



Board of Directors approved
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WCQS 2016 STRATEGIC PLAN DRAFT

CONTENTS

Background, Purpose, and Process2

Station Values3

Vision3

Mission.....3

Goals and Strategies4

 Goal 1: Exceptional Content.....4

 Goal 2: Diverse Audiences4

 Goal 3: Financial Sustainability5

 Goal 4: Effective Organization5

Performance Indicators and Targets.....6

BACKGROUND, PURPOSE, AND PROCESS

Background

The last time WCQS discussed strategic planning was in 2013, which culminated in a draft document that was not formally adopted (see draft plan in appendix). The 2013 draft strategic plan was created as the station emerged from financial challenges and reflects an organization looking to an unclear future. Since that time the station has become increasingly financially resilient, positioned for expansion through a new station signal, and under new leadership with the July 2015 hire of a new General Manager.

Purpose

The 2016 strategic planning process captured and documented the collaborative dynamic that has emerged since 2013 between the Board and Staff. At a future point the Board anticipates the need for a more in-depth strategic planning process that will cultivate transformative, deep thinking for long-range station strategy. At this future time the organization principles, mission, and vision may be revisited, but for the 2016 process they will remain unchanged. Consider the 2016 process as a station goal and strategy “tune-up.” The 2016 strategic planning process resulted in the following:

1. The Board and Staff engaged in a process that taught everyone about the roles and responsibilities in strategic planning.
2. A two-year Strategic Plan was created and adopted by the Board that documents the current station strategic thinking.

Process

1. *Complete*- Planning Committee researched radio station strategy best practices by reviewing other station strategic plans.
2. *Complete*- Planning Committee brainstormed a list of strategy ideas and sorted them into possible goal areas of a Discussion Draft.
3. *Complete*- Staff and Chair participated in a mini-retreat to review the Discussion Draft, add, revise, and improve the goals and strategies.
4. *Complete*- Planning Committee Chair and the General Manager revised the Discussion Draft based on Staff input and circulated to Staff for final review.
5. *Complete*- Planning Committee created Draft Strategic Plan based on Discussion Draft and shared Draft Strategic Plan with the Board Executive Committee for buy-in and approval to present to the full Board.

6. *Complete*- Planning Committee Chair presented the Draft Strategic Plan to the full Board for discussion and recommendation for approval during the Board Retreat.
7. *Fall 2016*- Final Draft Strategic Plan presented and adopted by the Board of Directors.
8. *Winter 2016*- Report out and share the adopted WCQS Strategic Plan with the public.

STATION VALUES

Note: last revised 2013

- Broadcasting of the highest quality that is pervasive throughout content and technical delivery.
- Fair and impartial journalism that relies upon accurate reporting, credible information and constructive civil discourse.
- Programming that enhances community life, aided by ongoing engagement and collaboration.
- Lifelong learning supported by engaging and provocative programming.
- The region's endorsement and support, as WCQS continually strives to be good stewards of public funds through sound fiduciary management.
- Mutual respect that sustains relationships with our community, audience, supporters, volunteers, Staff and Board.
- Diverse viewpoints, which we believe strengthen our community.
- Recognizing the arts and the power they have to transform and enrich our lives.

VISION

Western North Carolina Public Radio, Inc. aspires to be the essential and trusted source for independent journalism and programming that celebrates the creative life of Western North Carolina. We will follow this vision by creating and presenting content and services that connect the people of our region to each other and the world.

MISSION

Western North Carolina Public Radio, Inc. operates WCQS-FM and its associated broadcast services as a regional, community-based public radio system, committed to enhancing the quality

of life in Western North Carolina by: expanding listeners' horizons through new perspectives and listening experiences; promoting the free and independent interchange of ideas and information; and enriching and reflecting the cultural climate, heritage and traditions of our region and society through classical and other music, and the arts.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

GOAL 1: EXCEPTIONAL CONTENT

WCQS holds high standards for quality in all aspects of the station, especially with regard to content. This goal strongly aligns with WCQS's values and its commitment to be an independent, impartial voice of the region.

