

WCA-TV Board Meeting Minutes, Jan 17, 2024

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

The virtual meeting (zoom) was called to order at 6:06 pm on 1/17/2024

Handouts:

- Agenda for Jan 17, 2024
- Minutes for Nov 14, 2023
- Treasurer's report through 11/30/2023 for Jan 17, 2024

Approval of Minutes

Motion to accept the Minutes for Nov 14, 2023 made by **Elaine**, seconded by **James**, Unanimously approved.

President's Report

Chris: The Open Meeting Law training has been postponed. Chris has sent a response to the city manager regarding the lease. KP is aware of the bank fraud issue and believes this is pretty "cut and dry": the bank should be liable. Ninos has given his notice to the board, effective next meeting.

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

Officer Elections

George nominated **Chris** for President, seconded by **Elaine**. Unanimously approved.

Elaine nominated **Robert** for the Vice President, seconded by **George**. Unanimously approved.

George nominated **James** for Treasurer, seconded by **David**. Unanimously approved.

David nominated **George** for Clerk, seconded by **Robert**. Unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report

James read through the Treasurer's report as submitted. The narrative portion of that report, detailing the fraud case to date, is below:

On January 4, 2024, \$80,000.00 for moving expenses was transferred from our Watertown Savings Bank savings account to our checking account, per request from Andrea Santopietro.

On January 10, I reviewed and approved draft audit documents from CPA firm Minsk Gould Tattrie & Lussier.

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On December 22, 2023, I sent an email to Andrea Weerasekera at M&T bank requesting a formal copy of their fraud report. I received a reply on January 5th, 2024 stating that the fraud report was internal. She requested that I send the contact information for the detective, and their investigative unit would communicate the report directly with them. I sent her this information, along with a copy of the police report.

On January 10, I received an email from Andrea Santopietro regarding our bank fraud situation. She spoke with Jeff Mills from HUB Insurance Agency regarding if we had crime coverage. He didn't think we did but is going to contact our insurance provider to confirm. After speaking with him, Andrea said that it seems clear the bank is at fault in this situation and that we may want to pursue legal counsel or try to reopen the investigation with the police.

On January 12, I sent an email to Joseph S. Fair, Esq. at KP Law with a timeline of the events regarding the check fraud that happened with M&T bank. He said that our information will be reviewed and that they will get back to us. This email is attached to this report in the board meeting folder.

The police report that was completed by Watertown Police Department Detective Patricia Grady is attached to this report in the board meeting folder. Thanks again to Jen Nicholson for helping out with this.

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

By-Laws and Organization Committee Report

James read through the report as submitted; The committee met on zoom last week to regroup. The committee is aiming to have documents ready for the staff training in February.

A discussion of potential workflows to further edit the Policies and Procedures document ensued; the need for a glossary of terms and definitions within the document was highlighted.

Motion for the By-Laws and Organization Committee to continue edits on the document entitled "(Formatting) Policies and Procedures" made by David, seconded by Elaine. Unanimously approved.

Motion to accept the By-Laws and Organization Committee Report, made by **Elaine**, seconded by **David**, Unanimously approved.

Executive Director's Report

Budget

A 5% decrease in expenditures, but lower than expected sponsorships, led to a small profit. Going forward, the station will be reducing the software license costs by reducing the number of installed seats. Our audit expenses have increased slightly (\$300). Payroll fees increased \$10k over last year; this is a one-time spike. Next year's fees will be closer to prior years. Andrea is looking to reduce payroll expenses by cutting staff hours for part-time employees

(videographers). A short discussion ensued. Andrea will modify the sheet so that unexpended capital funds are transferred to the capital projects sheet.

Staff

Xavier (a college student), the first intern in the new space, has started working with Dan. He'll be helping with meetings and games. Expanding our intern program may allow for a reduction salary expenses in future years.

Professional Development

Sam and Dan are planning the PD workshops for the week of 1/29/2024.

Projects: Reopening

The station is still closed to the public; a soft opening will take place in a few weeks with a full-on grand opening possible in the spring. Some equipment isn't expected to arrive until the spring.

Projects: Punch list

Nate from Vertex is tracking the remaining items for the space. There's still some tile separation in the studio spaces, there's leakage/walk infiltration along the brick walls including the media suite and the MDF.

Projects: Studio B

There's no electrical capacity for the track lighting in Studio B. Andrea will discuss this with DPB as this should be easy to add. The track lighting has already been delivered, there's just no electrical to power/switch it.

Quotes: Signs by Tomorrow

Motion to engage Signs by Tomorrow for interior signage, per quote #23760 totalling \$4,627.92, made by **George**, seconded by **James**, Unanimously approved.

Quotes: Ockers

Motion to renew the BroadCast Pix warranty with Ockers, per their quote #003123 totalling \$3,697.50, made by **Elaine**, seconded by **David**. Unanimously approved.

Year-end programming tally

740:38 total programming for 2023

598 Programs

307 Government, 21% increase, including zoom

127 Education

169 Public channel programs, 29% increase

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

Assistant Director's Report

Sam: Membership through 2023 year end: 8 new members, 4 member renewals. 31 Member reservations, 2 student reservations. There's a lot of excitement for the new equipment, especially the podcast studio - which is expected to see a lot of use going forward.

Sam met with the business coalition and discussed how members can help one other. The coalition is committed to highly publicizing our grand opening, once the date is determined. WCATV will host a coffee connect for the coalition in May.

The cultural leaders ground has quarterly meetings; 2 hours of networking amongst Watertown's cultural organizations. WCATV will be hosting the cultural leaders on Thurs April 25th at 10am.

Watertown Cultural District, pending site visit and approval later this year. Sam is WCATV's organizational representative to the Cultural District Committee.

Sponsorship update: Lamachia Realty won't be renewing its sponsorship; Eastern Clothing will be renewing several sponsorships this year. Now that we're in the new space, we can deliver on the promises of the upper tier of sponsorship, which includes the production of a 30-second spot.

Legislative Update: On the national level, the Alliance for Comm Media calls for support for the Protecting Community Media (Television) Act.

HR3557 (American Broadband Deployment Act of 2023): House bill only (no Senate companion) is concerning as it could allow cable companies to unilaterally cancel provisions of cable contracts, including franchise fees. Jersey Access created a video that summarizes the bill.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:39pm.