

## *DRAFT Minutes*

# WBAI Local Station Board October Meeting

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## Call to Order

Regular meeting of the WBAI Local Station Board, convened remotely due to coronavirus precautions. Held via Zoom on October 10th, 2020. [Link to download Zoom video and audio recordings.](#)

Meeting is called to order at 7:06 and presided over by LSB Chair Carolyn McIntyre with Charlotte Albrecht as Secretary. Timekeeper is Hazel.

Link to the [roll call vote record](#).

## Approval of Agenda

Agenda is read aloud. (See below, red text indicates an accepted amendment).

1. Convene meeting.
2. Roll Call (5 minutes)
3. Adopt Agenda. (20 minutes)
4. Excuse absences. (5 minutes)
5. Approve outstanding minutes: [August 12th](#), [September 9th](#). (5 minutes)
6. Report from Pacifica National Board Directors. (10 minutes) — Alex Steinberg, Ralph Poynter, Shawn Rhodes, James Sagurton
7. Programming Updates (3 minutes report, 5 minutes Q&A) — Berthold Reimers, standing in for Linda Perry
8. General Manager's Report (10 minutes for report & 10 minutes for discussion) — Berthold Reimers
  - o [FY2021 WBAI Draft Budget](#) (updated version)
  - o [FY2021 WBAI Draft Budget Assumptions](#) (updated version)
  - o Supplement: [08.12.20 General Manager's Report to the LSB](#)
9. [Treasurer's Report](#) on the Budget — (5 Minutes report 5 minutes discussion) — R. Paul Martin
10. Vote on Local Finance Committee Motions (10 minutes)
  - o [Motions #1, #2, #3, #4](#) - originally proposed at August meeting
  - o [Motion #5](#) - originally proposed at September meeting

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- Supplement: [“Voting records for part of the WBAI local Finance Committee meeting of August 26, 2020”](#)

10a. Discussion of Next Steps in Management Evaluation Process (2 minutes)

~~11. Discussion: WBAI, Partnerships (MNN etc), Free Speech (15 minutes)~~

12. Announcement and Report from Fundraising Task Force (10 minutes) — Safia Albaiti

13. Update from Radio Committee (3 minutes) — Shawn Rhodes

14. [Report from LSB Committee of Inclusion](#). (3 minutes) — William Heerwagen

~~14a. Motion to Extend LSB Meeting Time to 9:45 pm to 10 pm (2 minutes) — William Heerwagen~~

15. Report from Program Director Search Committee (2 minutes) — Shawn Rhodes

16. Raising money for COVID affected people (2 minutes) — Errol Maitland

17. Public Comment. (30 minutes, 2 minutes maximum per speaker before next in queue to speak. Must always begin no later than 9:15 PM.)

18. Unfinished Business. (5 minutes)

19. New Business (5 minutes)

Adjourn no later than ~~9:45 PM~~ 10:00 PM (ET).

Mitch motions to add time to discuss how to proceed with the management evaluation process. Michael asks: wouldn't it be in an executive session? Mitch: no, setting up how the LSB will handle sending to Berthold and work on the suggestions outlined in the report. Wouldn't require an executive session. Also asks about the content of item #11 and who's sponsoring it.

Carolyn: I added #11 because of things said on air about MNN during the monthly LSB Report to Listeners. Clarifies it is a discussion, not a motion. Hazel then motions to table #11 until there is an actual proposal from MNN, the last one was in 2017. Alex: point of information, Hazel can't motion to “table” or “postpone” yet. Chair rules that this is the case. Mitch objects. There is clarification, and Hazel modifies her motion to “strike” instead of “proposal.”

There is further confusion about what item #11 is meant to be and whether or not someone said a proposal for MNN was being “suppressed” on the Sept 30th LSB show. Charlotte reminds everyone that we still have two potential motions on the floor and this discussion has moved onto talking about the item itself instead of whether or not to add it to the agenda. Mitch wants to add it to some time after GM's report. Marilyn clarifies what “next steps for the MEC process” means: GM has a month to respond, then his response is packaged with the original report and

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sent to Pacifica iED, who then has a month to respond. Wants to how to take care of these tasks.

*Basir motions to extend this section of the agenda for 5 minutes. Passes with 13 in favor, 2 against, 6 abstentions. Time is extended to 7:48.*

*Vote on Mitch's motion to add "Discussion of Next Steps in Management Evaluation Process" as 10a. Passes with 11 for, 6 against, 3 abstentions. Item is added.*

William reads a motion to extend all LSB meeting times until 10:00 pm. Wants to extend it for this meeting as well. Charlotte suggests we vote on this as one motion: adding 15 minutes to tonight's agenda, along with adding an agenda item to permanently extend (since we can't vote on that now).

