Grant to make sure we are in a position to renew their support and attract new sources of support for our local reporting.

Procurement Policy: We received a next gen grant from FEMA and they require us to adopt a procurement policy based on their guidelines. It includes a strict conflict of interest policy. The procurement policy and the conflict of interest policy applies to anything purchased with FEMA grant - generator, transmitter. If there's an identified conflict of interest we have to document what we did to make sure it wasn't a conflict of interest.

MOTION to accept procurement policy as presented by the treasurer Katie.
(Sally/Heather)

In favor: Don Almquist, Jeff Barnes, Dale Blagrove, Amy Brightfield (remote), Katie Childs, Barb Demarest (remote), Gerard Finn, Jill Fruchter, Leif Johansen (remote), Tanya Kalivas, Pete Madden, Ilya Marritz, Heather Quaintance, Krissy Smith, Sally Stuart

Abstained: None

Opposed: None

Listener Survey (Leif/Jill)

We are actively working towards another survey as we get into 2025; discussing what that's going to look like and strategy for getting it into the community and a diverse group of voices to respond. We're interested in looking at non-listeners in addition to current listeners in this next survey; we need to focus on what the future of our listening base will look like. Jill drafted the 2023 survey in the spirit of being something we could use and adapt from year to year.

The 2023 survey showed what people want more of (particularly local news) and highlighted that we need to attract new (and a new generation of) listeners as we look toward the future of the station.

Outreach committee update: (Heather) We're trying to schedule events to get the volunteers together. Jeff Barnes is planning an event for Nov. 1 (This was postponed.)

Nom and gov committee update (Pete): All the bios and headshots are in for the "Who We Are" page on the website that will feature all the board members. A board self-evaluation survey will go out soon and we can use that to determine what skills we may need in new board members.

Strategic planning (Leif) Our current strategic plan runs from 2022-2026 so on Jan 1 2026 it will be expire. The Strategic Planning committee is in the process of planing for a new strat plan as well as tracking the progress on the current strategic plan. Leif is streamlining the tracking docs. He will send out a google form in the coming days with assignments for strategic planning directives. Anywhere your role is next to one of those objectives, please add in any updates in service of achieving those goals. This will go into a spreadsheet format so we can see how we're doing on the strat plan goals. The February board meeting will be dedicated to discussing how we're doing on our current strategic plan.

MOTION to go into Executive Session to discuss a proprietary matter (Sally Stuart / Katie Childs) at 7:19

In Favor: Don Almquist, Amy Brightfield, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest (remote), Gerard Finn, Jill Fruchter, Leif Johansen (remote), Tanya Kalivas, Pete Madden, Ilya Marritz (remote), Heather Quaintance, Krissy Smith, Sally Stuart

Abstained: None

Opposed: None

MOTION to exit closed session (Sally/Katie) 7:34

There will be a meeting at the end of this month to talk about what type of position we would hire for this.

Gerry asked about corporate compliance training that includes harassment training. Tim explained that the staff completes NYS mandated harassment training annually.

MOTION to adjourn at 7:38 pm (Sally/Jill)

All In Favor

Abstained: None

Opposed: None

Submitted by Amy Brightfield