Strategies in support of the goal:

- A. Expand original journalism and meaningful reporting for Western North Carolina (WNC).
- B. Initiate and maintain closer working partnerships with regional organizations by developing and sharing content.
- C. Assess, identify, and invest time and talent in focus areas to reflect and foster WNC communities.
- D. Produce and deliver high quality content that is responsive to community input.
- E. Develop and implement an effective marketing communications plan for the WCQS news service.

GOAL 2: DIVERSE AUDIENCES

As a public service broadcaster, WCQS is committed to reaching as many residents of our region as possible.

Strategies in support of the goal:

- A. Create and source content that connects to and reflects the interests of the diverse groups that are current and potential audiences of WCQS.
- B. Retain and expand the audience by providing our content on as many platforms as possible.
- C. Conduct outreach and engagement activities to build community.

GOAL 3: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The financial well-being of WCQS is a partnership between the Staff and the Board. Success will assure the long-term content and technology investments required to deliver excellent public media service to WNC.

Strategies in support of the goal:

- A. Grow Board leadership in and support of station fundraising.
- B. Provide sufficient Staff capacity for fundraising, sponsorship cultivation, and member support.
- C. Increase awareness of the WCQS planned giving program to increase bequest support to the station.
- D. Cultivate, build, and strengthen relationships with the donors, members, and sponsors.
- E. Convert public radio listeners into donors by connecting them to WCQS programming they find meaningful.
- F. Create fundraising affinity groups.
- G. Experiment and innovate by integrating digital fundraising methods (e.g. mobile payment apps or text messaging payments) with fundraising, and exploring mission enhancing community partnerships.
- H. Explore use of donor-restricted giving (project/program specific funds) when the opportunity is aligned with WCQS mission and goals; e.g. funding for five segment environment series, see Goal 1 Strategy C.
- I. Annually review investment strategy.

GOAL 4: EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION

WCQS is committed to persistent improvements throughout the organization in order to provide the highest quality services that are supported by the community.

Strategies in support of the goal:

- A. Build listeners' connection to and engagement with WCQS by modernizing its technology. For example: continue integrating digital content and platforms with current broadcast platforms and services.

- B. Foster a culture of excellence and creativity by providing the best possible compensation, benefits, training, and tools for WCQS staff.
- C. Optimize organizational integration and efficiency.
- D. Communicate and share progress regarding strategic plan performance metrics with the Board and public periodically, and at least annually and at other times as helpful.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Performance indicators and targets are powerful tools used to measure the progress of a strategic plan. These will be developed by Staff after the strategic plan is approved by the Board. The indicators will then be integrated into departmental and Staff work plans. Progress on the strategic plan will be shared with the Board and public periodically and at least annually.

APPENDIX- 2013 WCQS STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal: Strengthen and expand the reach, value and use of WCQS's public service

- *Improve WCQS programming and service to the Western North Carolina Community.*
- *Pursue and develop opportunities to reach listeners through emerging technologies.*
- *WCQS will augment broadcasts to provide users a deeper understanding of programming through regular build-outs of related content.*
- *Generate programming content in collaboration with educational institutions, organizations and other media outlets that is relevant and important to our listeners.*
- *Engage new and existing listeners through the development of a marketing plan.*

Goal: Increase philanthropic and earned revenues to ensure financial stability and provide necessary capital to achieve strategic goals.

- *Increase emphasis on renewable annual major gifts*
- *Establish and grow a Sustaining Membership Program*
- *Develop and implement a utilization plan for 73 Broadway*
- *Establish and grow a Planned Giving effort*

Goal: Foster a culture of excellence and creativity by providing the best possible compensation, training, technology and facilities.

- *Review Personnel policies and implement all appropriate changes*
- *Emphasize efficiency with the goal of providing maximum integration and reducing redundancy of select work processes.*
- *Provide appropriate workspace, and adequate room for growth of Staff to meet strategic goals.*
- *Provide adequate and fair compensation for Staff.*

Goal: WCQS management will report annually to the Staff and to the Board of directors on the progress toward meeting the strategic goals outlined in this plan.