

## **WCA-TV Board of Directors Meeting (virtual)**

August 22, 2023

Attendance: Christopher McKenzie, Jen Nicholson, Ninos Hanna, George Skuse, David Stokes, James O'Connor, Rob Romano, Elaine Mello, Andrea Santopietro, Samantha Dudley, Samantha Henry

Minutes taken by Jen Nicholson

Called to order at 6:03pm

Deferred on approval of minutes

President's Report - Christopher reported that he received an email response from the city with a request for Christopher and Andrea to set up a meeting with George Proakis regarding the rental offer we made and to check in on the Comcast and RCN negotiations. We learned that we are not responsible for procuring legal representation for these negotiations with Comcast and RCN and that they will not take place until roughly next time this year. Chris also reported that he will also be taking signed documents to Watertown Savings Bank. Motion to accept the President's Report made by David and seconded by Elaine. Passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report - James reported our balance as of last month and that Andrea received the new checks from Watertown Savings Bank. He will need to go in person to close our old accounts after the fraudulent activity. We will need to decide when to do so (once all checks have been cashed). He also updated our new address with M&T, but WSB wanted us to wait. Andrea added that she has set up mail forwarding to the PO box. There is still one large amount under investigation after the bank fraud incidents from earlier this summer. Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report made by George and seconded by Ninos. Passed unanimously.

Subcommittee Reports - David deferred to Andrea regarding updates on facilities. Elaine made a motion to accept and seconded by George. Samantha reported that the bylaws subcommittee is working on dividing and conquering the necessary updates. Andrea shared that she and Sam Dudley started to work on the revisions to the handbook. They would like to present their recommended changes to the bylaws subcommittee and then to the full board. Motion to accept by George and seconded by David. Passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report - Andrea reported that the station is not moving this week as planned. The move was supposed to take place this upcoming Friday, but this not happening due to delays with the overall project and the move is now on hold. It is unknown when the move will happen, but it sounds like it will likely be around the end of September. The contractors for the school have been told that we are cleared to remain in the space past September 11 and our current physical space will not be touched. The station downtown remains as planned for today through Friday. We have no channels and will not broadcast on cable or livestream. The entire Cablecast service is down for this time. Government meetings

will stream on YouTube and will remain on demand on YouTube until we are back online and can upload everything.

Ocker's took apart our studio equipment and packed everything up. The space at Phillip's wasn't completely ready for them until the afternoon, though the conditions they are working in are not ideal, however the radiator has been removed. There is a temporary door and window AC unit for the time being. Beyond today, tomorrow our network is going to be set up and our internet was set up yesterday. On Friday, the physical equipment for Comcast will be moved. On Thursday, we will be moving the council chamber equipment we have at the station over to City Hall so we will not have to change how we film there. RCN is coming tomorrow to take a look at our equipment.

Andrea shared photos of the condition of the space and the different areas. Elaine shared that a major reason for the delay is that the same subcontractors are doing the work on the temporary high school at Moxley in addition to product delays. George asked about the rack in one of the photos that appeared too low and that it may interfere with the door opening. Andrea will inquire about this concern. Chris asked about a concern he has with Vertex not feeling that we are in a time crunch with the school. Andrea is considering having staff work at home beginning on September 11, depending on conversations over the next week. She is concerned that we could lose utilities among other possible problems. George shared that IT furniture may be stored in the unused lab at WCA-TV if the station remains open after September 11 as it may be the only space still open in the building after that date. Elaine asked how much is going to be in the old space during the month and if it would be worth inquiring about a storage pod or unit. Andrea said that everything is packed with the exception of personal computers and personal equipment. Her plan is to get everything packed and have employees take home what they need to be able to work from home if necessary. David asked about the furniture delivery date and Andrea said it is slated for September 20-22. David also shared that Mark Sideris reported at last night's School Committee meeting that WCA-TV is staying in the high school until after September 11 and that work is being focused on the temporary high school and the middle school kitchen to be done in time for the start of school on September 5.

