

Media Factory Board Minutes
April 25, 2025, 6 p.m.

In attendance: Keith Oppenheim, Seth Mobley, Deb Ellis, and Shelagh Shapiro. Dean Pierce, Jane Chou, and Colleen Goodhue attended remotely. **MF staff:** Patrick Heltz (Content and Distribution Director), was also in attendance.

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Approve Minutes: March 17, 2025
 - a. Change to iv 2 from 3/17 meeting (re VAN and discussions re: financial information)
 - b. Deb moved and Colleen seconded to approve the minutes with above amendment. Minutes approved.
4. Financial Report
 - a. Deb met with Seth today. He will begin and she will come in after his initial assessment of the finances.
 - i. Budget: 4130 - we have more donation \$ that hasn't hit the books yet. Will get us to 26% of budget - more on track than it appears. Donations are seasonal. Don't always come in consistently each month.
 - ii. Facilities fees income (4370) was a projection based on shared tech core facility expenses. Ch 17 pays us for their share of expenses in that room. Seth just finished running the numbers for them for 2024. Their bill is \$8000+ so the expenses we bill for 2025 will probably be more in that range.
 - iii. 4995 Unrealized gain/loss. Investments have been up and down. Value of the portfolio this month is very similar to what it was in December.
 - iv. 7005 Accounting - 2024 expense - billed in January. It will be moved.
 - v. Town of Shelburne is about to move their selectboard meeting to another regular schedule. This puts one of those Tuesdays on a very busy night for the MF. All production techs are out typically, so we're in communication with the town of Shelburne to explain what this means, budget-wise.

Hoping it might just be seasonal, temporary, or adaptable change. If not, we'll have to buy new equipment to cover these meetings.

1. Keith: would that equipment be useful to us long-term in other ways?
2. Discussion of this. Could impact our budget.
3. Dean asked if Seth would like him to connect with them? He knows the people involved.
 - a. Seth: we're in touch. If it comes up, though, if you feel comfortable to casually mention it, that could be helpful.
 - b. Now that there are these virtual meeting OWLs out there, it's becoming more common for people to say, "Couldn't we just do this with an OWL?" Great to get that message across that the quality isn't as good.
- b. Deb talked about her discussion with Seth about how he looks at the budget. One of his areas of focus is around payroll. Also income outside of cable revenue. A few questions they discussed:
 - i. 5565 - Workers comp seems like so little is spent so far. *Primarily paid in October.*
 - ii. 5595 Education - *primarily concerns one conference that happens later in the year.*
 - iii. 6000 - Administrative/Office - *another time-of-year issue.*
- c. Seth encourages other board members to ask if they have questions about the budget, as Deb has.
- d. Seth shared Profit & Loss sheets, as well as the way Ted has requested be made available. Seth working to make this a regular part of the meeting.
- e. Dean asked about how the "pie" of state funding looks at this point. Seth said we should receive a bit more this year. He was involved in reporting how the money is reported between organizations. Money lost in cable revenue from one year to the next, but also a portion based on population (tax related). Other centers suggest other ways of looking at access centers and the amount of reserves they

have. Seth is not in favor of talking about how access centers manage their reserves.

- f. Shelagh moved to accept the financial report. Jane seconded. The financial report passed.

5. Content Department Updates (5 mins)

- a. Patrick shared his screen.

- i. Internal Content position now held by Gabby (since January). Primarily a production position. Some shifts on the floor, but also:

- 1. Some MF online content
 - 2. Blog posts
 - a. One content-related post every two weeks or so
 - b. i.e. Women's History Month Playlist
 - 3. Town Meeting Day Video Outreach (can be audio for the radio and used in other ways, too)
 - 4. Focus on making these projects reusable in the future, such as updating the "sizzle reel."
 - 5. Facebook Page workshop promos
 - 6. Not just photos, stills, graphics as before; in her role as internal content producer, Gabby can do more.
 - 7. Also assets like the Banner Image on the website. Good for promotion, among all these other things.
 - 8. Seth: when Matt Goudy left, the MF redistributed some of his responsibilities to other people. Some content things, for example.
 - a. This position supports the content department and the production department, both. We have a lot more content on social media now.
 - b. Please follow us!
 - 9. Patrick: internal videos help us in other ways. The Hire Us page now has footage from the Penguin Plunge to show what kind of work the MF does. (Fun footage that helps illustrate what MF staff might do at an event.)

