

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
October 17, 2012

The Iowa Public Radio Board of Directors met on October 17, 2012, at Space2Work in Des Moines, IA. Present for the meeting were Chairman Art Neu, Vice Chairwoman Kay Runge, Director Warren Madden, Director Gloria Gibson, Director Doug West, Director Steve Firman, and Director Tysen Kendig. Executive Director Mary Grace Herrington, Chief Administrative Officer Kelly Edmister, Music Director Al Schares, Director of Network Operations Scott Rivers. Guests included Development Manager Andrew Arganbright, Underwriting Sales Manager Nile Hartline, and Interim Assignment Manager Joyce Russell.

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m.

**Agenda**

Herrington presented a revised agenda. Vice Chair Runge moved and Director Madden seconded to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

**Chairman's Report***Welcome New Community Directors*

Introductions were made. Director West and Director Firman were welcomed as new members of the board.

*IPR Managers' Comments*

An anonymous email from a Gmail account was sent to the board expressing discontent with Herrington's leadership. The senior leadership team and several managers addressed the issue. They expressed their support of Herrington, saying that she was a respected and respectful leader who mentored them and provided keen, strategic guidance. They shared concerns that she sometimes takes on too much and spreads herself too thin.

The managers expressed consensus that these were the complaints of a very small minority. Staff had not come to management with these concerns.

Russell talked about morale among the news staff. She said she had not heard complaints echoing those in the anonymous email. However, the news/talk team feels stressed, short staffed, and concerned about finding a Chief Content Officer and a permanent Managing Editor – News. They are still confused about why Jonathan Ahl is no longer employed by Iowa Public Radio. Herrington reminded those present that it is always difficult to address employment questions which, by their very nature as personnel issues, cannot be discussed.

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Members of the Board were concerned that the email message was sent anonymously and Director Madden cautioned the Board to avoid overreacting. It is difficult to address an issue without knowing where it comes from. They speculated that it could have come from a disgruntled former employee as easily as from a current one. They questioned why management was unaware of these feelings among staff, and why the individual(s) in question would feel that they needed to take their concerns to the board rather than to their supervisor. The Board has received a few communications since July 1 and they are concerned that employees do not feel that their voices are heard.

Vice Chair Runge recommended Herrington send a frequent communication to all staff to ensure that all levels of the organization are informed; Herrington agreed and noted context and details could be key points in the departmental meetings on a bi-weekly or monthly basis. All agreed that proximity and logistics of a statewide organization with employees in four locations could be a challenge to communication but the extra little efforts might give it a boost.

Herrington noted the search for a new Human Resources Manager will definitely help bring the employees together and ensure their voices are heard and they have an opportunity to fully participate in IPR's continued rapid growth. Despite the HR Manager position, Director West believed assistance from an independent HR professional could provide some feedback and suggest practice or procedure to improve the situation. Director West moved and Director Firman seconded to seek the assistance of an independent HR professional. Motion passed unanimously. Board members with recommendations should submit them to Vice Chair Runge by November 1.

**Minutes:**

Vice Chair Runge moved and Director Firman seconded to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2012 meeting as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

**Finance**

Edmister reviewed the financial suite and gave an update on the FY12 independent audits. Director Firman questioned the excessive amount the KUNI Friends group is charged for the annual audit. Edmister will question the Cremers et al regarding the matter. Chair Neu moved and Director Kendig seconded to approve the financials. Motion passed unanimously.

**Closed Session**

IPR Board of Directors entered into a Closed Session pursuant to Iowa Code 21.4 (j) to discuss the purchase of particular real estate only where premature disclosure could be reasonably expected to increase the price the governmental body would have to pay for that property.

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Herrington reviewed her written report emphasizing outcomes from recent station expansion strategy reformatting WOI 90.1FM from News/Classical to News/Studio One. Herrington noted the new Ames station will be completed in January 2013; communication plan to the Ames community “countdown to Classical” will launch soon.

Herrington provided campaign outcomes from the fall pledge drive. Early indicators show that average gift and total gifts are up however financial analysis has yet to be completed. Herrington praised the leadership of the new Development Manager, Andrew Arganbright, noting his energy, building relationships with all staff members and new tactics to the pledge drive made it a success.

**Community Feedback**

The material in the board books was reviewed.

**Meeting Dates**

Directors agreed on the following meeting dates and locations for the upcoming year:

- Thursday, December 13, 2012 | Des Moines | Space2Work
- Tuesday, February 26, 2013 | Des Moines | Space2Work
- Monday, April 15, 2013 | Ames | ISU Communications Building 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room\*
- Tuesday, June 25, 2013 | Cedar Falls | UNI Communications Building 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room\*
- Thursday, August 22, 2013 | Des Moines | Space2Work
- Wednesday, October 30, 2013 | Iowa City | SUI TBA\*
- Thursday, December 19, 2013 | Des Moines | Space2Work

\*IPR will host a reception immediately following the meeting in order for board members to engage with the employees

**Election of Officers**

Director Firman nominated Vice Chair Runge as Chair of the Board. Director Gibson seconded the nomination. Nomination approved unanimously. Chair Runge nominated Director West as Vice Chair; Director Kendig seconded the nomination. Nomination approved unanimously.

**Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.



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Respectfully submitted,

Deirdre Giesler  
Executive Assistant