

WCATV Board Meeting Minutes, July 12, 2023

Present: Chris McKenzie, George Skuse, Jen Nicholson, Elaine Mello, James O'Connor, Robert Romano, Samantha Henry, Ninos Hanna, David Stokes, Samantha Dudley, and Andrea Santopietro

** conducted online via Zoom*

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm on 7/12/2023.

Handouts:

- Agenda for July 12, 2023
- Treasurer's Report for July 12, 2023

Treasurer's Report

James read through the highlights of the Treasurer's report, which is quoted below:

WCATV is currently dealing with some very substantial bank fraud of our accounts at both Watertown Savings Bank and M&T. In June, 4 counterfeit WCATV checks from our M&T account totaling \$13,750.00 were cleared and cashed by several individuals. Additionally, a check for \$25,000.00 was cashed, but was flagged by WSB as counterfeit, which we have already received a credit back for.

Also in June, Andrea got a strange phone call from a woman who said that her husband received a check from WCATV for the amount of \$15,500.00. Andrea assured her it was not from us and to destroy it, which the woman said she would.

On July 6, M&T alerted us that another WCATV check was attempted to be deposited for \$977.54. That payment was blocked.

On July 11, Someone used our savings account at Watertown Savings Bank to make an online american express payment of \$1,910.00.

Andrea and I changed our website account passwords for both banks, although it is not suspected that this was the reason for the accounts being compromised. I am currently working with both banks regarding the fraud charges, to open new accounts, and to close our compromised accounts.

At the next board meeting, I will share a more detailed report that includes specific dates, individuals' names, check numbers and check images.

George suggested the police should be notified. **James** will look into the correct procedure and give them a heads-up. **Jen** offered to contact the detectives at WPD.

Motion to accept the treasurer's report, made by **George**, seconded by **Samantha**, Unanimously approved.

President's Report

Chris gave an update on the meeting with the city on 6/28/2023 in the City Managers' office. David, Andrea, Chris, City Manager George Proakis, and Steve Magoon were present.

Chris reported that it was helpful to have everyone in the room at the same time. The meeting was professional, but not contentious. It was clear that no one wants to see WCATV fail. The meeting began w/ WCATV's perspective, including the board's surprise of being asked to provide \$800k. The city understood WCATV's position that we couldn't commit to a 30-year agreement of any kind. If the station can't provide \$800k, the city needs to understand our finances.

The city asked for minutes from our meetings in 2021, which were provided by Andrea. The city manager produced minutes of a meeting in which Helen Chatel (former executive director) and John Airasian (former board president) were informed of some expectation that WCATV would reimburse the city, though no exact figures were provided. WCATV minutes from 10/12/2021 were specifically referenced.

The question becomes: how much can we contribute to the city and over what time period? Chris noted that we've always held \$200k-\$300k as a reserve for cost overruns.

Motion to accept the president's report, made by **George**, seconded by **David**, Unanimously approved.

Executive Director's Report

Andrea explained the different scenarios outlined in the *Estimates for City Move Expenses* via screenshared Google Sheet.

Samantha asked whether other access stations pay rent when occupying a municipal building. James said he'd look into this further.

George suggested deferring further questions and comments about the scenarios to executive session as most will inevitably lead to discussions regarding the negotiation with the city.

Motion to accept the Executive Director's report, made by **George**, seconded by **Ninos**, Unanimously approved.

Executive Session

Motion to enter Executive Session, to also include Andrea and Samatha Dudley, to discuss negotiations with the city related to payments related to construction reimbursement made by **George**, seconded by **Elaine**. Unanimously approved.

Motion to exit Executive Session made by **George**, seconded by **Samantha**. Unanimously approved.

New Business

Samantha noted that MassAccess has requested everyone tune into the 1pm Joint Committee hearing for bill H74 (CyberSec) tomorrow. Andrea clarified that only those testifying can join the zoom. The link to the meeting will be: <https://malegislature.gov/Events/Hearings/Detail/4626>

The **Next meeting** will be

- 7/18/2023 at 6pm at WCATV

Motion to adjourn by **James**, seconded by **Elaine**. Unanimously approved.

Meeting ended at 8:06pm.