

Interlochen Public Radio
Community Advisory Council Meeting
Thursday, April 10, 2014

Thom Paulson called the meeting to order at 12:35pm.

Present, in person or by telephone: Porter Abbott, Peter Bergin, Gloria Butler, Chris Campbell, Tim Jackson, Erica Karmeisool, Tom Quinn, Karen Segal, Carol Voigts. Staff present: Thom Paulson, Kate Botello, Tim Burke, Linda Stephan.

Thom began the discussion by addressing the question of newscast balance. The issues include the amount of local content and the nature of it. The station's policy is to avoid "breaking news" and to focus on policy issues that affect people in the community. Linda Stephan described the Michigan Public Radio Network's staff and capacities and the balance of state and local content. She described the ratio of preparation time to broadcast time—often many hours of preparation for very limited broadcast content. Thom discussed features reporting, explaining issues at greater length, and the need to establish IPR as a local presence for information.

Erica Karmeisool mentioned some frustration she hears in Ludington about nonresponse to news releases and the need for some acknowledgment of receipt. There was a discussion of how local organizations can submit releases that are useful for the station. Carol Voigts reported no difficulty getting her items recognized.

This led to a discussion of events reporting vs. news stories. The FCC limits the use of events notices to produce benefits for commercial enterprises. Genuine news stories are subject to less scrutiny in that regard.

Porter Abbott asked about the use of informal volunteer news stringers. Linda Stephan said that there are so many public meetings in region with not enough personnel to cover them all, and with many not producing newsworthy outcomes. Tips and calls about meetings likely to be newsworthy are welcome.

This led to a discussion of whether there are experienced free-lance writers in the area to use for reporting. Linda Stephan said there are local people and that IPR pays reasonably well, but there is a different skill set for radio production. Some print writers are frustrated with the transition. Training requires a lot of staff time. There will be a training workshop for audio production at ICA in June, and a more intensive training workshop in August, again, at Interlochen. A couple of stories would pay the cost of the training.

Thom next turned the discussion to recent and proposed programming changes. He answered questions about revenues and expenses. Overnight news broadcasts have limited listeners but alternative programs do not offer substantial cost savings. In music broadcasting, MPR has a much larger recorded music library than IPR and cost savings by dropping MPR (aka Music Through the Night) content would be about \$13,000 per year.

Karen Segal raised questions about attracting younger listeners. This led to a discussion of the format of the stations' web sites and links; Facebook targeting; announcements referring to streaming access; access via non-broadcasting means generally; distinguishing between NPR and IPR; and weekend news-side programs—the Moth Radio Hour has a strong appeal to younger listeners but may contain content that families do not regard as appropriate for children.

The meeting concluded at 2:00 p.m.

Recorded and submitted by Chris Campbell, CAC member.