

**Media Factory Board Minutes**  
**February 17, 2025 - 6 p.m.**

**In attendance:** Deb Ellis, Keith Oppenheim, Seth Mobley; Jason Raymond, Jane Chou, Eric Agnero, Dean Pierce, Colleen Goodhue, and Shelagh Shapiro attended remotely. **MF staff:** Patrick Heltz (Content and Distribution Director), Adam Walker (Production Services Director) and Gin Ferrara (Community Engagement Director) were also in attendance.

**1. Call to Order** - Keith called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**2. Public Comment**

- a. Intro to three staff members. Gin, Adam and Patrick introduced themselves and their roles for attendees who might not know them well.
- b. Keith: this structure is the new normal. Some or all three of these staff members will likely be attending board meetings regularly or at least from time to time going forward.

**3. Approve Minutes: January 20, 2025**

- a. Dean moved to approve the minutes from 1/20/25. Deb seconded.
- b. The motion passed unanimously.

**4. Financial Report**

- a. Deb and Seth talked this afternoon. Deb: what makes sense for us as a board re: the operating budget, discussion-wise? She has in the past found it a bit cumbersome to listen to the financial report. Others?
  - i. Eric understands this concern. Maybe each meeting could highlight a certain topic that educates us gradually from month to month.
  - ii. Keith says what he wants from the financial report is a guide who shows us what we should be looking at - a summary. Interpretation.
  - iii. COleen: the high level look has been helpful, but when we do dig into one line, that has helped her learn more about the budget.
  - iv. Jason: it's a measure of transparency. Also there's an element of offering feedback to the MF /Seth.
  - v. Deb re: how much we want vs. need to know. Op budget is more basic: what's been spent, what hasn't.
    - 1. HSAs all pay up front at the beginning of the year.
    - 2. Should she read the notes or have Seth go through them in more detail?

- vi. Seth: I approach the reports by looking at the budget. If everything was on target to the penny, he wouldn't have a lot to say. But often he has to speak to the lines that differ from the budget for one reason or another. He's happy to speak to other subjects if asked. He also does plan to highlight in yellow subjects that will be covered in meetings going forward.
1. 2024 books not yet closed. Some expenses hitting the books.
    - a. Some CC charges. Some invoicing from accounting.
    - b. We do still need to invoice Ch17 for their use of the tech core.
    - c. Income side: state funding in grants, fee for service, interest income... we still came out with 60K+ more than we'd expected in the budget. The cable thing needs to be navigated still, but we weathered that storm in '24.
    - d. 7005: we still haven't been billed for accounting.
    - e. Net Ordinary Income - we were intentionally going to dip into reserves by about \$135K (leasehold , roof generator, space for meetings). Some of those dollars were shifted to the EVO we reported on last month. We did not dip into the reserves as much as intended. We spent \$54K less than we'd expected from reserves. This sends a message to the cable companies about how we operate and how we plan and that we are budgeting to use the money given to us to further our mission to better our community. j
    - f. Keith asked about cable operator scrutiny of our financial reports. How do they look at our books and how often do we hear from them. Seth: this comes up in certain scenarios. They don't call or email regularly, but when we were negotiating our contract, we had to speak to these issues. If a few board members want to work on the budgeting strategy with Seth next summer, that could be very helpful. Earlier input (rather than the end of the year, such as with bonus \$ discussion), will be useful in planning. Cable

operators are not afraid to call out media organizations on items in their budgets. At the end of '27 Comcast will have a new CPG. We ask for things, Comcast wants things, and the discussion will go back and forth. Access centers need to present the plan for the money they might be sitting on.

- g. Majority of underspending was in capital. Salary, capital equipment... We'll come up shy by about \$28K of our target, due to unspent capital.
- h. Net Income Overall. We budgeted to go into the reserves. We did come up \$54K shy in doing this as much as we'd intended to.

