

Golden Valley Community Broadcasters, Inc.
KZFR Community Radio Board of Directors
June 23, 2020 – Special Meeting
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Board Meeting Date: June 23, 2020
Location: Virtual Meeting
Commencement Time: 6:00 pm

1. Meeting Opening

1.1 Call to Order – 6:02 pm

Staff Present: Rick Anderson, Grant Parks, Ray Laager, Leah McKean

Staff Absent: n/a

Board Members Present: Mercedes Macias, Rob Davidson, Jim McCullough, Courtney Farrell, Paul O'Rourke-Babb, Jeannie Trizzino, Steve O'Bryan, Sandra Morales-Miller, Bobbi Tryon

BOD Absent: LeAnn Cooley

Guest Attendees: Karen Laslo, Anna Kastner, David Fuhs

1.2 Amend/Approve Agenda

- Amend 3.3: Consideration of staff responsibilities – Motion by Rob, Second by Paul, unanimous approval

1.3 Public Input/Comments

2. Agenda Items Carried over From the June 9, 2020 Board Meeting:

3. Matters for Discussion

3.2 News Director Program Expansion

- Paul – gave overview of the background for this discussion.
- 5-minute board presentation of what they would like to see on this topic
- **Bobbi:** Historical discussion to add more news and public affairs on the KZFR station
 - Planning and strategy needed to create a department
 - More than a news show – look at scheduling, access to existing syndicating programs, how we represent local information, reporters on board, etc.
 - Current funding mechanism could assist with creating the news director position
 - Can we utilize the funding and the current social contextual discussions to be more inclusive?
 - Becoming a programmer can be a challenge to some of our community members – devise ways to be more open and accessible

- The community could benefit from public news
- A dynamic manager over the news department could help with this
- Sustainability of the position is also a need in this discussion
- Establish a committee to strategize the need, the plan and the implementation activities
- **Rob:** Excited about the potential to focus on local issues
 - Tremendous opportunity to focus on local news: city council, Butte County BOS, local community members, especially given our current climate
- **Steve:** the transition of KCHO will increase the need for coverage of local events
 - Need to find the appropriate talent to cover and deliver the various local news pieces
 - Be mindful of the one-time money from COVID-19 and our overall budget
 - Be cautious of the consistent expense to the station via a permanent news director position
 - Identify specific donors/underwriters to support a position like this
 - Could set KZFR as the source for issues may not covered by other sources
- **Jim:** Budget is a priority of strategic decisions
 - Primary mission of the board is to raise money
 - Events are undetermined as a revenue source
 - Underwriting due to COVID-19 is unstable
 - Businesses and students are a big factor on the overall revenue for the community
 - Local level news is important but challenging to predict future revenue sources outside of the one-time funding due to COVID-19
 - Plan is needed to determine who, hours needed, long-term strategy to create a new position
 - Current additional funding will need to cover operational expenses to offset downturns in other revenue sources
- **Paul:** Asked for clarification on the new funding streams
- **Rick:** clarifies sources and amounts – all tied to CPB funding
- **Jeannie:**
 - Agree with the lack of plan to afford a permanent news director position – would need to assess the financial plan
 - Assess the current public affairs programming – identifying what and when they will be delivering and finding ways to incorporate more local and other news coverage
 - Coordinate with the programmers to position us as a go-to news source
 - Start branding KZFR as a news source – most promotion is centered around music
 - Encourage our programmers to think about including more local news segment
- **Sandra:**
 - Agrees with everyone's points
 - Had some questions regarding the timing of news programming

- Bobbi weighed in that we are not considering dramatic shifts of what is currently on air – but rather cultivating what we have and asking them to shift their focus a bit – looking for someone to help shift things
- **Courtney:**
- **Leah:**
 - At the community booths at Farmers’ Market and other live events – the request for more news programming happens often
 - Station: promote peace not through music but through discourse
 - The community is identifying the needs and news programming is big
 - Personally feels that it is important, and we have failed as a station
- **Ray:**
 - Agree with Bobbi – time of opportunity for the station
 - “All politics is local”
 - While in uncharted waters – first time this month with no, new underwriters
 - Opening the economy is wrapped in fear
 - Approach this in stages
 - Local information and knowledge is lacking and so needed: our communities are lacking and limited leaving many residents in the dark of the issues
 - Can we identify a financial supporter that can back a 3-year plan to roll out this potential position
- **Rick:**
 - Mindful of the additional funding provided to the station because of the economic downturn due to COVID-19
 - News is very important to KZFR – we do provide Democracy Now! as KZFR’s main news source
 - Democracy Now! in the morning and the news director in the afternoon
 - It is an election year, and we could capitalize on the opportunity of that and the responsibility of delivering that info and the local info
 - Hesitant of a dedicated position due to funding challenges
 - Need to develop a strategic plan for dedicated staff with funding goals
 - Local/state/federal news is critical because there is not a good, dedicated local source
 - Need to be mindful of our financial situation, but sometimes taking the leap is what is needed – we could potentially find funding if a program is on the air
- **Grant:**
 - Appreciate the need for a news department but aware the financial constraints
 - In-house news activities that are currently happening: rebranding of the news and public affairs logo without changing the programming – sets the foundation for the new department
 - Have a staff working toward news programming, etc.
 - Creating a news department could potentially lead to hiring up to 4 positions
 - Recommending to put a pause on the news director position but focus on the activities that are currently happening

