
RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY
WSBE/Rhode Island PBS

DATE: February 15, 2012
TIME: 4:00 P.M.
PLACE: WSBE Rhode Island PBS
50 Park Lane
Providence, RI 02907

PRESENT

Mr. Michael Isaacs (Chairperson)
Dr. Robert Carothers
Mr. James Leach
Mr. Charles Roberts
Ms. Karen Shuster
Mr. Peter Wells

EXCUSED

Mr. William Maaia
Ms. Lisa Pelosi

ABSENT

None

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. David Piccerelli (President and CEO, WSBE)

Pursuant to notice, a meeting of the Rhode Island Public Telecommunications Authority convened on Wednesday, February 15, 2012.

With a quorum of members present, Chairperson Isaacs called the meeting to order at 4:05 P.M.

With a motion by Mr. Roberts, a second by Ms. Shuster and a unanimous vote, the minutes of the Board for the regular and executive session from a meeting on July 11, 2011 were approved.

President's Report (General Manager)

Mr. Piccerelli reported the following:

Engineering Operations

- The unattended operation system is ready to be employed. We have had preliminary discussions with the IBEW to put in place the appropriate monitoring procedures that will keep us in compliance with the collective bargaining agreement.

Programming

- Antiques Discovery and Appraisal Show, is Saturday, February 18, 2012, at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick. (9:00 AM, 11:00 AM & 2:00 PM)
- Thanks to Jim Leach for making a great connection for us w/Cardi's
- Working with Brian-Scott Smith to develop an hour long show based around someone who brings in a unique item to the show.
- Sold 500 tickets.
- This Old House – Barrington episodes began premiering on WSBE on January 28th.
- December 31st the Department of Ed ending their sponsorship of GED Connection. We pick it up and is now airing again. Will be on Cox On Demand service as well.

Production

- “*A Lively Experiment*” has been receiving very positive feedback.
- Will be working with Dr. Philip Rizzuto from Lifespan (Rhode Island & Miriam Hospitals) to create a long form PSA on a TBD medical issues.
- We will be the presenting Mary Anne Kane and her show, “*CEO Global Foresight*”. Maryanne is the former host of the New England Cable news show, CEO Corner. She is also the former Business Editor for WHDH, is a former national correspondent for NBC's Today Show, has served as Bureau Chief for the MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour, and has worked as a reporter for WCVB-TV. She has seven pilot episodes completed and is looking to get picked up nationally. We will also be producing six additional episodes with her over the next several weeks.

Development

- Wine Event – *An Evening Uncorked* will be held, Saturday, April 21, 2012 at the Roger Williams Park Botanical Center. Final details are still being worked out.
- There is a new committee for *An Evening Uncorked*, expanded with a concerted focus of bringing in a more diverse group of supporters and ultimately buyers.
- Hired Vanessa Medeiros, consultant, to work with us on this event and develop additional events for us.

- Spring Auction will be under a new format this year and will run the entire month of May. There will be no live nights but we will pre-produce spots highlighting items/packages and depending on the value will run for a full four weeks.
- We put our membership database through a wealth screening and have identified 250 names of current members who have capacity to give significantly more than they current give. We are putting together letters to solicit these individuals that will be followed up with a phone call by me and ultimately a face-to-face meeting.
- We will be doing a joint fundraising effort with Crossroads Rhode Island for the month of April. A spot will be produced with me and Anne Nolan, President of Crossroads Rhode Island, for our air and for the Cox cable system. All donations that designate the joint effort will be split 50/50 between the organizations.
- December pledge grossed \$85,000 and was \$5,000 better than we budgeted, largely in part to the show *Joe Bonamassa at the Royal Albert Hall* which raised \$12,285 alone in one airing. Joe will be at PPAC on May 22nd and we have 500 tickets to give away as part of pledge.
- We received a grant from Ocean State Charitable Trust for \$3,500 to fund the purchase of a new server for the Allegiance Membership & Auction software. Without this server upgrade we would not be able to install the next version of the software. The old software is no longer being supported.
- Working with Michael Isaacs, we have revised the by-laws of the Foundation.
- These revision will be voted on at a meeting of the Foundation to be held on February 29th.
- Have been working with Temporary Nominating Committee to form the new RIPBS Foundation Board. Committee is Jim Leach, Laurie White, Lisa Churchville and myself. We identified fifteen individuals that we approached to see if they would be interested in serving on this Board. I have had several meetings and I am happy to report that the new Board will be in place as of February 29th.
- Once the new Board is seated, we will focus on ways to increase fundraising revenues.

Financial Report

- The Governor (State Budget Office) is recommending that our State Appropriation from the General Fund be reduced from \$947,960 to \$936,562 for this fiscal year. This reduction further adds to the deficit position from this account from the initial appropriation reduction of \$150,000 during the last legislative session.
- Our Fiscal Year 2013 Governor’s recommendation is for \$425,286. The recommendation is to fund the first six months of the fiscal year then calls for the independence of the station.
- Support from the CPB was \$28,108 lower than expected so far and is expected to be off a total of \$56,216 for the year. This is a direct result of lower State Appropriations and fundraising dollars over the past couple of year.
- Our deferred payment plan to PBS was approved for the outstanding \$214,924 we owe PBS from fiscal year 2011 dues. This plan pays off this balance over an 18 month period which will conclude with an April 2013 payment.

- Expenses were \$32,223 higher than budget largely due to an inability to achieve budgeted savings from personnel reductions.
- Some larger expense variances are because of:
 - Building Utilities – greater efficiencies achieved by adjusting the hours that the HVAC equipment is in operation.
 - Dues & Subscriptions – better than expected savings from changing our PDP (Programming Differentiation Participant) level with PBS from a 40% station to a 25% station. We expected to achieve savings of \$25,000.
 - Talent Fees – This variance is a result of the show we produced in a partnership and is offset by un-budgeted production revenue from the Art RI.
 - Temporary Help - \$7,748 of this variance is attributed to Art RI and an outreach project Beyond the Light Switch.

PEG Access

- Eric Palazzo retired – replaced by Tom Kogut

New Business

Mr. Piccerelli discussed the efforts he and Chairperson Isaacs are putting forth in working with the Governor's Office and Legislative leadership to have funding fully restored for fiscal year 2013. As things progress through the legislative session, he will keep this Board informed of any material developments.

Adjournment

With a motion by Mr. Wells and a second by Ms. Shuster, and unanimous approval, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 PM.

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



David W. Piccerelli, President and CEO

May 30, 2012

Date