



WYSO BOARD MINUTES

February 17, 2016

WYSO Conference Room

Yellow Springs, Ohio

Members present: Chuck Berry, Don Hayashi, Judd Plattenburg, Rodney Veal, Lucy Owens, Herbert “Rusty” Cousins, William “Bill” Linesch, Ashley Appleman, Bruce Bradtmiller, Kevin McGruder, Seth Gordon and Glenn Watts.

Members absent: Natalie Skilliter, Nancy Nash, Kevin Rose, Brad Price and David Seyer.

Staff present: Neenah Ellis, Doug Hull and Luke Dennis.

Seth called the meeting to order at 8:16 a.m.

Welcome. Seth welcomed Lucy Owens to her first meeting and had the Board members briefly introduce themselves.

Minutes. Moved by Bruce, seconded by Don, to approve the revised draft of the Minutes of the meeting of December 16, 2015. The revised draft was circulated prior to this meeting. The motion to approve the Minutes was approved by voice vote. Glenn will E-Mail the Minutes to Juliet Fromholt for posting on the station’s website.

Driveway Moments. Bruce reported that he drove to Indiana over the weekend and was able to receive WYSO well past Richmond, IN due to the new tower. Bill asked about NPR inserting “live” into the newscast introduction. Neenah said that it had started about the first week in February, but she did not know why the change had been made. Seth said the recent coverage of Iran was very interesting. He also noted that NPR has a new female announcer whose voice is not typical of NPR. Neenah identified her as Mary Louise Kelly.

Meeting Locations. Seth said that Natalie has offered her restaurant in Dayton, the Corner Kitchen, for alternate Resource Board meetings starting in April. Moved by Rusty, second by Bill, to hold alternate regular meetings at the Corner Kitchen beginning with the April meeting. The motion was approved by voice vote.

Committee Assignments. Seth said that at the last meeting Glenn recommended amending the Bylaws to give the Chair authority to reassign the duties of the standing committees to special committees. This was done and Seth distributed the new committee assignments with the new Board members slotted into the committee structure. Seth said that some members have been “voluntold” of their new assignments. Moved by Glenn, second by Rusty, to approve the updated committee structure as presented by the chair. The motion was approved by voice vote.

General Manager’s Report. Neenah said that she would briefly reprise a few things that were first discussed at the December meeting and also cover several new things.

Staffing:

There have been no significant transition problems with the three new staff hired in November, December and January. Jackie Winfree is the new Membership & Traffic Coordinator and she has adjusted well. She has been a volunteer and Community Voices producer, so she knows the station well. April Laissle arrived in January and trained for a week before starting as Morning Edition host on January 20. She is starting to take reporting assignments and she will be on-air during the fund drive. Luke will give a full report on the new Underwriting Director, but it has been a pleasure to bring Karen Bledsoe on board.

WYSO will get an archives intern for nine months paid for by the National Digital Stewardship Residency (NDSR). WYSO is one of eight organizations in the country to receive an intern, the smallest and the only one that is a stand-alone radio station. This person will help us create a roadmap for the development of our archives. The intern will help the station create collection policies and policies concerning public access, as well as develop a digital management system for the collection.

Tower:

The new transmitter site was activated on January 15. In the first two weeks there were many calls and emails from listeners in the south-Dayton region saying that they heard signal improvements. There were also a few complaints from Yellow Springs about signal reception. We responded by email and telephone to suggest how radios and antennas could be adjusted.

The marketing plan was completed in early January with some budget adjustments and the College was notified of the planned expenditure of approximately \$24,000. We are notifying our listeners about the new signal strength in the following ways:

1. On-air announcements.
2. A press release.
3. A story on air by Juliet Fromholt using the *WYSO Curious* format (thanks to Chuck for contributing photographs of his signal strength meter). Juliet's story resides online.
4. Social media, including e-blasts, Face Book and Twitter.
5. The new tower will be a pitching point during upcoming on-air drive.

