



WMHT Public Media

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**WMHT Educational Telecommunications
WMHT Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2024**

A Meeting of the WMHT Board of Trustees was held on September 19, 2024, via a hybrid in person and zoom visual and audio conference call. Del Salmon, Chair of the Board of Trustees, presided.

Present

Del Salmon	Livingstone Mukasa
Anthony Hayes	Mary Ellen Piche
Tammis Groft	Tobi Saulnier
Susan Kress	Gwen Wright
Doris Fischer Malesardi	Benita Zahn
Martin Mbugua	

Excused

Don Applrys	KMarie King
Bridget Ball Shaw	Karen Opalka
Ian Berry	Khadijah Peek
Karen Carpenter	Toyin Tofade
Angela Dixon	Teresa Zielinski
Glinnesa Gailliard	

Also Attending

WMHT Staff: Sandra Beer, Val Belden, Patrick Carpenter, Virginia Claus, Will Pedigo, Julie Raskin and Chris Wienk.

Mr. Benitez, VP, Capital Region Chamber

Call to Order

Mr. Salmon called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM

DE&I Capital Region Chamber

Mr. Hayes introduced Mr. Benitez, VP of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the Capital Region Chamber, and noted he would be speaking to the entire staff in the following week.

Mr. Benitez spoke to the importance of the Chamber's mission and its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) focus. He shared that research shows that diversity drives better performance and that demographics in our country show a workforce that is getting younger and browner. The Chamber started its DEI Initiative in 2017 and recently held its 6th Annual DEI summit. He emphasized that DEI is not a set of rules, but a set of tools that can be leveraged to improve business strategies. He highlighted various DEI initiatives and resources they make available and noted that they tailor the work to an organization's goals, helping to define purposeful and consistent steps.

***Consent Agenda
Items***

On a motion by Ms. Fischer Malesardi seconded by Ms. Wright the consent agenda of minutes and notes listed below was unanimously approved by the Board of Trustees.

Minutes and Notes

- June 20, 2024 Board Meeting
- July 3, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting
- July 24, 2024 Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
- July 30, 2024 Investment Sub-Committee Meeting
- August 7, 2024 Governance Committee Meeting
- August 5, 2024 Community Advisory Board Meeting
- August 22, 2024 Institutional Advancement Meeting
- September 11, 2024 Audit Committee Meeting
- September 12, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting
- September 17, 2024 Governance Committee Meeting

President's Report

Mr. Hayes thanked Mr. Benitez before noting that FY25 is off to a great start. WMHT has been nominated for 4 NY Emmy's:

- Overall Excellence - Medium market – **WMHT Public Media**
- Documentary – Cultural – **Reframing an Empire**
- Societal Concerns- short Form – **Aging Together in NY**
- Audio Post-Production – **AHA! A House for Arts!**

Mr. Hayes and Mr. Pedigo will attend the awards event on October 26th.

Mr. Hayes was re-elected to a second term on APTS (America's Public Television Stations). WMHT Family Fun Day was a huge success. The HR Director position is posted, and WMHT has started receiving applications. The role of Chief Technology Officer (CTO) is being filled with a one-year interim appointment of an internal candidate who will receive leadership and management training to assist in gaining experience. Mr. Hayes also highlighted the success of the second annual Staff Appreciation Day and a recent CURRENT interview which has sparked attention and positive feedback.

***Strategic Planning
Committee Report***

Ms. Piche noted that the 3 fully detailed documents of the new Strategic Plan were sent out earlier. She quickly showed key pieces of the 3-year Strategic Plan including the new Vision, Mission and Values Statements and the 6 Goals: Community Engagement; Education, Financial Sustainability, People & Culture and Programs & Content. The goals and their objectives are laid out along with assigned responsibility. The second document is The Strategic Plan Work Plan will be filled out with tactical goals, timeframes and responsibilities in the coming months. The third document is a GANTT chart to see the timeframe of each goal and objective.

On a motion by Dr. Saulnier, seconded by Ms. Groft, the strategic plan for July 1, 2024- June 30, 2027, was unanimously approved.

***Governance
Committee***

Ms. Groft reported that the Governance Committee has been working on a new slate of Trustees for the upcoming Annual Meeting in November. She noted that Mr. Salmon is stepping down as Chair but will serve a 2nd three-year term.

The two board surveys are important for selecting new board members and to understand the knowledge and skills within the board. If a Trustee has not yet completed either one, there is still time to do so.

She shared the results of the anonymous, demographic survey, comparing 2023 and 2024. The results showed that the board has become more diverse. The board showed a higher level of involvement with 73.3% of members reporting they were deeply involved. She announced plans for a board orientation for new board members.

***Finance Committee
Report***

Ms. Raskin noted that we are trending well with a fabulous June to end FY24; over \$800,000 better than budget, and over \$100,000 better than revenue budget. Budgeting conservatively has been very helpful for the station. In FY25, we are seeing a bit of a different trend and are not getting gifts as soon as we did last year, though we are not concerned. Ms. Raskin is confident we will make our budgeted goals.

The Investment Sub-committee met with Graypoint. As of June 30th, our Board Designated Fund was \$14.3 million, midday today it is at \$15.1 million. For FY24, our unrealized gain was over \$3 million; our Graypoint fees around \$44,000 and interest income was \$317,000.

On a motion by the Finance Committee the Board of Trustees unanimously accepted the Finance Committee report.

***Institutional
Advancement
Committee Report***

Ms. Fischer Malesardi reiterated that WMHT Family Fun Day was a rousing success. She thanked trustees who have written thank you notes to donors and happily reported that the board had 100% participation by trustees. Mr. Carpenter noted that FY24 membership was over 30,000 and membership income came in at 101% of goal. This fiscal year we will continue Trustee handwritten notes to donors; the station will aim for 31,000 members and keep sustaining membership at 50% of the total. The Major Donor Goal is \$945,000, the underwriting goal is \$800,000 and 100% participation by the Board once again.

Diversity Statement

Ms. Raskin introduced a re-affirmation of WMHT's Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report, required by CPB. This will be sunset after this year and replaced by the Community Representation Statement. CPB requires this report to be posted on our website. In addition to the policy statement, the report includes details of how the station has worked to further that.

Community Representation

Diversity in our workforce, management and boards is essential to our ability to serve our communities at the highest level and is an ongoing goal. We take a wide view of diversity, including, but not limited to any status protected by federal, state, or local law, in an attempt to create an environment that welcomes all forms of differences and is supportive of the core values we share.

On a motion by Dr. Saulnier, seconded by Ms. Groft, the Community Representation Statement was unanimously approved.

Leadership Team Reports

Mr. Wienk shared that WMHT-FM had a 3-day pledge drive, raising just under \$36,000. Helping Musicians of Maalwyk kick off its 25th Anniversary season.

WEXT pledge drive started today, tomorrow is the last Opalka Gallery Pop Up Beer Garden event and next Saturday WEXT will be at the Troy Art Block. WEXT continues to co-host *Live and Local at the Linda* with local musicians on first Fridays.

Mr. Pedigo note that WMHT premiered *From Land to Legacy: 100 Years of New York State Parks and Preservation*, last week. Next Friday, Sept 27, WMHT is receiving a NYS Broadcasters Association Excellence in Broadcasting Award for our multi-platform project *Opioids in NY: Stories & Solutions*. The industry's newspaper, *The Current* has recognized Shantel Destra recognized as a rising star in Public Media.

Meeting Adjourned

At 5:08 pm a motion to adjourn the meeting by Ms. Wright, duly seconded by Ms. Fischer Malesardi, was unanimously passed.