



WJFF Radio Catskill Board of Trustees - Special Meeting of the BOT Meeting Minutes for February 9th, 2026 at noon

Online meeting

Board Members Present: Don Almquist, Dale Blagrove, Amy Brightfield, Katie Childs, Barb Demarest, Jill Fruchter, Brett Hogencamp, Tanya Kalivas, Pete Madden, Ilya Marritz, Elizabeth Hope Williams

Staff Present: Tim Bruno, Mimi Bradley, Jason Dole, Ronald Kelson, Patricio Robayo

A quorum being present, Pete called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm.

MOTION to enter a closed session discuss a confidential financial matter – (Madden/ Fruchter) at 12:06pm

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

OPPOSED: none

MOTION to exit a closed session discuss a confidential financial matter (Madden/Childs) at 12:26pm

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

OPPOSED: none

MOTION to pursue Memorandum of Understanding with WIOX in Roxbury to pursue a merger or acquisition of WIOX (Madden/Demarest)

There was a discussion regarding the Station's possible acquisition of WIOX/Roxbury. Pete led with the reasons that we should pursue this opportunity: it would allow the Station to expand our coverage area, expand the reach of our journalism, expanding our audience, it helps us to become a more sustainable operation, it gives us access to a whole new community of potential listeners and donors, it is aligned with what the

Public Media Bridge Fund and others have said they would like to see from organizations in the wake of the government's defunding of public media, and it would realize the vision of the Radio Catskill brand for expansion throughout the Catskills.

Katie added that our vision would include a simulcast of the WJFF signal to the WIOX audience. Also, this would preserve public radio and increase access to information for the WIOX listening community, as they do not have any syndicated programming partnerships and since they have expressed that they are not able to sustain their stations programming in the long term.

Ilya commented that in moments of instability, there can be a temptation to avoid risk, but this is often an illusion, as not taking action or calculated risks can put you at greater risk. He sees this as an opportunity for the Station to strengthen its financial situation and broaden its connection to the community, which is why he is in favor of this.

Katie asked the board, as this potential merger with WIOX is a funded partnership, would we be open to other partnerships in other geographic areas that would speak to our listener base and community. Pete affirmed that we would be open to pursuing other such opportunities.

Jason wanted to underscore that this is a really good opportunity that allows us to follow our goals, both geographically and in terms of growth. When we rebranded as Radio Catskill, it was with the idea of reaching a greater geographic area. This puts a foothold in the region where there is literally wilderness, and it can allow us to work off the infrastructure already in place. He supported what Pete said about this allowing us to pursue our vision and live up to our name and Ilyas comment about risk and Jason urged the board to embrace the risk involved and pursue the WIOX acquisition. He said that last year was an emotional rollercoaster, and losing the funding from the CPB was a serious change, but he has been positive and is excited by the opportunities and feels we are better positioned than ever to work together to serve the community.

Tim echoed what Jason said that this is a sign of the Station in a position of strength; seven months after being defunded, we are pursuing a merger. He thanked everyone for all their hard work.

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

OPPOSED: none

Pete thanked everyone, in particular Katie for reviewing all the financials, which was no small task, and Tim for reviewing the content. He said this is a very exciting time for the Station, which will bring our journalism to a new audience.

Katie said that she will need help with the due diligence and looked to volunteers to start a subcommittee in this effort. Barb and Pete volunteered.

The next step is the legal review, which Tanya volunteered to join in any lawyers' meetings and help in any legal reviews. Ilya also was interested in being involved in this.

MOTION to adjourn at 12:45pm

Submitted by Donald Almquist