The Iowa Public Radio Board of Directors held their regular meeting March 17, 2009 at 2111 Grand Ave in Des Moines. Present for the meeting were Directors Art Neu, Kay Runge, Steve Parrott, Warren Madden, Steve Carignan, and Mary Grace Herrington. Present from the Leadership Team were: Don Wirth, Jonathan Ahl, Joan Kjaer, Al Schares, Michelle Rourke, Wayne Jarvis, and Matt Sieren.

Chair Runge called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. Two new directors, Michelle Rourke and Al Schares, were introduced and provided the board with brief biographies of themselves.

Following introductions, Runge adjusted the agenda, moving the Executive Session portion of the meeting to the beginning.

Carignan made motion to move into Executive Session pursuant to Iowa code section 21.5(j) to discuss the purchase of real estate. Motion was seconded by Parrott. By roll call:

- Carignan: Aye
- Madden: Aye
- Neu: Aye
- Parrott: Aye
- Runge: Aye

Executive Session entered into at 9:04 a.m.

Neu made motion to end Executive Session. Seconded by Parrott. By roll call:

- Carignan: Aye
- Madden: Aye
- Neu: Aye
- Parrott: Aye
- Runge: Aye

Exited Executive Session at 10:05 a.m.

Madden made motion to move into Executive Session pursuant to Iowa code section 21.5(i) to discuss staffing implications based on anticipated state funding reductions. Motion was seconded by Carignan. By roll call:

- Carignan: Aye
- Madden: Aye
- Neu: Aye
- Parrott: Aye
- Runge: Aye

Executive Session entered into at 10:14 am.
Neu made motion to leave Executive Session, seconded by Madden. By roll call:

- Carignan: Aye
- Madden: Aye
- Neu: Aye
- Parrott: Aye
- Runge: Aye

Exited Executive Session at 11:45 a.m.

Following a brief recess, Troy Vogel, the new Corporate Support Specialist located in Des Moines, was introduced to the Board by Michelle Rourke.

Kjaer noted a correction to the January 20, minutes: the Live from Prairie Lights archives are located at the University Library and Special Collections, not the Iowa City Public Library. Parrott moved to approve the January 20 minutes with that correction. Seconded by Neu. Corrected minutes approved unanimously.

**Discussion & Decision Items:**

**A. December and January Financials:**

Wirth discussed the December and January financials, noting they were reflective of a revised budget projecting lower income and expenses. Wirth commented that IPR remained on track to maintain a deficit neutral budget line, as the Leadership team and staff have been reducing operations expenses as much as possible.

Carignan inquired into the true nature of the investment earnings line. Herrington responded that Fiscal Operations will be clarifying that line as IPR changes its reporting structure.

**B. Revenue Forecasts and Trends:**

Wirth reviewed the FY10 revenue forecast sheet that was handed out, pointing out that the organization anticipates a $300,000 decrease in university funding from the current fiscal year, approximately a $100,000 decrease per university. In response to the CPB revenue line, Wirth commented that CPB revenue is based on forward-funding, which has been established through a grant with return on investment potential. This impacts Iowa Public Radio in that its federal funding went up last year, so there might be a slight growth in dollars from this year that the CPB provides.

Wirth continued, noting that Membership has been slotted for a slight increase, about 5% over this year. The Development revenue line, which includes underwriting and major gifts, was
established using the top performers’ prospect lists and successful closes, goals off that were
created for each officer, and a small percentage increase for the new fiscal year was included.

The State of Iowa appropriation removed 11% from the current fiscal year amount. The “Other”
category includes tower leases and other passive income, and is flat from FY09 as well.

Neu inquired about the State appropriation budgeted at $445,000. Herrington commented
that she has met with David Miles and is in ongoing conversation to keep aware of this
amount as the legislature moves into approving the budget.

Carignan asked how realistic the 5% growth in Membership was, as he’d heard that few
other organizations were experiencing development growth. Herrington commented that
she was optimistic about the number, but does believe it attainable based on 2008
performance analysis and given metrics, revenue goals, etc, that have been established.
Additionally, Membership continues to grow. Good, quality, focused behavior on IPR’s
end will help close the gaps. IPR is starting the new fiscal year with a good framework,
which hasn’t existed network-wide before.

Wirth brought attention to the dispersion of the audits for FY08, as well as a composite balance
sheet as of June 30. This provides a picture of what the single organizational audit might look
like for Iowa Public Radio.

