

Media Factory Board Meeting, 12/11/23 5 pm

In attendance via Zoom: Jess Wilson, Seth Mobley, Keith Oppenheim (joined at 5:23) Shelagh Connor Shapiro, Deb Ellis, Katherine Bielwala-Stamper, Dean Pierce, Jason Raymond, Chris Dissinger.

1. Call to Order 5:03 p.m.
2. Public Comment (none)
3. Approve Minutes: November 20, 2023
 - a. Seth shared his screen while members reviewed the minutes from last month.
 - b. Dean moved to approve the minutes. Jason seconded.
Minutes approved.
4. MF will close Monday from 2-6 so that staff that wants to join the holiday party (12/18 at 3 p.m.) can make it.
5. Next regular meeting will be on 1/15 (MLK Day).
6. FY24 Operating Budget Review
 - a. Seth: should we address some of the other questions that came in ahead of time while we wait for Keith? Deb: let's move forward.
 - i. Seth addressed Shelagh's question about WBTV Funding. The balance sheet reflected a checking account with only \$10 in it, though that has now been lessened by bank fees.

- ii. More people now give online. That was set up back when people wanted to write checks directly to the station. But WBTV has funding in other MF accounts.
 - iii. Jess: donations are tracked and any directions about where a donation should go is respected and can be reported on if requested.
 - iv. Katherine encouraged board members to support the radio station, as she likes to do once a year. Easy to donate on the website.
 - v. Jess: physical mail annual appeal letters for MF have just gone out.
- b. Dean had a couple of questions re: 1) breakdown of funding stream on government side vs. other funding. 2) Whether MF has gone to individual towns that we serve for support as they set their budgets. Might be worth looking at (next Oct/Nov).
- i. Seth: we do ask for money (not by way of the budget) when towns ask for coverage of additional events.
 - ii. Seth: on Govt. side, we've never asked to be in town budgets. We would have a good pitch if we were to do so, given services offered, the pandemic, and

other factors. Discussion of one town in particular that may be resistant, given history.

- iii. Jess: analysis with decline in revenue does help as we draft any such request.
 - iv. Katherine has some experience in drafting such letters and would be happy to help
- c. Jason had questions about workshops. (SCS - look back for wording.)
- i. Seth shared “Regular Workshops” spreadsheet for a discussion of attendance.
 - ii. Open to exploring diversifying revenue through these services. A matter of striking the right tone and communicating the value to people, not building any barriers to access for those who can’t afford to attend.
- d. Jason had also asked about our partners (events, schools, nonprofits) and Seth shared a sheet about that as well.
- i. Around 63 meaningful partners in 2023.
 - ii. Jess - we work with colleges and universities, for example. Seminars, graduations, training. Media sponsorship partners. Some that are more a hybrid situation, like Penguin Plunge. They pay at a reduced

rate. Most things made with partners also go on our channels.

- iii. Spreadsheet needs to be fleshed out around things like Value.
- iv. Keith: this is a great list of all the people we connect with.
- v. Seth: also happy to keep talking about these subjects with Jason later (offline).
- vi. Jason mentioned his research into other places that offer similar workshops and services, and how they structure their tuition options). He is curious how often these relationships are used for publicity to show the variety of organizations we partner with. Jess spoke more to this as well.
- e. Chris: these are important subjects, but there should be a distinction made between budget (with income sources and expense activities) and strategic planning (where we map expenses to income sources).
 - i. Jason mainly wants to draw attention to the potential funding that could come from revisiting what we charge for education.
- f. Chris asked to hear the difference between different types of reserve funds.

- i. Seth addressed this, discussing remote origination, streaming services, and getting live feeds to go out on the channel live. He pointed to different categories of funding and explained in some detail what each number means.
- ii. Seth also explained challenges made through the years by Comcast about our reserve funds. We want to spend down our reserves, but not in ways that aren't thoughtful.
- iii. Keith asked about funding that will be spent and will not be spent, and Seth and Jess addressed which reserves are meant to be spent sooner and which are more general reserves.
- iv. Seth also addressed planning questions such as hiring, which costs more but creates more production revenue.
- v. Chris: less than 2% of our reserves are being earmarked this year. But such categories need to be in the budget for the numbers to be sound.
- vi. Seth: two important factors of note - increases to our budget that we opted to do last year. And the decreases to cable revenue last year.

- vii. Goal is to have a budget that captures all of our goals and needs, but in recent years we haven't fully spent down our operating budget.
- viii. Katherine moves to approve the operating budget.
Deb seconded the motion. Motion approved.

7. Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.