10. Jane commented on how great this looks and how good it looks.
11. Dean agreed. He asked about reels and also what's next beyond Facebook and Insta. Seth: we've dabbled on TikTok, with mixed feelings. Well-established YouTube channels. MeetUp. Discord. Twitter we pulled back due to engagement. Not active on BlueSky or Threads.
12. Colleen: do we track engagement?
 - a. Seth: yes. And we have an Instagram challenge for staff to provide content and captions. Those with the most reactions get NA drinks. Trying to make it fun. No marketing dept so we try to "teamwork it."

6. Board Appointments & Election

- a. Seth: As of now, Jane, Jason and Colleen are up for reappointment. All are willing to stay on for another term. It's a two-year term beginning after tonight. He explained how we came to schedule this in April (as far as the annual meeting is concerned). New appointments come in June; reappointments come in April.
 - b. Deb expressed how happy she'll be if they agree to stay on. This is the general consensus. Jason couldn't be here tonight, but as far as Seth goes, he's happy to remain on the slate.
 - c. Jane: it's been a pleasure being on the board and she's happy to stay on for two more years.
 - d. Colleen commented that she has learned a lot and is happy to stay on for two more years.
 - e. Dean asked about the approach, procedure wise. Do you need a motion for each?
 - f. Moved to approve the slate of Jason, Colleen, and Jane. Dean moved and Deb seconded that motion. Discussion of the vote and quorum. The motion passed.
7. New board appointment possibility: John Billingsley (Champlain College adjunct and acquaintance of Keith's).
- a. Great, relevant experience, nice guy, interested in joining the board.
 - b. Keith: rapport matters, even if it's not required. He'll be a good addition if we invite him in.

- c. Keith would like to invite him to the annual meeting and then he would be voted in - or not - in June.
 - d. Seth: DL to nominate selves or others is this Friday. There are a few other folks who have already expressed interest, a couple of whom aren't yet members.
 - e. We're presently down to 8. Shelagh is stepping down. We could appoint John to fill Shelagh's seat. Art is stepping down. And one other seat is open. So there would be room for appointed seats.
 - f. Keith: new executive committee participation will be needed, with Art (VP) and Shelagh (Secretary) stepping down.
8. Strategic Planning Check-In
- a. Steffi sent out a package with notes from the board retreat.
 - b. Seth: People felt it went really well. Lots of valuable ideas were generated.
 - i. Next step: planning committee check-in. Steffi will present notes in a more refined way to this group, who will then narrow it down to bring to the full board.
 - ii. Staff and board will have input for ideas as it develops.
9. Board Meeting Improvements Discussion
- a. Deb, Keith and Seth talked last week about board retreat feedback re: making board meetings more engaging.
 - i. Financial report is dry and takes up a lot of it.
 - ii. General discussion about how to make the meetings more engaging, participatory, etc.
 - iii. For example, can Seth get financial reports out earlier to make the discussion more streamlined?
 - 1. Colleen - can we discuss the financials only quarterly?
 - 2. Seth - board needs to approve the financials each month to help accounting stay on track with their reports.
 - a. Report on it, then approve it?
 - b. Provide it, then approve with no discussion?

- c. Shelagh - can financials be shared monthly but only discussed if people have questions, and then quarterly? Or is that not ok with the bylaws?
- d. Keith: likes the idea of changing the pattern of the board meeting in that way if it satisfies the bylaw requirements. No decision is required right now, but let's discuss at an upcoming meeting when more people are here. Maybe in June.
- e. Dean: doesn't mind the monthly discussions.
 - i. Maybe it could be approached differently. i.e seeing things graphically. Pragmatic question about how to export the pdfs from Quickbooks that could be simplified. He'll think about this and bring it up in the future when we re-address this later.

b. Also, getting the committees re-engaged.

10. Other Business

- a. Gifts for Outgoing Board Members
 - i. Awkward conversation ensued ;)

11. Shelagh moved to adjourn. Deb seconded. The meeting ended at 7:26 p.m.