

**WFAE Community Advisory Board (CAB) - Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, 23 July 2020 | Zoom Meeting

**Attendance CAB Members present:**

Kwame Agbeke	Jarret Hurms	Hema Parekh
Jennifer Beightley	Ingrid James	Raquel Rivera
Allyson Colaco	Magdalena Krajewska	Lecia Shockley
Myah Davis	Dennis Lazarus	Shante Williams
Mary Dombrowski	John Lincoln	Bryn Wilson
Stephen Guardipee	Sri Nagarajan	

**CAB Members Not Attending:**

Keenya Justice  
Barbara Lom

**WFAE Staff present:**

Jeff Bundy, <i>Executive Director of Branding &amp; Engagement</i>	Joe O'Connor, <i>President and General Manager</i>	Renee Rallos, <i>Community Relations Manager</i>
Ju-Don Marshall, <i>Executive Vice President</i>		

**Meeting began at 5:30 p.m. over Zoom**

**Agenda**

- |                            |                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Welcome & Introductions | John Lincoln    |
| 2. Approval of the Minutes | John Lincoln    |
| 3. Station Update          | Joe O'Connor    |
| 4. Content Update          | Ju-Don Marshall |
| 5. Succession              | John Lincoln    |
| 6. CAB Member Feedback     | John Lincoln    |
| 7. Questions               | All             |

**Notes:**

**Welcome & Introductions – John Lincoln**

Advisory members and WFAE staff introduced themselves. Official welcome to new CAB members:

Allyson Colaco	Ingrid James	Bryn Wilson
Myah Davis	Dennis Lazarus	
Jarrett Hurms	Raquel Rivera	

**Approval of the Minutes – John Lincoln**

Motion By: Stephen Guardipee

Second By: Jennifer Beightley

April 23, 2020 meeting minutes were approved without objection or abstention.

**Station Update – Joe O'Connor**

*Extraordinary times*

1. Global pandemic
2. Earthquake of awareness by white Americans of what Americans of color have gone through.
3. Team is 90% remote; only 6-7 employees are coming into the studio, but not for full shifts. Not the only tenant in the building, so trying to keep the team safe. Working to get those employees working remotely, too. Staff has been very productive and innovative.
4. Nationwide conversation with stations
5. Fundraising
6. Programming
7. Advertising dollars (70% of ad revenue went down) – corporate sponsorship team has stepped up.
8. One layoff in sales; rest of the organization is hiring.
9. Amy and Ju-Don have successfully applied for and been awarded grants; allowing WFAE to grow.
10. Demand for what we are doing is greater than ever; we cannot go in the other direction.
11. Responsibility to improve the diversity of our vendors, audience, and team members. Actively talking about how to better train; this has been a directive from the board for the last five years, now it just has more focus. We must do better to battle systematic racism; hope the CAB and Board will hold us more accountable. Has a presentation (one hour in length) about what the station is doing currently on our behalf; contact Joe if interested in this presentation.

### **Content Update – Ju-Don Marshall**

Presentation “Content & Programming Update” ([LINK](#))

Collaborative Grants:

- \$25,000 for Community Storytellers Network related to coronavirus
- \$100,000 Facebook grant to collaborate with Q City Metro, Charlotte Business Ledger, and La Noticia – economic impact on black and Latino communities
- \$7,000 Google grant for COVID-19 coverage
- Solution-based series related to studying the healthcare industry from a Major Donor (anonymous)
- Bryn Question – do you know what you are looking for when you pursue grants/funding?  
Ju-Don answer:
  - o Have an idea of what we want to do and seek funding
  - o Also look at what RFPs are issued, and we may develop programs to fit the RFP

*Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Partnership:*

- Overlapping and similar missions
- Shared visions: Find the common ground with the people in the community for knowledge sharing purposes
- Trusted institutions in the community

*Charlotte Journalism Collaborative:*

- 9 media organizations, Queens University, and the Library (host of the work)
- Also provides research assistance

