



## WYSO BOARD MINUTES

April 15, 2015

WYSO Conference Room  
Yellow Springs, Ohio

Members present: Ashley Appleman, Heather Bailey, Fred Bartenstein, Chuck Berry, Bruce Bradtmiller, Rusty Cousins, Seth Gordon, William Linesch, Nancy Nash, Kevin Rose, Natalie Skilliter and Kristen Wicker.

Members absent: Kevin McGruder, David Seyer and Glenn Watts.

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

Seth called the meeting to order at approximately 8:15am.

**Check-in.** Seth asked the Board members if they had any driveway moments of note. Bruce referenced one of the Veterans Voices Stories. Chuck encouraged more coverage of climate change.

**Minutes.** The Minutes of the meeting of February 18, 2015 were approved as submitted.

**Financial Report.** Doug distributed a schedule showing the financial activity for the period ending March 31, 2015. During his discussion of the report he noted that revenue was strong, expenses were below budget and WYSO was in a positive cash position. In a discussion of the budget process for the station's programming, he explained that NPR's rate increases were usually presented at high levels and then negotiated downward by the General Manager and staff. This makes the costs of programming difficult to project from year to year.

**Dashboard Update.** Fred noted the following about the dashboard items:

- Number 2A: "FY15 total revenues exceed FY14 by \$30,000 or 2%" was not expected to see underwriting exceed the budget, which was not a change from the previous report.
- Number 5A: Fundraising pledges for the tower project have reached \$535,000 out of the \$600,000 target stated as the dashboard goal.
- Number 5B: "Goal, case, and campaign cabinet are in place for Phase II" of a capital campaign. Funding for a capital campaign consultant is still being sought.

**Next Up Report.** Ashley reported that Next Up had been attending various local events and signing up young people to Next Up. Jayne Monat has really taken ownership of the group. They will be considering more intentional programming for the upcoming year.

Luke shared that the Marketing and Development Committee reported that they would give an update about the marketing plan and underwriting kit during the June meeting.

Luke provided an update about the Spring Fund Drive results and the new silent and mostly online format (see attached). He discussed the role and inclusion of Sustainers in how the fund drive goal is set and communicated. Luke talked about the financial success of the spring

campaign, although it was not as successful in attracting new members as he had hoped. The fall drive will probably be a hybrid approach to remind current members to give in advance and several days of more traditional fundraising with a focus on new members.

Luke was asked for his assessment of the impact on volunteers of an online campaign. He said that volunteers expressed some sadness in missing the “community” of the drive. Ways to reach out to volunteers and contributors to express appreciation were discussed. Luke also discussed out bound calls and calls by on-air staff.

There was some discussion of the benefits of an on-air campaign and the opportunity it provides to express unscripted passion for the station and public radio. The need to remind members how much their support is appreciated was expressed.

The discussion presented a key question for the future: How do we raise money and, at the same time, develop the community sense of WYSO? It was stated that the next listener survey needed to include questions about fundraising and that one of the strategic goals for WYSO needs to be the creation of a “WYSO Community.”

**Nominating Committee.** The Nominating Committee had nothing to report.

**Friends of WYSO.** A capital campaign consultant has been identified to work with WYSO to develop and train the campaign cabinet. Funding for the campaign is being pursued with some local foundations. It is hoped that the campaign can launch in July. Chuck suggested that the campaign might align better with the tower move.

**General Manager’s Report.** Neenah reported that the *Graduating Latino* project will begin to air ten stories in the coming weeks. Veteran Voices will have additional stories coming with a new grant application in progress. Three Community Voices projects were generating revenue through contracted services for the station with local businesses.

The Antioch College reunion will facilitate a WYSO reunion of sorts on Father’s Day Weekend, June 19. Assistance will be needed for many of the day’s events.

Neenah also reported that a number of new fundraising events would be explored to raise revenue.

**Next Meeting.** The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held at **8:15 a.m.** on Wednesday, **June 17, 2015** at the station’s studio location, 150 E. South College Street, Yellow Springs. 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.

**Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:15am.

(In the absence of Secretary Glenn Watts, Bill Linesch recorded the minutes. Seth Gordon compiled the minutes on October 18, 2015 and they were then edited and formatted by Glenn Watts.)

## WYSO Spring 2015 Fund Drive Results Summary

### **Goal**

In the spring 2015 the fundraising goal was set at \$153,000.00. This goal was 23.50% lower than the previous spring's goal. This was the first time sustaining members were taken into account when setting the fundraising goal. Additionally the first half of the calendar year performed highly, so we were able to decrease the goal, rewarding our listeners, and ensuring a successful drive.

### **Pre-Drive/Low Impact Drive**

In the spring of 2014 \$18,269.08 was raised during the three week pre-drive period. The 2014 spring pre-drive consisted of a direct mail campaign hitting about 3000 members and infrequent promos announcing the fund drive was coming. In the spring of 2015 \$101,648.30 was raised during the three week low-impact (or pre-drive) phase. The spring 2015 low impact drive consisted of a direct mail campaign hitting about 5000 listeners, one to two promos an hour announcing "*this is the drive*" and a heavy social media/email campaign.

