

WCATV Board Meeting Minutes, June 6, 2023

Present: Chris McKenzie, George Skuse, Jen Nicholson, Elaine Mello, James O'Connor, Robert Romano, Samantha Henry, Ninos Hanna, Samantha Dudley, and Andrea Santopietro
** conducted online via Zoom*

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm on 5/23/2023.

Handouts:

- Agenda for June 6, 2023
- Minutes for May 9, 2023
- Minutes for May 23, 2023
- Treasurer's Report for June 6, 2023 (through 4/34/2023)
- Facilities Subcommittee Report for June 6, 2023
- By-Laws and Organization Committee Report for June 6, 2023

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes for the May 9, 2023 meeting made by **George**, seconded by **David**. Unanimously approved.

Motion to approve the minutes for the May 23, 2023 meeting made by **Elaine**, seconded by **David**. Unanimously approved.

President's Report

Chris: Chris and Andrea met with the City Manager yesterday. As it's June, it's time to consider cost-of-living adjustments and raises. We'll add an Executive Session to the next agenda. There's some unfinished business regarding the Executive Director's contract. We'll discuss this in a future Executive Session as well.

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

Treasurer's Report

James read through the highlights of the Treasurer's report for 6/6/2023 as provided prior to the meeting. Our total cash available is \$872,189.93 - that number is complicated as it's as of April 30th and doesn't include pending checks or approved-but-not-expended quotes. James will log into M&T Bank online to ensure that he can check balances in real-time.

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

Facilities Committee

David read through the highlights of the committee report as prepared. The move-in date has been pushed forward to August 24th; this date gives Andrea time to coordinate with the vendors

to target a firm date. Radiator/heating issues as being handled by Ai3. JML Lighting has been assured that the long lighting grid pieces will be moved into the studio within the next week before walls are sheetrocked. The next School Building Committee meeting is scheduled for June 21st. We're meeting Thurs @ 11am w/ Vertex and hope to get an update on the breaker panel issue (1x400A panel vs 2x200A panel) which is delaying power within the space.

Chris and **Andrea** met with the City Manager who explained the \$800K was expected by the town as a reimbursement for the construction. The Manager suggested that the \$800,000 be paid over 30 years as a municipal bond (approx \$30k/yr?). Chris would like to see what a payment schedule for the \$800k. A discussion of the potential impacts of such payments ensued and was tabled. Chris would like to pursue a meeting with the manager, Council President Sideris, and other key personnel.

Motion to accept the Facilities Committee's report, made by **George**, seconded by **Elaine**, Unanimously approved.

By-Laws and Organization Committee

Samantha: The committee met and had a second meeting with Chris and George to discuss some questions. The bylaws are heavily based on a membership model that doesn't really echo how the organization is currently structured. Work is ongoing and will continue.

Motion to accept the By-Laws and Organization Committee's report, made by **Ninos**, seconded by **David**, Unanimously approved

Executive Director's Report

Andrea:

Staffing: New Hire

A new content manager (Tegan Parker) has been hired. There was a large pool of good candidates. Five were interviewed; three had second interviews. Tegan has interned at several places, worked w/ her local access station, and has good references. Her schedule will be in flux for the start of her time with the station.

Annual reviews, raises, etc... will be discussed at the next board meeting. Performance reviews will be completed before the end of the month.

Projects

Per Elaine's suggestion, interior drone footage of the "old" High School will be recorded (the morning of 6/23). WCATV will be open for the public walk-thru on the evening of 6/22.

Phillips Update

Andrea and Sam met with Nate/Ai3 and Chase/Vertex to discuss colors and finishes. A rendering is expected soon. Andrea met w/ staff to discuss closing to the public; the plan will be finalized once the schedule is produced by Vertex and Rogan. The last news broadcast will be

July 28th. Uniset is scheduled for 8/7-9 for the move the set to the new space. Furniture delivery will be rescheduled to mid- or late August.

Comcast hasn't been able to secure a police detail for their exterior work. Vertex is now involved to assist with the scheduling. The new date for the work is Thurs 6/8/2023. Ockers is also slated to begin work on Thursday as well.

Fundraising

The Watertown Community Foundation grant was approved. The Watertown Business Coalition has offered the station a free membership. Outreach to restaurants for sponsorships is ongoing. A new focus on social media posting and community events (farmer's market, etc...). Other events include a networking event at Donohue's. Andrea hopes to host events in the new space to continue to build those connections ("Coffee Connect").

Programming

Cablecast launched a new audience measurement feature for live streams. During graduation, there was a peak of 36 viewers, with >30 viewers for most of the event. Year-to-date hours are 269 hours, which represents a 21% increase from last year. There have been consistently more government meetings than education since we've been rebroadcasting zoom meetings. The radio programming has been moved to the public channel.

Legislative Update

The "streaming bill" is in subcommittee. MassAccess has spoken w/ the house chair and has questions on how it will impact consumers. Andrea has talked to the City Manager who has agreed to sign the letter in support of the legislation.

On the federal level, the American Broadband Act of 2023 passed the House Energy and Commerce Committee; this has the potential to decimate local government funding. It might give Cable companies the right to terminate certain provisions of franchise agreements. ACME is obviously against the bill and is looking for organizations to sign on to rally opposition. There's no companion bill in the Senate.

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

Old and New Business

Old business: Open Meeting Law will be discussed at a future meeting.

New business: Invite Tegan to an upcoming board meeting.

Next meeting will be

- 6/20/2023 at 6pm via zoom

Motion to adjourn by **David**, seconded by **Ninos**. Unanimously approved.

Meeting ended at 8:06pm.