*Queen City PodQuest Academy:*

- Started with community call-out as a tool to amplify new voices and tell new stories
- Drew a lot of core WFAE listeners (predominately white)
- Partnered with the library and marketed at branches to meet a broader audience

- 400 people registered: 2 in-person session pre-coronavirus and virtual since

*Report for America Collaboration / Project:*

- 2.5 team audience engagement team at library
- Team spends three days at branches
- Nonprofit attempting to crisis in local news and lack of news/information in certain areas
- Reporters: Laura Brache Field (La Noticia)
- Dante Miller (community editor)
- Embedded in the library – understand the needs of the community
- Civic Needs
  - Census outcome
  - Democratic process
  - How local government works

*Forthcoming:*

- Community forums, programs, and exhibits over the next year
- Build out news offerings by what we learned
- Health collaborations
- Statewide Collaborations
  - Queens University – student reporting
  - NC AT&T
  - The Charlotte Post

*New Publishing System:*

- Early as September – working through the launch
- Flexibility to showcase topical coverage at WFAE
- Deeper dive in to features (stories, podcasts, etc.)

*App Facelift: Mirroring deeper dive aspects of the website*

*Google Project – Story Mosaic*

- Community to shape news that is covered
- Cohort of media companies to take suggestions

*CAB Feedback Requested:*

- Decide on programming changes – survey forthcoming
- News and information survey for Library/WFAE/Wikipedia partnership

*Questions and comments:*

- John Lincoln – progress and commitment of the station to progress is mind-blowing.
  - Partnerships around ideas are now sticking; station's efforts towards community engagement is awe-inspiring
- Myah: Commitment to different voices; collaborations and initiatives are great.
- Ingrid: the way news has gone over the last 20-years being more opinion based; it's refreshing to hear that WFAE is a conduit for news that matters to our community. We need the news, without the opinions, and instead with the facts.

- Bryn: breadth of what WFAE is grows beyond what a listener hears; asked where this content will be available.
  - Ju-Don: trying to distribute across multiple platforms; cross-posting on collaborators' systems, too.
  - La Noticia – written and audio for Spanish speaking audiences
- Jarret: Inspired by what is happening; hope that we are evaluating what zip codes you are reaching and where we are deficient.
  - Pre- and post- survey request for geographic areas and ethnic background
  - Broadcast is a bit more difficult but use information of where Nielsen thinks we are.
- Raquel: is La Noticia the only Latino partner? Is the station becoming more bi-lingual?
  - Spoke with Norsan Media to apply for a grant, but that did not move forward yet
  - Want to grow the WFAE audience, but want to amplify our partner, too. We hope to send audiences between the two outlets.
- John: the more the CAB understands what is going on and how we can engage people in our networks is really important. These updates are really helpful as we conceptualize what is happening. We need to spread these developments out to our networks.
- Joe: the “wow” factor; we have a great story to tell. Jeff Bundy once said we needed a reporter to share what we as a station are accomplishing. Our grants are reflective of relationships we have created. We want to be in the community – and need you to tell us where to be. We need to get the “WOW” out.
  - What are you not hearing on the art? What’s missing?
  - We want to hear from you.

#### **Succession – John Lincoln**

- We want to be mindful about who may be rolling-on; want to make the process objective.
- Next Step: convening
  - Chair Role: ensure process is open to everyone to participate
  - Secretary: TBD
- New Member Orientation:
  - Coming up July 27 at 5:30 pm via Zoom
- Membership committee:
  - Kwame Agbeke
  - Mary Dombrowski
  - Stephen Guardipee
  - Magdalena Krajewska
  - John Lincoln
  - Barbara Lom
  - Sri Nagarajan
  - Jeff Bundy (WFAE)
  - Catherine Welch (WFAE)

#### **CAB Member Feedback – John Lincoln**

- Lecia: appreciates the newsletter (education, amplify, political); the overview is a great way to reach new audience. Provides the opportunity to feel connected and informed.
- Ingrid: “The Frequency” is “snackable”. Content on programs, such as “Charlotte Talks” is so helpful and often makes things clearer.