WYSO and Antioch College:

Neenah extended congratulations to Kevin M. as the first recipient of Antioch College's Martin Luther King, Jr. Award. Quoting from the award ceremony, she said that Kevin was selected "because of his passion and demonstrated commitment to build a just and inclusive community at Antioch and beyond. He has demonstrated his commitment in tangible ways including scholarship and teaching, committee work, community involvement, traveling with students and supporting individual faculty, staff and students."

Neenah had a good meeting in January with Tom Manley, the new President of Antioch College. She had an opportunity to explain her ideas and anxieties and describe the challenges that she sees. He expressed very strong support for WYSO, and he has some ideas for integrating WYSO more into the curriculum and activities of the College. Dr. Manley starts March 1 and Neenah is proceeding on the assumption that there will be

greater engagement and collaboration. Neenah said that she will invite him to the June Resource Board meeting and ask that he share his thinking about the station.

Neenah began conversations late last year with Lori Collins-Hall, the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Antioch College. Dr. Collins-Hall is working on a plan to bring the station closer to the College. Neenah hasn't seen the plan yet, but she has received positive signals from Dr. Collins-Hall.

New Programming:

The new Dayton Youth Radio series is to begin airing this week or next. There are four youth radio courses being taught this spring. We will be in Yellow Springs for the first time, we will be back at the Dayton Early College Academy again, Ponitz Career Technology Center again, and for the first time in Springfield. The Springfield program is through the CareerConnectED Center in an after school space just for high school students they call YOUmedia.

Another project that will launch in March is Women's Voices from the Dayton Correctional Institution. Lewis Wallace started a Community Voices training program at the women's prison late last fall. The program finished last week and the stories that will be airing are quite amazing. WYSO received a lot of support from the prison administration and staff and Neenah is hopeful that they can return this year or next.

There is another American Graduate series coming in collaboration with ThinkTV. This is on the transition from high school to college.

Ongoing programming:

Culture Couch

The Rediscovered Radio Viet Nam series launched in December and is continuing.

WYSO Curious

Presidential Debate:

Neenah is looking for innovative ideas about how to cover the first of the four presidential debates in the 2016 general election season. This debate is sanctioned by the Commission on Presidential Debates and will be held at Wright State University on September 24, 2016. She needs story ideas such as community impact, preparation arrangements, and anything else that might be of interest. She will be meeting with the Wright State Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and people at ThinkTV. NPR probably will have people here to cover the debate and Neenah has requested that they spend some time at the station and perhaps broadcast from WYSO. E-mail any ideas to her.

Training:

The most recent Community Voices class has registered 13 people, and a new podcasting workshop open to the community was held January 30 for 12 paying customers. A second podcasting workshop is scheduled for June 25. These workshops teach the basics of podcasting to anyone who is interested in learning how to use this medium.

Friends of WYSO:

The Friends of WYSO was created to hold donor funds separate from the College and to develop into a fund-raising organization. Additionally, should the need ever arise, it could hold the license for the station. The Board was initially composed of Fred Bartenstein, Karl Colón and Maureen Lynch. Maureen committed to serve for a year and she now has gone off the Board and been replaced by Evan Scott. Neenah will be meeting with the Board on March 4 to discuss various issues.

Glenn asked if there was any progress on getting 501(c)(3) status for the Friends and Neenah said that they have not started the process. She and Doug have done some financial modeling, but that is as far as they have gotten. Luke noted that 501(c)(3) status is on the Dashboard.

Upcoming events:

- March 1 – The launch of an archives blog by Archives Fellow Jocelyn Robinson.
- March 8-12 – The on-air fund drive, if needed. Chuck asked if this drive is longer than last year. Neenah said that last year the on-air portion of the spring drive ran two days. More time is available this year, but will not be used if the goal is reached.
- March 14 – There will be a Listening Party for major donors featuring the new Women’s Voices from the Dayton Correctional Institution series. Lewis Wallace, Anita Kelly and Renee Wild will be the presenters.
- April 2 – The *WYSO Serious* event at Memorial Hall.

