

## **WCA-TV Board Meeting Minutes - February 20, 2025**

Present: **Chris McKenzie, Elaine Mello, Robert Romano, Jim Vershbow, James O'Connor, David Stokes, Samantha Henry and Andrea Santopietro.**

Absent: **George Skuse, Jen Nicholson, Robert Romano**

The meeting was called to order: 6:09pm

### **Handouts:**

- Agenda for (Google doc link) [Feb 20th](#)
- [Treasurer's Report](#) through 1/31/25 (Google drive link) for Feb 20th
- Bylaws Subcommittee meeting notes from (Google doc link) [2/6/25](#)
- [Review vs Audit](#) (Google drive link)
- Production Training and Equipment Manager [proposed job description](#) (Google drive link)
- Community Outreach & Fundraising Coordinator [job description for new position](#) (Google drive link)
- [Programming report](#) for January 2025 (Google drive link)

### **Approval of Minutes** 6:10pm

Deferred as minutes not available

### **President's Report** - Chris 6:14pm

Chris talked to the city manager along with David and Andrea regarding a lease for the studio space in the Phillips. The idea was to get one from KP Law by Valentine's Day, but it hasn't happened yet.

Ascertainment hearing has been scheduled in the city calendar for Monday, May 19th to do a presentation for the upcoming cable franchise renewal. It will probably be at city hall, but the location is to be determined. The Ascertainment committee hasn't met yet, but is in the planning stage.

A motion to accept the President's report was made by David, seconded by Elaine and unanimously approved.

Motion to enter executive session by David, seconded by Jim, approved by roll call of members by roll call vote: David, James, Jim, Chris, Elaine, Samantha

### **Treasurer's Report** 6:25pm

Board members read through the Treasurer's report as submitted.

Total Current Liabilities are \$15,018.55 in accrued payroll expense.

Andrea mentioned the Watertown Savings Bank non-profit choice awards. It would be good to get people to nominate WCA-TV. It was recommended that social media posts would help to get the word out to potential voters. So spread the word and vote!

A motion to accept the Treasurer's report was made by **Elaine** , seconded by David, and unanimously approved.

### **Discussion** 6:36pm

**Progress report on items for the ascertainment hearing and report** - Andrea talked about doing videos for the Ascertainment hearing. She met with the staff and talked about the hearing and capital improvements in the future. They went over a list of people for testimonials and broke it down in terms of people on video, people in person at the hearing and planned a timeline for getting things done. They also will come up with a guideline for how the presentation might look. The idea is to break it out to different group videos - city govt, etc. with 1 person presenting that one, then schools and sports, community and arts, and the last video would be members, staff and board members video that will be used in the hearing. These videos will be interspersed with in person testimonials similar to the last hearing in 2014.

Andrea is also going to meet with Gary from Okers in terms of capital planning asks for budgeting purposes.

She also met with the city's CTO on plans for infrastructure upgrade planning.

Andrea has also met with the Libraries regarding upgrades to the Watertown Savings Bank room technology and Ernie from DPW about phase 3 Victory field work.

Jim asked about whether a person doing a video would speak in person, but Andrea said it would be up to them. And they'll think about who would be good in person presentations, so any ideas would be welcome.

Samantha mentioned that having a tight script for the presentation with focused questions ( 3-5) minutes for video and for presentations.

Next meeting for the ascertainment committee will probably be Monday at 4pm to meet. Andrea suggested Jim help out with this in terms of availability since Samantha is unavailable to meet. Once she has a good draft, Samantha will be able to look at it and go over it.

**2024 actuals audit vs financial** - Joanna gave Andrea a list of the budget actuals. audit - Mass raised the threshold for audits from 500k to 1 million, but for 2024, we were still required to do a review. Andrea spoke to the auditors and what the difference between an audit and a financial review in the future. Main differences is assurance and time and cost. Andrea asked for a quote for what that would be in the past. The quote was lower than what we paid for an audit, but was more than she thought it would be. So gave a quote of 9,500, which is about 2k less than the audit.

Andrea proposed that we move forward with a review over an audit. James mentioned that it might be wiser to continue to do audits in light of negotiations with the city and cable companies coming up. Especially in light of the bank fraud and the fact that the money didn't hit until the 2024 budget. And then for 2025, go to either a review in the future. Elaine recommended that for 2k difference is minor and worth continuing to do an audit just to cover ourselves during this time we are negotiating on a lease and eventually with the cable companies for new franchise licenses.