*Vote on Hazel's motion to strike #11 "Discussion: WBAI, Partnerships (MNN etc), Free Speech." Passes with 14 for, 3 against, 3 abstentions. Item is struck.*

*Tonight's meeting time is extended to 10 pm without objection.*

*Vote on William's motion to add "Motion to Extend LSB Meeting Time to 9:45 pm to 10 pm (2 minutes)" at 14a. Passes with 16 for, 1 against, 3 abstentions.*

Basir has another item he wants to add to the agenda. Someone says that these requests should be made ahead of time. Basir points out that he emailed the whole LSB with a request to add "WBAI Producer Grievance Procedure" to discuss the need for one to be implemented, but the Chair decided not to add it to the agenda. We are (very) over time for this section, so we cannot vote on it.

*Agenda as amended is adopted without objection.*

## **Attendance and Adopting Minutes**

Voting Members in attendance: Safia Albaiti, Charlotte Albrecht, John Brinkley, Mitchel Cohen, Jack DePalma, Jack Devine, DeeDee Halleck, William Heerwagen, King Downing, R. Paul Martin, Basir Mchawi, Hazel Pinder, Ralph Poynter, Shawn Rhodes, Sharonne Salaam, James Sagurton, Max Schmid (via text chat), Alex Steinberg, Marilyn Vogt-Downey, Michael White, Amy Wilson, Carolyn McIntyre.

*R Paul motions to excuse the absences of Ana Garcia and Erroll Maitland. No objections*

*Michael motions to approve minutes from [August 12th](#) and [September 9th](#). No objections.*

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### **Reports & Discussion**

**Report from Pacifica National Board Directors.** Alex presents, with additions from James. PNB established a task force for how to repay Pacifica's \$3.2 mil loan, part of a strategic recovery plan. Pacifica is now in line for an Emergency Injury Disaster Assistance Loan (EIDL) loan from the federal government, though it has not been received. Progress being made on audits.

An emergency PNB meeting was just noticed for the purpose of "announcing a new bylaws period." Alex explains that this is a step that has to happen before any bylaws petitions can be brought before the board, and that the meeting was called by the same group of people who are trying to move forward with the bylaws petition. Details of this bylaws revision campaign and its implications for the survival of WBAI can be found in detail in [August's minutes](#). Shawn notes that emails are being sent from "New Day Pacifica."

John Brinkley: what's the hold up with the audits? Alex has his suspicions, but can't say publicly. Notes that we're 2 or 3 months away from catching up. James says KPFA and KPFK are causing the main hold up by not providing information. Not WBAI, although there are some minor things missing. 7 months of the year our info was going directly to NETA through an online system. Even with the EIDL, refinancing of \$3.2 million will have to happen.

Dee Dee: what lists are being used for the petition? Alex: it's a list of "current members," supervised by Renee Penalosa (former National Elections Director) to give out email addresses to mailing houses.

**Programming Updates.** To be given by Berthold, since Linda Perry is not present. Berthold begins by saying that the language used by Basir & others describing management's relationship to staff as abusive was "not civil" and asks for an apology. Carolyn agrees it was not respectful and hurtful, and she personally apologizes, saying these comments were out of order, as was laughing at the suggestion of an apology. Basir disagrees with her assessment.

Programming has been steady. Will be re-sending the fundraising schedule to producers Monday. Currently using 19 hours a week for fundraising, but the idea was 25 hours. Preempting everyone's show every four weeks. In two weeks, shows 7pm to 5am will begin having scheduled fundraising preemptions as well.

Berthold says there was some confusion from staff about the newest version of this schedule, but that he sent it out on Wednesday or Thursday of last week to the entire staff. He was not able to reach out to all of the shows individually to inform them of these changes.

Programming has been pretty steady. Josh Fox's program is off the air. Berthold details a few new shows added during the week [I can't hear what they are]. Says we have a 2'clock health strip (?) which will allow for related premiums. Will be re-sending the fundraising schedule to producers Monday.

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**Time for questions about Programming.** John Brinkley: Gary Null was off the air last week, but before he left he said he wouldn't come back unless there were some "concessions made." What were those? Berthold: there were no concessions. He complained about the preemptions about Randy Credico being back on the air, but Randy apologized at length. Old news. Something also about "Wake Up Call" being back on the air?

Basir says that Berthold sent out the most recent schedule changes at 9:07 on Thursday 10/8, but Basir's show was at 8 pm. Meaning that his show was preempted without notice, because he had no way of knowing that the 7/22 schedule was not still in effect. Berthold should apologize to him and his guests for this error.

Alex, point of order: Objection, LSB is not here to listen to producer grievances. Time is up for this section anyway, so we move on.