We raised \$83,379.22 more in the spring 2015 pre-drive than spring 2014. That is a 456.40% increase.

### **On-Air**

In spring 2014, after a full week of on-air pitching (126 hours), \$130,351.94 was raised, bringing the full total to \$148,621.02. In spring 2015, after 1.5 days, \$36,904.90 was raised, bringing the full total to \$138,553.20. These totals do not include challenge grants. This is a 7.39% decrease in overall funds raised; however in spring 2014 only 75% of the goal had been reached (not including challenge grants and in spring 2015 90% of the goal was reached (not including challenge grants).

### **Post Drive**

In spring 2014, one week after the fund drive an additional \$7,817.30 was raised, bringing in a final total of \$156,438.32 (not including challenge grants). In spring 2015, five days after the fund drive, an additional \$7,992.30 was raised, bringing in a final total of \$146,545.50 (not including challenge grants). The total funds raised in spring 2015 were 7.39% less than spring 2015; however spring 2014 reached 79% of the goal and spring 2015 reached 96% of the goal.

### **Breakdown of Money Raised & Donor Breakdown**

Overall in spring 2015 (without challenge grants) we raised 6.32% less than in the spring of 2014 with participation down by 8.14%. Participation and dollars raised were up this year for those donating \$1 to \$119 and \$1000 to \$5000. Dollars raised are up in the \$500 to \$1000 range, but participation is down just 3.13%.

Participation and dollars raised are both down this year by roughly 24% in the \$120 to \$499 range. We can speculate a couple of causes for this decline. The first being "sustainer danger." Sustainers only count towards the fund drive goal the first year they become a sustaining member. This is because the following years, when they auto-renew, their renewal is not a result of that fund drive's efforts. Therefore, a number of listeners became sustaining members in spring 2014. Therefore all of those members were counted that year, but not in the spring of 2015. The second likely cause is that we did not spend hours on air pitching the MemberCard or giving levels.

Participation and dollars raised were up by roughly 50% in the \$60-119 range in the spring 2015. This significant increase might be attributed to the thank you gifts at lower giving levels, the lapsed mailing that asked for \$35-\$75, or the lack of giving level pitching, which may have made smaller donors feel more included.

Finally participation and dollars raised were up by more than 50% in the \$1000-4999 range in spring 2015. The cause is less clear at this level but likely is due to major donors appreciating the new fund drive style and showing their support monetarily. Anecdotally I felt a surge of support from this group.

Moving forward we need to strategize communication methods that will continue to welcome donors at lower levels but bring the \$120-240 donor numbers back up.

### **Money from New Donors & New Donor Breakdown**

Across the board participation and dollars raised from new donors is down by roughly 45%. The only donor level that participation and dollars raised from new members increased was the \$60-\$119 level. This increase had to come directly from messaging on-air, via social media, or email campaigns. None of the direct mail campaigns were acquisition mail. To identify this increase we need to review all email, social media and promo scripts. Likely, it is due to the lack of giving level pitching and a support of the new fundraising model. Ideally we will be able to work these new members up the giving ladder over the next few years.

As for the decrease in new members participation and donations during the drive, we likely need to attribute that to the inability to "make the case" on the air. We believe new members require a strong pitch demonstrating why they should give, not how they should give. We will need to identify new ways to make the case in this new fundraising model.

### **Rejoin/Renewal/Add Gift Participation**

The most significant data from this segment is that the add gift participation increased from 66% to 287% in every giving level category. This should mostly be attributed to the add gift mailing through Greater Public. Some of the increase can also be attributed to current members that are on an October (or other month) renewal cycle but wanted to participate in the new fund drive style.

Members that expired and then rejoined was up by roughly 43% for members donating \$1-119 for the spring 2015. However, in most other giving categories it was down significantly (28-60%). The increase at the lower giving levels is likely the lapsed direct mail effort through Greater Public. The cause of the decrease of rejoining members at higher giving levels is difficult to identify. My best guess would be sustainers. As we increase our sustaining member pool we will continue to have less renewing and rejoining members during fund drives.

Across the board the renewal rate dropped in all but one giving level category. The biggest decrease is from the \$120-999 giving levels (28-48% drop). This again is likely due to "sustainer danger" but may also be attributed to the new drive style's limitations for "making the case." Renewals at the \$1-119 level are also down but by less significant rates (6-13%). The giving level with renewal growth was the \$1,000 to \$4,999 category, with 100% growth.

### **Sustainers**

In the spring 2015 fund drive we added 21 more sustainers than in spring 2014. That is a 14% increase. This can likely be attributed to the new pledge page which requires monthly donors to become sustaining members.

### **Method of Donation**

In spring 2015, not surprisingly the donations made over the phone decreased by 74%. Online donations increased by 36% and mail donations increased by 112%. It is important to note that some of the online donations may be from the phone bank. It is likely that the increase in online donation is greater than what we are able to report on.

### **Premiums**

Overall premium consumption is down by 15%. This decrease should provide significant savings in both thank-you gifts, postage and packing materials. The decrease is likely due to the lack of premium pitching during the fund drive.