

LOUISVILLE PUBLIC MEDIA
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 26, 2021

Board Members Attending: John LaBarbera, Alan Rosenberg, Terry Tolan, Tyler Allen, Heather McHold, Keith Runyon, Ellen Call, Abby Shue, Ann Coffey, Andrew Simon, Wendy Sirchio, Cedric Powell, Holly McKnight, Ankur Gopal, Eric Carrig, Marita Willis, Susan Moss, Nat Irvin

Absent: Jose Donis, Jose Gaztambide

Staff Attending: Ellen Oost, Stephen George, Dennis Stovall

Guests: Tom Williams

The meeting was held via Zoom due to COVID-19.

Eric Carrig called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

- I. Eric welcomed everyone and then addressed the board regarding an out-of-cycle board leadership transition. Eric had already spoken to board members about his decision, but as of this meeting he is officially stepping down due to a job change that has changed his schedule and availability. Wendy, the Chair Elect, will be taking over about six months ahead of schedule.
- II. Wendy offered her thanks and then asked for approval of the November meeting minutes. Keith made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Susan and all voted in favor.
- III. Abby asked if there were any questions related to the December financial statements, and shared the highlights:
 - a. Revenue is \$100,000 ahead of the operating budget.
 - b. Underwriting remains the biggest challenge as we try to determine whether we're going to be able to secure Waterfront Wednesday sponsors.
 - c. We've submitted the PPP loan forgiveness application and should know something soon regarding a confirmation that it will be 100% forgiven. Once that is confirmed, the amount of the loan will then appear as income. We are not eligible to apply for a second round.
- IV. Stephen then gave the President's Report:
 - a. Personnel update:
 - Colleen Phelps, host of the *Classically Speaking* podcast, has been hired as WUOL's Music Director. We will be announcing her hire next week.
 - Bec Feldhaus Adams has been hired as WFPL's News Director and started last week part-time as she finishes out some work with her previous employer. Bec is a Louisville native who comes to LPM from Norfolk, Va., where she led the creation of a local newsroom at WHRO.
 - We are still seeking a news editor to replace Mike Edgerly, who recently retired.
 - b. Waterfront Wednesday plans are underway, in hopes of hosting a season July-September, with two events each month following all CDC protocols (including an attendee cap, registration requirement, masks and social distancing, etc.).
 - Nat mentioned the recent announcement that Thunder Over Louisville just will occur, but without spectators, in April.

- Holly asked to see the sponsorship plan, as she's seen some interesting proposals and activations recently. She also mentioned that this might be a good opportunity, since the event is ticketed, to experiment with making it a paid event.
 - Ann asked about whether we've considered a virtual opportunity as well, and Stephen mentioned that we're looking into a live streaming option.
- c. We currently have two new podcast initiatives in the works:
- Driven by our need to grow in that space, and also by our desire to elevate more diverse voices, we will be partnering with producers who already have a product but would like some help on the distribution side. We are actively soliciting proposals (with an emphasis on non-white creators) and just launched *Money Memories*, our first podcast within this new distribution model. These podcasts will be available to advertisers in our podcast rotation.
 - We're also working on an incubator program, where people with a great idea for a podcast, but who need help learning how to do audio production, can work with our team to develop their podcast and distribute it. We see this as a great way to develop a local talent pipeline. More info on that program's launch will be available soon.
- d. DE&I update: LPM shared our first public report in December. Fewer than 10 public media stations in the country have released a report on DEI and our report, although not perfect, is being circulated as an example of what everyone in public media should be doing.
- Stephen thanked the Board for helping us start this work more than two years ago, before it was as big of a focus as it is now in our city and across the system.
 - Cedric asked about what kinds of questions others interested in the work are asking us about, and Stephen mentioned:
 1. Pay equity study
 2. Internal advancement structure
 3. Including equity in the company ethos
 4. Hiring practices
 5. I.D.E.A. staff committee
- e. Update on our policy discussions surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine: Media is part of phase 1C, so we're hopeful that all staff will be able to register for their vaccines soon. We've been having many conversations internally about whether to require staff to be vaccinated - not as a condition of employment - but as a condition of being in the building, representing LPM publicly, etc.
- f. WFPL news expansion:
- Stephen reminded the board of our strategic plan goal to be the "first choice for in-depth local news and investigative reporting, filling the void in daily news coverage in our community and region."
 - Over a year ago, we developed a plan to grow the WFPL newsroom in order to help make that goal a reality. That plan was paused when the COVID outbreak led to so much economic uncertainty. This fall, we began talking to potential donors about the plan again.
 - We have raised (at the time of this meeting) \$1,150,000 toward our goal of raising \$1,500,000 for the project. The Board originally recommended the \$1,000,000 mark at the threshold to begin hiring.
 - There are four positions that we want to start hiring for later this week: breaking news, health, race and equity, and city government. We will hold the business and development reporter and the VP of Content until we've raised the full amount.

- The Board congratulated Stephen on the progress toward this expansion.
- V. Keith then gave a Leadership and Governance Update:
- a. On behalf of the committee, Keith proposed a bylaw change related to “Responsibilities of Board Members” under section 1 entitled “Financial Support.” The proposed revision would state, “All board members are required to be contributing members of LPM within the fiscal year of joining the Board and each fiscal year thereafter or volunteer an equivalent amount of time to the stations. Hardship exceptions may be made on an annual basis to the Board Chair.” This revision eliminates reference to a specific dollar amount and makes clear that being a contributing member is an annual obligation based upon the fiscal year.
 - Keith made a motion to approve the bylaw change as written, and his motion was seconded by Heather. All voted in favor and the resolution is approved.
- VI. As for other business, Wendy reminded the Board of the offer to participate in the Dan Pallotta “Bold Training for Nonprofit Boards and Staff” and said to let her know as soon as possible if you’re interested. Finally, Wendy mentioned that she will be reaching out to all Board members to talk about going forward and working together, in order to get to know each member and their priorities.
- VII. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m.