- Jarrett: Also appreciates the coverage around education. Also liked the week-long coverage of past episodes around systemic racism; provided information that many of us may not have known.
- Dennis: Really likes the perspectives provided by “Charlotte Talks”, especially the Friday News Round Up.
- Mary: timing of the Friday News Round-up is a great catch-up on the conversations and stories from the week.
- John asked about the CAB’s propensity to list to podcasts
  - Barbara Lom and Keenya Justice have reviewed submissions for possible future podcasts.
- Renee: orientation, new surveys and membership succession planning are all on the horizon.

## Questions

- Hema: where is the station on the process of looking for a new site in Uptown?
  - Joe shared that the Board had asked for the station to consider being in Uptown to be more visible. Building a building was not going to work but continued to look for a studio. Given the productivity demonstrated doing quarantine, and the standards set by technology companies, for example, we are opening our conversations up to consider something like a co-working space. Potential to save money and maintain productivity.
- Hema, question for Ju-Don: what is the timeline for requests for CAB feedback?
  - Ju-Don: Goal is to share links by Friday, July 24 in the form of a survey; request for a turn around by next Friday, July 31.
- Allyson, question to Joe about his involvement with the NPR National Board of Directors:
  - Thorough job thinking about technology and podcasting – hear about them earlier and share with the team. EX: reckoning around institutional racism – is objective a tool for this topic. NPR is making it a part of its strategic plan – sometimes it is a simple cut and paste, but we are trying to take advantage of the technology.
  - Ju-Don: NPR is reaching to us for our guidance:
    - Sought guidance around investigative podcasts.
    - Indexing with black audiences; and
    - Shaping a fellowship with NPR for stations.
    - Also, part of a Content Management System (CMS) team as one of 26 stations.
  - Jeff: fundraising and development – at forefront of results on the national level. National public analysis – over the previous five years, we were the second fastest growing station – second to Boston college statement. Other stations have reached out to know how we are (Public Radio Development Officer board) – led webinars.
    - Finished up 11% in membership over previous years.
    - Orientation session will cover how the station takes in money – July 29 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm.
- Kwame: is there a way to not have the audio prompted for the story when you click through in the app or an email – would prefer the written story.
  - Ju-Don: good feedback; will consider what the parameters are when a story loads through various media platforms.
- Jennifer: what is the greatest fundraising need in between fundraising drives?
  - Jeff: historically, we have passive fundraising with July and August being the slowest months for us.

- Increased the number of sustaining members (\$1.6M); more than non-sustainers.
  - Paying attention to possible cancellations – fewer last month and in the fall.
  - Telemarketing and mail campaigns continue. “Donate Now” included in the email alerts, too.
  - Listener habits are changing; will change the fall appeal on-air asks; telemarketing is working better since the pandemic happened.
- Jennifer: any changes in major donor giving?
  - Jeff and Joe: Last quarter of FY20 saw larger gifts; seemed to represent recognition of the service that NPR is providing. We are putting out great product, bringing out best practices for engaging donors, saw major gifts of \$1,200 or more total over \$1,000,000.
  - Average donation for sustainer is \$10 per month; average one-time gift \$65
  - There are different scripts for different donor levels.
- Dennis: has there been any tracking about whether individuals have given portions of the \$1,200 government stimulation – stations in the system did have fundraiser language guided towards donors.
  - Jeff: not that we have seen but will see if there is national data available.

#### **REMINDERS:**

- Community Advisory Board Member Orientation: **Wednesday, July 29, 5:30 – 7:30 pm** via Zoom. All members invited.
- Next Community Advisory Board meeting: **Thursday, October 22, 2020**. Location will either be at WFAE at **6 p.m.** or online at **5:30 p.m.**