- Maybe bring in people that are not necessarily paid – but are willing to create content
- **David Fuhs (guest):**
 - Don't underestimate the level of effort of a news director
 - Recommends having a news department – the station is lacking that now
- **Anna Kastner (guest):**
 - Have been talking about a news department for many years
 - Are there funders who are willing to sponsor or use some of the current funding to support news program at least up until the election
 - Next year may be too late – critical election for 11/2020
 - We are limited on local information
 - Request to find funds until at least leading up to the election
- **Karen Laslo (guest)**
 - News and Democracy Now! advocate
 - Please do not take away from Democracy Now! funding
 - Ideal traits of a news director: someone familiar with journalism, the workload expectations, may be challenging to find someone that cannot be compensated at the level that it should
 - Start a once-a-week program
 - Add more local news to the rotation: our community may not be aware of local discussions, changes, decisions, etc.
 - Can we have news programming director start as a volunteer?
- **Mercedes**
 - Recognize the need for more local news representation and connectivity
 - Critical junction in our country related to difficult conversations
 - The station needs to be cognizant of the economic sustainability of the community
 - Can we reach out to other organizations that are delivering news, tap into the journalism department at CSUC for interns
 - Relying on old financial models is not going to work
 - Loss of diversification and independent reporting is waning in the public news/radio
- **Paul**
 - From a news volunteer's perspective
 - Tries to have good journalistic integrity when delivering news segments: research, validation, vetting, etc. takes dozens of hours per show
 - Volunteers may be limiting – while valuable, still challenging
 - It's been too late for 20 years – look at consolidation of messaging in mainstream media; main news has promoted racism and classism for too long. The station needs to be on the forefront of the movement that is occurring throughout the nation.
 - We should engage new partners to move the message forward: erase the racism and classism.
 - Utilize the platform and tool that we have in a mindful and meaningful way

- Find ways to implement in a fiscally responsible way
- Requesting that the board create a subcommittee to move the discussion forward: watch the economy, be creative in our revenue sources, articulate the activation and dialogue around this messaging
- **Jim:**
 - Board is responsible for oversight – including our new staff
 - Need to be mindful of future endeavors while maintaining our current operational expenses
- **Mercedes:**
 - Online pledge drive was very successful
 - “Must spend money to make money”
 - Development of online merchandize site is a potential new revenue source
 - Time to empower our community members to be sustaining members in small monthly amounts they can afford
- **Bobbi:**
 - Recommend a committee to oversee the plan of funding, what we have, what we can implement – lead by Paul
 - Bobbi would like to stay on the committee as a community member
 - Motion to start a committee lead by Paul
- **Ray:** Happy with the discussion
- **Jim:** Rick and Jim to look at the budget with various scenarios and understand the numbers
 - Really understand the budgetary needs
- **Bobbi:** Establish a subcommittee without expenditures and what we need to know to move forward with expenditures
- **Paul:** Second
- All in favor – unanimous

3.3 Staff responsibilities

- Positions have been eliminated
- What can we base this on
- From staff: this seems like a personnel issue
- Several job descriptions are being filled by people – but without differentiation
- Rob: Complicated area of discussion – support idea about news director. It’s on the mind of the board that extra duties have been absorbed as we have pared back finances.
 - Reiterate the hardworking staff that is keeping the station moving forward
- Courtney: What does the staff need and what is the plan to bring that to fruition?
- What responsibilities were absorbed, what funding was affiliated with that, etc.
- Paul: Personnel issues, cautious of labor law, etc.
 - Need a report from the GM and staff about what areas are needed in terms of occupations
 - What is the funding needed to implement that desired/needed positions
- GM to provide executive committee with needs and funding requirements

Next Steps:

Confirmation of June 30 BOD Election Committee

Paul to coordinate formation of news programming committee

4. Action Items

5. Adjourn: 7:38 pm