

WCA-TV Board Meeting Minutes, Mar 19, 2024

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm on 3/19/2024

Handouts:

- Agenda for Mar 19, 2024
- Minutes for Jan 17, 2024
- Minutes for Feb 20, 2024
- Treasurer's Report through 1/31/2024 for March 19, 2024
- ARPA Grant Agreement between City and WCA-TV
- Letter from KP Law to M&T Bank re: Fraudulent Checks (3/8/2024)
- Draft RCN License Renewal Agreement from KP Law

Approval of Minutes

Motion to accept the Minutes for Jan 17, 2024 made by **Elaine**, seconded by **David**, Unanimously approved.

Motion to accept the Minutes for Feb 20, 2024 made by **Elaine**, seconded by **Robert**, Unanimously approved.

President's Report

Chris: No updates on filling the board vacancy; Elaine noted that the city did post a call for candidates on their social media.

KP Law provided a draft of an updated agreement between RCN and the city of Watertown. Andrea provided an overview of the agreement and highlighted some of the sections for consideration. George requested a copy of "EXHIBIT 1:I-NET LOCATIONS" and wondered whether we might be able to view neighboring communities' similar agreements with RCN.

KP Law sent a demand letter to M&T Bank regarding reimbursement for the fraudulent checks.

Andrea received the ARPA Grant Agreement between the City and WCA-TV (\$82,328). A discussion of the agreement ensued, specifically the insurance requirements, and the completion date (12/1/2024). Andrea will ask questions of the City and our insurance provided.

Motion to accept the President's report, made by **Elaine**, seconded by **James**, 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:

The statements that we receive from Watertown Savings Bank were still being delivered to our PO Box address. I called and had it updated to our Common Street address (the bank should have done this when our business address was updated in December, but they did not). I was also told that they will be sending a new 1099 tax form, which was attempted to be delivered to the PO Box but was returned to the bank.

On March 8, Margaret M. Chrusciel of KP Law mailed a letter to M&T Bank demanding reimbursement for the fraud charges that occurred last year. The letter is attached to this report. [We have not yet received a reply.]

Our anticipated first quarter 2024 Comcast check has not yet been received.

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

Executive Director's Report

Budget

A deficit of \$38,883 is anticipated for 2024; increases in health, dental, HR service (includes paychecks, 401k, worker's comp., training), employer liabilities (COVID recovery fee).

Grand Opening

A grand opening celebration for the new studio is scheduled for Thursday, April 11th from 4-7pm. Over 140 personal invitations were sent. Outreach via social media is ongoing. Potential speakers have been contacted: City Manager, Council President, Superintendent, and Chase Terrio from Vertex. The ribbon cutting (with giant scissors!) will be live streamed. Andrea is finalizing the schedule which will include studio tours and interactive activities (podcast, news script scavenger hunt, etc.). A display case w/ awards will be in the hall (still needs to be built). Catering might be through Ricey East (recent sponsor).

Amir and Nehu will be providing a mural for the studio.

Facility Update: Move finance review

Total spent on move/outfitting as of 1/4/2024: \$562,638

Facility Update: Punch list items

JML Painting will provide a quote to touch up/repaint some areas in the studio
There's a leak (noticing stains on the new ceiling tile).
Andrea will follow up with Chase@Vertex regarding potential punch list items

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

Assistant Director's Report

Sam: Ricey East and Eastern Clothing are sponsors totaling \$1250 for this year.

Grants: Sam is in the applying for a grant from the Marshall Home fund (\$737) for four free workshops on digital literacy at the senior center. Also, Wal*Mart local community grant application for \$3515 for closed captioning

Workshops are ongoing including outreach to increase participation. Workshop opportunities will be showcased during the grand opening.

Legislative

Steaming Bill: Per an email on March 8th from David Gauthier (Mass Access President): "Very productive meeting w/ the team; high interest in the bill from many stakeholders. The deadline for a decision to push the bill forward is April 8th."

Maine recently imposed a new tax on all companies that utilize public poles.

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

Motion to enter executive session to discuss a proposed employee title change made by Elaine, seconded by Robert. Roll call: James, Elaine, Chris, David, Robert, Samanta, George

Motion to exit executive session made by Elaine, seconded by Robert. James, Elaine, Chris, David, Robert, Samanta, George.

Motion to change Dan Hogan's title to Director of News and Studio Operations at an annual salary of \$54,000 as of today with no retroactive payments, made by Elaine, seconded by Robert. Unanimously approved.

Old Business:

Andrea: Policies and procedures should be sent to the lawyers

James: Separate email addresses for board members

New Business:

George: Generator plans

Robert: Need a spotlight in the rear parking lot

Motion to adjourn by **James**, seconded by **Elaine**. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:41pm.