#### **Action Items** 6:55pm

The **Bylaws and Organization Committee** is putting through one job description and one changed description for consideration by the board. Andrea talked first about the community outreach and fundraising coordinator role, which was discussed in the last meeting as a replacement for Sam and to focus on the outreach and fundraising. This description was presented to the subcommittee and was agreed as a good idea.

Salary is comparable to other positions out there. Sam thinks this is a good direction and having someone focused on these specific tasks will help the organization in the long run.

James made a motion to approve the job description for the fundraising coordinator, seconded by David. The board unanimously approved.

**Production Training and equipment manager** - upgrade of existing position of the coordinator for govt. She trains people to run the equipment and has taken on inventory management, etc. She has also been doing workshops. She would also propose a raise for Victoria as well as the new job title. She has really grown into this role and recommends a 2% raise, which was already factored into the budget. This would bring her to 42,400.

Elaine made a motion to access the position title and description change as well as new salary, seconded by Samantha. Unanimously approved.

### **Executive Director's Report** 7:10

**2025 budget** - Changes to payroll expenses, Previously, the number was 444,924. Changes also factor in the new position as well. Benefits changed from insurance policies in the shift to ADP from Paychex, which will bring expenses down by 2,500.

**Projects** - The network switches are in, lit in the Parker library and the senior center. There was a fiber install from the school MDF to the WCA-TV MDF. Originally the thought was the city fiber would be in a loop, but that isn't the case. So 2 of the switches had to be installed at the police station which is the hub for the city network. So another switch was purchased, another type of switch to swap out the switches installed to use elsewhere. That's on order, so hopefully will be in so that work can be done. They will also add in new equipment at the ice rink. There was an issue of getting on the city's network by accident, and found out that plugging the switch into the internet. They normally would connect a signal camera for livestream there and with no dedicated drop at the press box, it was a bit convoluted. This season, they installed a port in the rack at the press room without telling the staff which caused issues when doing productions, as well as Belmont access who also used the same drops at the rink.. They'll be putting in a POE switch and upgrade the existing closet box that is currently in use with a rack.

Scholarships - applications will open on Monday. Andrea spoke with Mike Reilly at the high school about getting more seniors to apply. They decided on two 500 dollar scholarships. This window will be open until the Friday before April vacation.

**Outreach & fundraising** - Recap on the nonprofit roundtable with the business coalition. 15 people on the call from various nonprofits, talking about needs, with a focus on fundraising as a whole with a lot of ideas. They'll meet again sometime this spring and how people can work together to fundraise. Key suggestions from Perkins and the Media alliance was being transparent on needs and funding to reach out in the future. Maybe make the donate button more prominent with perks for different tiers, and possibly do a membership drive or donation telethon, etc...

**Programming** - (see drive) for January livestream numbers. There was an issue with getting VOD numbers, which will be updated at some point in the future.

**Legislative update** - streaming bill. Mass Access had a meeting on Feb 11th and efforts for this year. Current bills are SB399, HD326 (in committee still, so will change.) It's still the same bill and it will need to follow the same process as last session. There were reps and senators who sponsored the bill were on the call. They are confident it will go to the same joint committee so they can pick up where they left off. So they urged people to keep on speaking

with local reps to encourage support. They have 36 house co-sponsors and 16 senate co-sponsors. Westford Access is spearheading a campaign on PEG funding creating a spreadsheets of vendors and how much all the communities pay those vendors to get them to help advocate for the bill as well.

David motion to access report, seconded by James. The report was unanimously approved by the board.

### **Old Business**

None.

### **New Business** 7:45pm

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Chris - Jen is stepping back from the board and will evaluate in a couple of months about commitment, but we may have a vacancy on the board.

The group also discussed pending changes with a new FCC head and how this might affect rules in the future that could affect us. One concern in the past was siding with cable companies in terms of how it might affect funding for access in the future, so we will just need to watch out for any updates that may affect us

### **Next Meeting** 7:52pm

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 18, 2025

April 15, 2025

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

Meeting adjourned at .7:56