Spring Fund Drive. The total annual membership goal is \$750,000. After factoring what will be received by June 30 from sustainers and *Pet Wars*, Luke determined that \$197,000 is needed from the Spring Drive. Last March the goal was \$153,000. The quiet phase started Monday, it will run three weeks, and should generate \$100,000. The spring drive will center on local content and “giving voice” to the region: week one will feature *Veteran’s Voices*, week two will focus on *Youth Radio*, and week three will highlight *WYSO Curious*. The on-air portion starts March 8, if needed.

The appeal letter is ready to go out. Judd at Oregon Printing helped create it and it is very special. It is segmented so it has tailored appeals to the different types of donors. It is image driven and very personalized, including the person’s giving history. A return envelope is included.

Luke would like the Board to sponsor a challenge grant.

Seth mentioned that there is a Veteran’s Voices story that has never aired about the impact that the program has had on veterans. He suggested that this might be the time to use the story.

Chuck said that he was very impressed by the Annual Report to the Community and asked about its distribution. Luke said that the Annual report lives on the website, rather than as a printed document. It has been e-mailed to the Leaders and eventually will go to the 6,000 people on the station’s e-mail list.

Underwriting. Karen Bledsoe has become part of the team; she is not just out in the field selling, but is part of the planning sessions. She is making changes in the way that we sell

underwriting. We are aiming at long-term contracts with volume discounts. There will be frequency discounts so that the more an underwriter buys, the lower the unit price. We will publish a rate card next month so that everyone can know what it costs to be on the air, and we are looking at creating turn-key packages for use by non-profits. All of these changes reduce the amount of negotiating needed and greatly simplify and shorten the process. We have also started charging for ads on the website.

Karen is meeting decision-makers at major buyer organizations and she is cultivating three different media buyers. If these media buyers understand what a good bargain WYSO is, they will buy a lot of our airtime for their clients. Karen is off to a good start, having closed \$70,000 in new business since she started in mid-December. The budget has an underwriting target of \$325,000 for this year. Chuck asked whether this target was feasible and Doug said that as of today, we are between zero and \$20,000 short for the year.

Financial Report. Doug distributed a schedule showing the financial activity for the period ending January 31, 2016. This schedule shows actual and budget numbers for the most recent month, and year-to-date for the current and two prior years. Doug said he would be focusing on the FY16 YTD Actual and Budget columns and the Variance between those two columns.

For the first seven months of the year, everything looks good. Year-to-Date the station is in the black by \$57,493. This number does include money for the new tower of \$14,112, but even without this amount the station has a surplus of \$43,381. On the revenue side, Gifts are up, Underwriting is down. Actual Underwriting revenue is \$168,155 versus the budget of \$189,583 which means we are running under by \$21,428. It is difficult to forecast when underwriting payments will be received, so that variance is not surprising, and even if it persists through the end of the year, the underwriting program can still be considered successful during this transition period. All of the other categories look good. The Grants variance is due primarily to timing differences. When a grant is received, it cannot be immediately booked as Revenue. Rather, it can only appear as revenue when a related expense is recorded.

On the Expense side, the station is under budget by \$30,561, which is good. Both Wages & Benefits and Programming & Purchased Services are under budget. This is due primarily to Doug devoting 25% of his time to the College and the College paying this portion of his salary. There has also been some salary savings as employees left and were not immediately replaced. Benefits reflect some savings on health insurance costs, fewer people participating in the retirement program and lower wages. Supplies, Equipment and Gen'l Admin are slightly over budget, but most of this is non-cash in-kind expenses.

The College has made an adjustment to this year's operating budget. Each College department has been given a unique amount to cut between January and June 30. WYSO's savings target is \$26,500, but this number is not yet final. This means that we have a bit more than four months to realize the savings. The College has directed that the reduction come from non-salary savings and does not consider revenue increases. This reduction in the budget will be reflected in the Board report for next month.

