

ILLINOIS VALLEY PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION
Community Advisory Board (CAB) Meeting

Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 4:00 PM - WTVP Executive Conference Room

MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Meeting our new "Chief Officer of Content and Digital Media" James Kerr
3. Current yearly survey results
4. Programming updates
5. Selecting a CAB member to speak at the Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday, June 9th.
6. Other Business
7. Adjourn

MEETING MINUTES

- Jenn Gordon called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.
- In-person: Henry Blackwell, Marcia Lough, Lee Maki and Brittany Miller
- Via Webex: Jess Hill
- Absent: Jess Hill and Carrie Roos.
- Staff Present: Jenn Gordon (CEO), James Kerr (Chief Officer of Content and Digital Media), Jed Klabunde (Chief Programming & Operations Officer) and Mark Lasswell (Director of IT / Compliance Officer)

Overview

The session focused on reviewing programming survey results, highlighting a predominantly older audience and the need to engage younger demographics through targeted outreach and advertising. James Kerr introduced himself, sharing his extensive local media background and enthusiasm for leading content production.

Discussions emphasized the importance of locally produced documentaries and community-focused programming, with successes noted in recent productions like the US Senate forum and 'Voices of the Nation' series. The group explored viewer preferences, platform usage trends, and the impact of new streaming app availability and location services on audience measurement.

Volunteer engagement and community outreach efforts are gaining momentum, with strategies proposed to increase survey participation and volunteer recruitment through direct engagement and incentives. Upcoming programming includes a new show on

local businesses and innovation, reflecting the station's commitment to storytelling that resonates with the community.

The committee also reviewed national programming themes centered on historical and cultural observances, ensuring diverse and educational content. Plans to improve future surveys by targeting underrepresented groups and simplifying participation were discussed. The meeting concluded with logistical reminders and a call for continued collaboration, positioning WTVP to strengthen its connection with viewers and community stakeholders.

Detailed Summary

Introduction of New Content Officer

The meeting began with the introduction of James Kerr as the new content officer for WTVP, filling a position that had been vacant for about sixteen months due to budget constraints. James shared his background in local television, digital media, and his excitement to join the team, highlighting his experience and connection to the community.

- The host introduced James Kerr as the new content officer after a long vacancy due to financial considerations.
- James Kerr described his local upbringing, education at SIU Carbondale, and extensive media career.
- James expressed enthusiasm about joining WTVP and contributing to local storytelling.

Community Advisory Board Role and Membership

The Community Advisory Board (CAB) was discussed as a vital group for community feedback and transparency, continuing a PBS tradition despite changes in federal requirements. Current members introduced themselves, and the importance of recruiting new members was emphasized to maintain diverse community representation.

- The CAB serves as a channel for community feedback and helps maintain transparency with the public.
- Members shared their backgrounds and involvement with WTVP and the CAB.
- The group acknowledged the need to recruit new members to keep the board effective and representative.

Programming Survey Results and Audience Demographics

The group reviewed the latest programming survey results, noting a decline in responses compared to the previous year and a skewed demographic primarily aged 65 and older. The survey highlighted popular program types and viewing habits, revealing opportunities to better engage younger audiences and diversify outreach strategies.

- Survey responses dropped from 580 to 471, with most respondents aged 65 and above.
- Children's programming ranked highest in popularity, but younger demographics were underrepresented in the survey.
- Discussion focused on the need for targeted outreach and advertising to attract a broader and younger audience.

Viewer Preferences and Program Types

Survey data showed strong interest in locally produced documentaries, public affairs, mysteries, and history programs. The group discussed the importance of local storytelling and the challenges of balancing national and local content, as well as the evolving tastes of audiences, especially regarding British comedy and other genres.

- Locally produced documentaries and special showcases received high viewer interest.
- There is a noted challenge in introducing new British comedy content due to audience expectations.
- The group recognized the value of local content in building community pride and engagement.

Broadcast and Streaming Platforms Usage

The committee examined how viewers access WTVP content, with cable remaining the dominant platform, followed closely by broadcast and various streaming services. The recent availability of the PBS app on LG TVs and improved location services were noted as positive developments for accurate audience measurement and regional content delivery.

- Cable remains the primary platform for most viewers, with broadcast and streaming services also significant.
- PBS app availability on LG TVs (models 2022 and newer) enhances accessibility.
- New location verification methods help ensure viewers receive correct regional programming.

Volunteer Engagement and Community Outreach

Efforts to reactivate the volunteer base and increase community engagement were discussed, including recent successful events and distribution of program guides in the community. The group considered strategies to increase survey participation and volunteer recruitment through direct engagement and incentives at community events.

- Volunteer base reactivation is progressing with events like the station ambassador breakfast.
- Program guides are being distributed widely, aiding membership conversion.
- Suggestions included using ambassadors at markets to encourage survey participation with incentives.

Local Production Highlights and Upcoming Shows

Recent successes in local productions were highlighted, including the US Senate forum and the 'Voices of the Nation' series. Upcoming programming includes a new show about local businesses and innovation, produced in partnership with Distillery Labs, set to launch in July with a pre-screening event planned.

- The US Senate forum had broad statewide exposure and positive reception.
- 'Voices of the Nation' continues with plans for additional funded episodes and sustainability efforts.
- A new monthly show focusing on local businesses and startups will debut, featuring community innovators.

National Programming and Thematic Focus

The programming schedule includes a focus on historical content, particularly related to America's 250th anniversary, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, and other culturally significant themes. The group discussed various series, documentaries, and specials planned for upcoming months, emphasizing educational and diverse content.

- May programming highlights Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month with diverse documentaries.
- Historical series such as 'Finding Your Roots' and 'American Experience' are featured prominently.
- New and returning mystery series and musical specials are scheduled to engage varied audiences.

Survey Improvement and Future Strategies

The committee discussed ways to improve future surveys by targeting underrepresented demographics, creating abridged versions for easier participation, and preventing duplicate responses. Ideas included year-round survey availability and leveraging ambassadors for in-person engagement to increase response rates and data quality.

- Plans to target younger demographics more effectively in future surveys were proposed.
- An abridged survey version for quick responses at events was suggested.
- Measures to prevent duplicate survey entries and improve data integrity were considered.

Meeting Logistics and Next Steps

The meeting concluded with reminders about upcoming events, including the June board meeting where CAB representation is needed. The group reaffirmed communication channels for programming updates and encouraged ongoing feedback and collaboration among members and staff.

- CAB representation at the June board meeting was requested and volunteered.
- Members were encouraged to provide feedback and stay engaged with station initiatives.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Minutes submitted by:

Mark Lasswell

WTVP Director of IT / Compliance Officer