
RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY
WSBE/Rhode Island PBS

DATE: October 28, 2010
TIME: 4:00 P.M.
PLACE: WSBE Rhode Island PBS
50 Park Lane
Providence, RI 02907

PRESENT

Mr. Michael Isaacs (Chairperson)
Hon. Judge Robert Flanders
Mr. James Leach
Ms. Lisa Pelosi
Mr. Peter Wells

EXCUSED

Hon. Judge Frank Caprio
Mr. Charles Roberts
Ms. Karen Shuster

ABSENT

None

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. David Piccerelli (Vice President & CFO, WSBE)

Pursuant to notice, a meeting of the Rhode Island Public Telecommunications Authority convened on Thursday, October 28, 2010.

With a quorum of members present, Chairperson Isaacs called the meeting to order at 4:10 P.M.

A moment of silence was observed to remember and honor Mr. Robert Fish.

With a motion by Mr. Wells, a second by Mr. Flanders and a unanimous vote, the minutes of the Board from a meeting on May 4, 2010 were approved.

Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Isaacs had nothing to report in addition to the other agenda items.

President's Report

Mr. Piccerelli reported to the Board the following:

Generally, the past few months have been very quiet as they typically are for us during this calendar period. A few pertinent bits of information follow.

Engineering Operations

- There have been some minor bugs in our programming automation system that could have caused significant disruption to our broadcast day. The Engineering & Programming employees along with our vendors created a seamless work around to get us through the issue until a permanent patch was put in place.
- Looking to have the 24/7 monitoring software up and running by mid-winter. The delay has been caused by the intricacies of integration into our system and not wanting to disrupt programming should a problem arise. An off line test is being planned before full implementation.

Programming

- The *Tenth Inning*, the latest installment of the Ken Burns special Baseball has been a huge success for the entire PBS system nationwide. The sale of DVD box set sales has been tremendous.
- Our partnership with Tim Gray (former sports reporter for WJAR now a local producer) to act as a fiscal agent for his fundraising efforts for his HD productions has been hugely successful. To date Tim has raised in excess of \$100,000 to producing four documentaries on WWII. Our benefit from this will be the exclusive premier broadcasts and as the sponsoring station for distribution nationally to the PBS system.
- Mr. Flanders encouraged the development of more of these types of relationships.

Production

- Summer and early fall are very quiet for the production crew once Ciao Italia exits the building in late June. Aside from the continuation of the weekly shows and the house keeping tasks, there has not been much to work on.
- Our partnership with the Seashell School, a venture brought to us by Jerry Sardinha, is progressing forward. Seashell School is in its development stages and should Jerry receive the requisite funding it could become a full-blown PBS children's program. He has been working out of our offices, has built a set and is ready to shoot a pilot except for one key factor, money.

Development

- Fundraising is progressing fairly well so far this year overall.

- Membership through September 30 is up close to \$30,000 buoyed by a great September pledge drive and adding several TOOP (targets of opportunity) nights in August.
- Underwriting remains relatively weak as the economic environment of the State is not conducive to business support.
- December pledge looks very promising with great programming.
- The Art and Antique did not perform as well this year as last with gross sales being \$25,652 versus \$37,229. Donations of art were down significantly and the return on donor value was down as well. We may need to rethink this event and make some adjustments going forward.
- We will be hosting a Rhode Island PBS Kids Club Halloween Party Friday evening here at the station. We expect almost 100 people in attendance.

Video Streaming

- The video streaming program is moving forward with good results. This year we are collaborating with Learn 360 and the PBS Digital Learning Library.
- We are putting together a plan to house videos in-house on our own servers. This will permit us to expand the local content and give us greater control over the content to match Rhode Island's curriculum standards.

PEG Access

- The new PEG Access studio has been running since February and by all accounts, it is a huge success.
- Complaints have been almost non-existent with really only one person expressing her opinions at will.

Financial Report

- Aside from some minor cash flow problems that have worked through, the station is in good shape to budget financially. Revenue/support was lower than expected by \$58,966 due significantly to the fact that we were not paying the President & CEO salary and benefits for the quarter, as we did not receive this money from the State. Expenses were better than budget by \$43,978 again largely attributed to not paying the President & CEO salary and benefits.
- Building utilities were down \$12,781 for the quarter. We changed the set back time on the A/C carving off three hours per day Monday through Thursday and five hours on Friday. This coupled with the employee's diligence in saving on overall electricity consumption accounts for the savings. The boiler was shut off in June resulting in no gas consumption for the summer months.
- There are a few other positive variances believed to be attributed to timing differences from when invoices were actually entered and do not amount to any meaningful savings or alarming overages.
- Overall, the station is running as lean as it can with roughly \$2.2 million of the \$3.2 million budget being directly attributed to salary and benefit expenses.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Communications

None

Future Agendas

None

Mr. Wells moved to go into Executive Session per RIGL Sec. 42-46-5 (a) (1) to discuss personnel and to interview candidates for the position of president & CEO, seconded by Ms. Pelosi. After a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Leach moved to return to open session, seconded by Mr. Wells. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Leach moved to seal the executive session minutes, seconded by Mr. Wells. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

With a motion by Mr. Leach, a second by Ms. Pelosi, and unanimous approval, the meeting was adjourned.

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcription of my notes taken at the time of said meeting.



10-18-2010

David W. Piccerelli, Vice President & CFO

Date