Doug pointed out that the approach being taken by the College ignores the potential for revenue growth or the station's current favorable net revenue over expense balance. Providing the College with a net surplus at year-end will not necessarily meet the College's instruction to

make cuts outside of Wages and Benefits. Don asked how these cuts can be made outside of salary. Doug responded that it will be difficult because so many of the non-wage items relate to programming or are necessary to generate income.

Bill asked whether Doug would show the required reduction as a one-line entry to the budget report or if it would be spread to all categories. Bill said he didn't think the College should care how the adjustment is handled so long as the College ends up with net cash in hand; however, it would be easier for the Board to track the budget if the change was shown as a single entry. Doug responded that he is required to distribute the reduction to all of the categories.

Glenn observed that if the station is successful in raising additional revenue, it will not be able to spend it on non-wage items and therefore it would be better if additional revenue went to the Friends of WYSO. Contributions can be made to the Friends and are tax deductible by the donor because they go to the Dayton Foundation.

Kevin M. said that he was on the College budget committee and that the mid-year reduction is necessary because College spending is exceeding its capacity to produce income. The College budgets have been running around \$19 million in recent years. The donors are becoming fatigued and will not provide the level of support that they have in the last couple of years. Tuition is starting to come in, but not as much as had been expected. The budget for 2016-17 will be \$3 to \$4 million lower than for the current year. Therefore, this mid-year reduction is being made to prepare the departments for the leaner budgets that they will have next year.

Chuck reminded the Board that the College is awaiting a decision about its accreditation, and that decision will have a major impact on its ability to collect tuition and to attract funds from donors. As a major donor, he indicated that he wanted his gifts to benefit the station and if it appears that they may, in fact, go to the College, he will need to reconsider his giving. Judd added that there are many donors of smaller amounts who feel the same way.

Glenn indicated that it is not possible for the station to transfer money to the Friends of WYSO, but new donations could be directed to the Friends. Doug agreed, but said that it would be less easy for the station to spend this money, and that the answer is in having a 501(c)(3) in place.

Seth said that it was important for the Resource Board to discuss this issue with the new president of the College as soon as possible. Seth will send an invitation to President Manley outlining these concerns and inviting him to meet with the Board.

Dashboard Update. Bill handed out the February 17, 2016 version of the Dashboard. He noted that there are three "C items" on the first page where the color has not been changed to blue: 1.a. the tower project, 1.c. the awareness campaign, and 4.a. the benchmarking study for staff. These items have been completed and he will correct the colors on the next version.

Bill noted that most things are progressing as planned and there are remarks explaining those that are not on schedule. Seth asked about item 8.b. College/WYSO liaison established as College employee. Neenah responded that in the fall she had discussions with the Media Arts Department about a possible new hire who would have among his or her duties serving as a liaison to the station. That position has been withdrawn by the College and it is unclear as to if

or when it might be restored. However, one of the faculty who teaches a media skills class is in the Community Voices program. He brings some of his students to class and this provides some engagement.

Tower Marketing. Luke said that the tower marketing plan has been revised. Construction costs were higher than planned and this has reduced the marketing budget. Most of the money will be directed to cable TV. There are two commercials that started Monday on the Time Warner channels that best align with the demographics of the station. These commercials will run for the next three months. There will be a single giant 80 x 20 billboard in a prime location along I-75 close to where OH-63 intersects. The billboard will be up for three months. The plan also retains much of the digital marketing purchase from Cox Media Group and includes banner ads on their owned and affiliated websites. Some of the money will be spent on Facebook to increase “likes” through the Cox Facebook accounts. The part of the original plan directed at print media was dropped, but Luke was able to secure four Sunday ads in *Today’s Pulse*, a Cox publication that reaches the new coverage area. Luke feels that the station is getting a lot for \$24,000, but because the plan started a little late, some of the ads will run into May.