Andrea had a follow up meeting with Dr. Galdston. George attended for part of the meeting as well. George discussed the two doors in the Phillip's parking lot. The school department is willing to give one of the doors for our Aiphone doorbox. Ultimately, George discovered that the doorbox is incompatible with the WCATV system. We can keep the door, but we need to buy a new external intercom station. The cost for the station, parts, and labor should be between \$6,000-7,500. The next step will be for Ocker's security to survey and figure out the next steps, including who should be doing the installation. Andrea will follow up.

Additionally, Andrea and Dr. Galdston checked in about a few other topics. Andrea sent her all of the information needed for WCAC staff to get their own key fobs. Andrea was concerned about the building alarms and the building closing at 11pm, but George shared that staff can use their fob to enter the main hallway without setting off the alarmed doors so long as none are entered. They also discussed the addresses and Dr. Galdston emailed the DPW about WCAC

getting its own address (and possibly a Marshall Street address). In the same email, exterior signage was also brought up to clearly indicate entrance/exit as well as our dedicated parking spots for our staff. Dr. Galdston recommended that we order a mailbox and have the school maintenance crew set it up for us. Dr. Galdston is looking into shared custodial details as well. Andrea has most property insurance questions answered and awaiting a few others from the new Director of Public Buildings. Andrea mentioned interior signage and Dr. Galdston recommended Signs by Tomorrow. Jen knows the owner personally and she is happy to reach out when it is time to move forward.

Andrea also reported quotes about upgrading to HD from RCN for encoders and installation and Ockers for ensemble design down converters and other parts. The two amounts are quoted for 3,948.50 and 4,737.00. Motion made by Elaine and seconded by David to approve these quotes. Motion passed unanimously.

Andrea shared a programming recap of YTD through July: in total 397 hours for a 9.5% increase from 2022 and 355 programs (6.5% increase from last year). The most views for streaming in July was the police chief community input forum. Andrea also added that we did have to replace our LiveView (the company sent a new one after the first was not working properly). Motion to approve made by Elaine and seconded by George. Motion passed unanimously.

Assistant Executive Director's Report - Sam Dudley shared updates about fundraising, outreach, and legislation. First, we have a new \$500 annual sponsorship from Bob Airasian and his real estate company. We also received our new sponsorship brochures that debuted at the Watertown Arts Market this weekend. Many community members were interested in our booth at the market: many new people signed up for our mailing list and some new memberships as well. Sam hopes to try the scavenger hunt model again at Faire on the Square next month. She also found a list of sponsors from about 20 years ago and will look into which businesses still exist. Additionally, Sam is looking into possible grants in Watertown and would like to get an early start on them, including the Marshall Home Fund to possibly collaborate with the Senior Center. Another possible grant is through the Watertown Community Foundation. Lastly, the Watertown Cultural Council/Massachusetts Cultural Council is another grant avenue. Elaine brought up purchasing swag for the Faire on the Square, which Andrea plans to do.

Sam also reported that she joined a virtual MassAccess conversation about the recent hearing. Most legislators agree that they want to help, but there is some pushback about whether the streaming bill is the way to do that. The most critical timeline is from September to February 1. Andrea and Sam came up with action items to garner support for the bill, including:

- WCA-TV produced videos about our history and why we are losing our funding (the recommendation is for the focus to remain positive)
- Representative Steve Owens is going to make a video in support of the bill this fall
- A list of talking points and an explanation of the breakdown of costs and myths vs. facts for staff to send to legislators - Sam will share these with the board

- Andrea will be discussing with Charlie Breitrose to run an article about the bill in Watertown News and Dan will be reporting on WCN
- Sam Dudley recommended also having literature available on the topic at the Faire on the Square

Motion to accept the Assistant Executive Director's Report made by Ninos and seconded by David.

Motion to enter Executive Session along with the Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director to discuss the rental agreement with the city made by Ninos and seconded by Elaine. Passed unanimously. Entered Executive Session at 7:39pm.

Motion to leave Executive Session made by Sam H. and seconded by Elaine. Returned by Executive Session at 7:55pm.

No old business.

New business - Elaine asked if we could archive our old meetings in the shared drive. Rob shared that he is interviewing with the Residents Advisory Committee to seek another term on the Board of Directors.

Our next meeting will be virtual and held on Tuesday, September 5 at 6pm.

Motion to adjourn made by George and seconded by David. Passed unanimously.

Meeting ended at 8:02pm.