## **5. Balance Sheet reviewed quickly**

### **6. PNL:**

- a. Review of HSA expenses and how they are paid early in the year.
- b. Budget not yet entered into quickbooks as it has not yet been approved.
- c. Seth spoke briefly about how accounting works with Roseworks, new bookkeeping. This has changed a bit from how we worked with Sarah, who showed the whole year each month. (Easier, per Seth.) But we're trying to figure this out. Hoping for some compromise.
- d. Coleen asked about income projections - a line Seth had skipped. He thanked her for pointing it out. He'll fix the error and get it into the budget.
  - i. Coleen: that category had a higher line than budgeted last year.
  - ii. Seth: we received one big \$10K donation. Might be a mistake to count on that again this year. Do you budget higher for income and possibly not meet your goals, or budget lower and anything that comes in higher is a nice surprise? We try to walk that line.
  - iii. Gin pulled up a graphic re: 2024 Donations. Big jump from donors. She made the point that asking for money does result in higher numbers!
- e. Dean moved Eric seconded approval of the financial report. Motion passed unanimously.

## **7. 2025 Capital Budget**

- a. Summary
- b. Seth: Capital is different from operating because it is negotiated on top of funding and is not required of cable operators to provide.

- c. .5% capital (each) was successfully negotiated in contracts when we were VCAM and RETN. After the merger, this combined to be 1%. New contract, just signed, maintained that 1%. Use it or lose it. If our contracts went away, we would likely no longer have this money to use.
- d. The Media Factory has just north of \$200k in deferred capital revenue (reserves) on hand. We project that we'll receive this in '25 as well.
- e. We are budgeting for \$300,000 in capital expenses including \$50,000 out of our deferred capital revenue.
- f. We were able to identify approximately \$12,000-\$13,000 from the 2025 operating budget that can be moved into the capital budget.
- g. Expensive services: Network services. Internet. Channel moderation. Content streaming. All in support of capital equipment. Network connectivity and the internet moving into the capital from the operating side for this reason.
- h. Seth took us through the process. MF Budget Pie-in-the-Sky Wish List > \$400K. This is high, so we work to arrive at a more reasonable target. Gin: Departments help to update needs and wishes to help bring the organization to a reasonable budget number. Staff discussion of details re: these issues:
  - i. Adam: prioritizing is a good first step. The process helps create reality checks about what to budget for.
    1. Upgrading our studio - what we're putting some of the budget toward. Most important is making sure we have great cameras and a control room that's in good shape. Jordan did a great job of making that room a lot more user friendly.
    2. File reporting, fixing failing equipment, assured master copies of work and high quality archive. He mentioned other more specific items as well.
    3. Municipal systems: we have six installations out in the field (school districts, for example). In assessing these, we've decided we need to standardize our setups better to minimize human error in the field. This will help with training and overall quality.
    4. Internally, we're doing fee-for-service work for which we have some dedicated cameras. Can't tap into all the lenses we have available in the public side. Might like to invest in equipment to even this out a bit. Seth spoke to this for a minute as well.

ii. Patrick

1. Covered content. Basics to keep channels on the air to the same quality standard. (video hosting, storage, support/maintenance, etc.)
2. Channel related item - Making Comcast channels HD. ~\$4K
3. Website related (\$35K) - developers working on the website front end. No support at this point. Improved navigation. First step to improve our back end in the future as well.

[Shelagh had to sign out at this point. Seth took over recording the minutes.]

iii. Gin

1. Outreach- usually a smaller capital budget item. This past year we got a new DSLR Camera. This year: a few goals around different types of engagement.
  2. The Media Factory wanted to hold more events that feature the work of our members and other digital media artists and plans to curate an Art Hop exhibit internally.
    - a. Eric mentioned being glad that hosting more events is part of the planning and would like to include more off-site events to connect with more people.
- i. Deb moved to approve the 2025 Capital budget, Colleen seconded, Budget passed unanimously

**8. Strategic Planning Check-In**

- a. Seth provided a progress update on the strategic planning project
- b. The board discussed potential dates for the board's strategic planning session. April 5th emerged as a possible date. Seth will reach out to board members to get more feedback about April 5.

**9. Other Business**

- a. No action was taken

**10. Adjourn**

- a. Dean moved, Deb seconded, meeting adjourned at 7:47pm