Chuck said the Nielsen rating changes from the Winter Book to the Spring Book should be telling. Luke said that the Winter Book would provide a baseline and a review of the Nielsen ratings could be on the agenda for the June meeting.

Next Up. Ashley said that since January they have had a listening party every two week centered on the *Serial* podcasts. Two were held at businesses in Dayton and one at the station. So far, they have had three parties with about 20 people participating in each. Next week the party will be at Brad’s house with a carry-in meal. Jackie Winfree and Juliet Fromholt have been very helpful.

WPAFB Working Group. Seth said that there was nothing to report.

Nominations and Boardsmanship. Bill said there was no update on Board nominees, but the Committee has been working on a Board orientation and resource book. He circulated a three-ring binder with the first draft version of the Board Handbook. Bruce said he loved the idea of having all of the important material in one place, but he would like to have this in an electronic version. Bill said he would explore this option.

Programming and Training. Kevin M. said that he and Joselyn Robinson have been working on a digital humanities symposium focused on the WYSO archives. It is tentatively scheduled for Friday and Saturday, October 21-22 to be held at Antioch College. A training segment will likely be held on Saturday morning and will benefit students and faculty who are interested in developing stories. They will learn about the resources in the archives and how they can be used to develop stories. Kevin M. and Joselyn will send a call-for-proposals to area colleges in the next few weeks.

Events Committee. Luke said that the Committee is working on the major fundraising event of the year to be held April 2 at Memorial Hall in Dayton. It is to be called *WYSO Serious?* and it will have an April fools theme. The Rubi Girls are developing special material that they will perform. Amy Dickinson, author of the syndicated column *Ask Amy* and panelist from *Wait*,

Wait Don't Tell Me will appear. The on-air promotion of the event has just started, but the postcard drop has produced 35 ticket sales so far. The target is to sell 250 tickets. The Board is asked to sell four tickets each and Rodney is helping organize the Patron Committee which is tasked with selling the bulk of the tickets. There will be a raffle item, but no live auction. The event is being sponsored by the Southwestern Ohio Council for Higher Education (SOCHE).

Capital Campaign: Bruce said that there were two purposes to the original campaign. One was to fund the tower relocation and the other was to build an endowment. Now, the new tower is in use, but growing the endowment is a long-term endeavor and building an endowment is not a very sexy activity. He asked what the focus should be and how they should proceed. He would like everyone to think about this and provide some thoughtful guidance. Should the committee be trying to raise money for the endowment, or should it be asking people to give money in a "crisis/emergency" mode to insure the continued existence of WYSO? Bill said that before anyone can approach major donors, it is important to be able to give assurances that the money they give will go for the benefit of the station. Any type of "emergency" funds request will surely raise this issue.

Neenah said that the station could use a programming fund. The station does not have a program director, but is generating a lot of content. The station needs a manager to direct these efforts and to edit and organize this material. Perhaps a focus of the campaign could be around a programming fund.

Neenah emphasized that the station creates interesting and unique programming. We produce 40 hours of local content each week with the bulk of this being music, but what is particularly important is the short 3 to 5 minute programs that have a direct impact on the community. Bill asked if this content offers an opportunity to raise some revenue. Neenah responded that this may be possible, but her immediate focus is on using this programming to meet local needs and not on syndication.

Adjournment. Moved by Rusty, seconded by Rodney, to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was approved by voice vote and the meeting ended at 10:15 a.m.

Next Meeting. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held at **8:15 a.m.** on Wednesday, **April 20**, 2016 at the **Corner Kitchen Restaurant**, 613 E. Fifth Street, Dayton, OH. The Agenda will include approval of the Minutes of the meeting of February 17, 2016 and committee reports. Committee Chairs should E-mail agenda topics that require Board discussion or action to the Board Chair not later than the Friday before the meeting. The E-mail should include the topic, the desired outcome (e.g., a resolution) and the estimated time that the discussion will require.

Respectfully submitted,
Glenn Watts, Secretary