Herrington provided a document on the historical trend of university support, other revenue
lines, total employees, etc. Herrington also commented that she would soon like to take the
analysis to the next steps, such as cost to raise a dollar. This should also help the organization
keep its eyes on other production values, etc.

Parrott asked that IPR also do a Return on Investment analysis. Herrington said that
seems reasonable and that she would plan on it as the cover sheet.

D. Noon format change/Cooper update:
Ahl discussed the memo handed out to the Board, which was created in response to Neu’s
question about whether the noon hour programming change benefitted or negatively impacted
the organization.

Ahl stated that though it might initially look like the programming change hurt IPR, a lot of other
variables changed or could not be accurately tracked. As an example, he stated it is difficult to
track what program does the best during a drive, as listeners don’t necessarily call in when they
are asked, but instead when it is most convenient for them in their schedules. However, IPR
should figure out whether the show has been effective, and the best way to determine whether a
show is successful or not is to look at the audience listening to it.
In terms of the noon programming change, Ahl’s analysis of WOI AM showed that the audience remained almost identical to the numbers prior to the change – this suggests that IPR has not lost a huge amount of audience in the programming change. Ahl also took a moment to define “cume” and audience research metrics.

Ahl also pointed out that on the last page of the memo the Board members could see the total listeners to Iowa Public Radio, which trended up in fall 2008. This means that since the inception of Iowa Public Radio, more people have been listening than ever before.

In summarizing the discussion, Ahl noted that the noon hour programming has not lost listeners in the change, and overall the organization has more listening than ever before. IPR staff and board need to be careful about how to weigh the anecdotal evidence received from the listeners that complain in terms of the entire picture.

In moving to the ISU Extension service, Ahl stated that IPR’s relationship with Extension has been and continues to be very important to the organization. Thus, Ahl worked with Cooper to create a new format better utilizing this partnership. Highlights include:

1. Fewer, but longer market reports – provides more information in real context
   a. Benefit: will have to rely less on students to read the reports without the correct background information
   b. To make this as effective as possible, Ahl will work with the students on radio training while Cooper does contextualizing training
2. Instead of doing four to eight minute segments every weekday during Talk at 12, the last half of the Monday show will be dedicated to Market Extension News
3. Doug Cooper will do some reporting on agriculture issues that will go through the same process as any other reporter will need to get the story on air, these will be eligible for NPR posting as well

The nice piece of this is that the new format is a lot like Mid-Day, and is on all News signals in the network. Once IPR gets through a few books the organization can then compare how the second half of the Monday show works versus the first half – then it is comparing apples to apples.

Herrington also noted that in the future, the responsible department will put together a plan for how to properly roll out the information best utilizing marketing dollars.

Neu commented that this information looks good, but he was receiving complaints that Elwynn Taylor left. Ahl responded with two points. One, Elwynn Taylor left when the change happened and the audience size didn’t change in response. Two, Elwynn Taylor won’t talk to IPR. Several representatives invited him to a larger role on-air, and he didn’t want to take it.
Information Items:

A. IPR Policy and Procedure Handbook – Draft:
Herrington briefly discussed the Iowa Public Radio Policy Handbook, which is an attempt to give IPR strong guidelines and get within accepted practices. The team inventoried the current policies, removed those no longer needed, and has begun assembling policies to meet current needs that weren’t previously covered. Once all policies are drafted, pertinent ones will be put before the Board for their review and approval. Herrington thanked Matt for his work on this as project manager.

C. Membership by County:
Herrington noted that this information was included in the pre-meeting packet.

  Carignan commented that he was impressed with how well Polk County was doing without clear coverage.

  Parrott mentioned that there are eight or nine counties that have about half the population and it appears IPR has been doing fairly well in reaching them.

E. Podcast Training:
This item was postponed until the next meeting.

Other:
Neu inquired about IPR attaining a signal in Sioux City. Jarvis responded that IPR has applied for a signal there and is waiting for final decision. Should the organization receive a signal it will need to build relationships with current public radio signal holders in that area.

Parrott inquired about Southeast Iowa. Jarvis responded that IPR has applied for several signals throughout the state. Some of those have already been acted on, which IPR did not receive. Others are still open, including Sioux City and Keokuk, and the organization has a good opportunity to receive them through challenge if they are not awarded to IPR.

  Neu commented it would be nice to have a report on the status of IPR’s applications for signals.

Runge adjourned the meeting at 1 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Matt Sieren, Executive Administrative Assistant