**General Manager's Report.** Made payroll, health benefits, rent. We have raised \$27k for the month so far, but the goal is \$100k. Reevaluating the efficacy of this style of fundraising again October 31st. Still having trouble getting premiums out. Working with NETA on discrepancies between our records and theirs. Very briefly presents [FY2021 WBAI Draft Budget](#) and [FY2021 WBAI Draft Budget Assumptions](#) .

**Questions for General Manager.** Mitch: Why aren't Christine Blodale morning premiums doing as well as expected? Also you shouldn't be saying you "hope" for bequests, it sounds like you are hoping for people to die. Berthold says he was encouraging people to put WBAI in their will, so it's a misunderstanding. He encourages corporate matching on wills, as well. For Blodale, went from \$2,300/day as \$3,500/day previously. We will go back and reevaluate what works and what doesn't with this new scheduling system.

Jack: fundamentally rejects the premise that Staff LSB Members are not supposed to represent the interests of the producers who voted them in. They are here to share the staff perspective and concerns. For example, producers receive constant emails that they do not enough BAI Buddies, but this is tied to the push from many of us to transform the e-commerce system; buddies are ready to commit to the station every single month but we're waiting on this. RPM, for example, has premium deals ready to go with Verso Books and Haymarket Books. What's the status of the new e-commerce platform? When can we expect to see it implemented?

Berthold: I would defer to Safia when she does her report to talk about what's happening with the e-commerce system.

Michael: in the future when we deal with the budget, let's be clearer that we are doing ok at bringing in revenue, but there are factors after the fact beyond our control. For example, we're not getting money from the Borough President's grant because of failures of Pacifica Central Services. We pay them to handle our money but they don't do it well, causing this cyclical effect of being in the red. There's also how bequests are distributed (not all to the station itself) and payments to the Pacifica archive.

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Marilyn: there are four separate membership lists, how can we have one and make it more accurate? Also, would like to register the “52-week fundraising schedule” has not been working.

To Marilyn’s second point, Berthold suggests we should ask the producers what they think and that they should be in favor because previously certain shows would get preempted often, but this schedule that distributes that burden.

We’re out of time, so Carolyn suggests we talk about membership list management during item #12.

**Treasurer’s Report.** Presented by R Paul. The [FY2021 Budget](#) (which just started Oct 1) is pulled up on screen and we go over major items. The Local Finance Committee voted to send it to the LSB “without recommendation.” This budget is a prediction of management how the finances *should* go.

Looking at revenue. Listener support: predicted \$1.2 mil. BAI buddy: predicted \$18k (around the same as this year). Total revenue projection: \$1.4m (compared to FY20 \$1.37m). Predicted \$143k by end of FY21 (compared to \$843k in the red FY20). FY20 had 131 days of pitching, FY21 will be 300 days of pitching but for fewer hours per day (if “52-week” fundraising schedule continues). Management has predicted only 73% of premiums will be met. Reminder: Local Finance Meeting Wed 10/21.

*Chat comment from Safia: “I just want to make it clear that I might not get to my report but I do \*not\* have more information on the ecommerce platform. I have asked the General Manager for updates myself since the last time I introduced the GM to FII Marketing, a pro-union shop ecommerce platform, but I am not the General Manager so I have no authority myself in implementing this platform. That is up to Berthold and Jack Devine’s important question still stands. I just want to be clear about that.”*

**Public comment begins at 8:15.**

**Resume Budget Discussion.** Marilyn: R. Paul is right to say that Pacifica is at a “tipping point,” and that we should get to see a uniform chart of accounts. And that we should know which stations have not been complying for FY19 audit. R Paul: asked CFO for detailed accounting of that, should have it for NFC meeting.

Carolyn: do we need to vote on the budget? R. Paul: it can go to the NFC without us voting on it. Probably best to move on, since Local Finance Committee had no recommendation.

**Local Finance Committee Motion#1:** R. Paul recommends against voting for this motion. A lot of this is already being done, asking PNB to order someone else to do something as a resolution. Alex also recommends against. John Brinkley: how do station budgets affect audits? R Paul: they don’t really. It’s to anticipate problems; the auditors need information that’s not being given to them. *Local Finance Committee Motion #1 fails with 4 in favor, 12 against, 4 abstentions.*

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Safia suggests we pick up where we left off with items on this agenda in November, including Basir's item, instead of starting fresh with a new one. Carolyn says she will take this into consideration.

**Adjourn at 10:00 pm**

Did not get to: remainder of Local Finance Committee motions, Announcement and Report from Fundraising Task Force, Update from Radio Committee, Report from LSB Committee of Inclusion, Motion to Extend LSB Meeting Time to 9:45 pm to 10 pm, Report from Program Director Search Committee, or Raising money for COVID affected people (2 minutes) — Errol Maitland