

WBAI Treasurer's Report
May 8, 2024

The National Finance Committee (NFC) met on April 23, and April 30, 2024. The local Finance Committee met on April 17, 2024. All of those meetings were held by teleconference.

At the April 17, 2024, local Finance Committee meeting the committee discussed the recently concluded emergency on-air fund raiser for the Tower Rent and the nature of restricted funds. It was reported that WBAI had gotten a check for \$85 from the company Good Search as a result of people using that company's search engine while naming WBAI as the beneficiary of their searches on that platform.

The General Manager told the committee that in consultation with the Executive Director it had been decided to not wait until May to hold the emergency Tower Fund on-air fund raiser. He said that it had started on April 8, and had run for a week. He said that in that week about \$48,000 had been raised on-air as compared to about \$13,000 the previous week when the emergency on-air fund raiser had not been going on. He said that a donation of \$17,000 from a Major Donor had come in. He said that the most recent E-mail he'd gotten from 4 Times Square, which included the April Tower Rent, said that WBAI owed about \$132,000. He said that with all of the money raised and sent to 4 Times Square the Tower Rent bill stood at about \$46,000 still owed as of April 17. He said that the station would resume emergency on-air fund raising on April 29.

The General Manager told the committee that the monthly revenue from BAI Buddies had been about \$18,000 for a long time, but for three months it had risen to about \$22,000. He said that for the past month the revenue from BAI Buddies had been about \$23,000. He told the committee that producers had been given monetary goals for on-air fund raising. He said that he was not going to shoot anyone for missing their assigned goal and he would speak to each producer individually to see how Management can help them and we would see how close they can come to that. He said that 60 shows had not yet met their goal.

The General Manager said that he was sure that WBAI would make payroll.

The General Manager said that people did not have to call the station to get a refund for a premium they didn't get because they could always go on-line and get a refund if they did not get their premium.

There was a discussion of the General Manager's ability to come up with accurate totals of revenue raised by each producer. The General Manager said that he had "total access" to the *Allegiance* software that tracks donations. The General Manager said that he would send a breakdown of what programs were raising how much to the producers, to the private LSB mailing list and to the Executive Director. He said he would not send the information to the public unless the producers wanted him to.

The General Manager reminded the committee that he doesn't do financial reports anymore and that the National Office has to do them. He told the committee that WBAI no longer owed back rent to 388 Atlantic Ave. because the building had been sold and the previous landlord had forgiven the full amount of rent that had been in arrears. He said that the Executive Director had been in contact with the new building owner and that WBAI would probably reduce

(MORE)

space in the building and thereby end up paying a lower monthly rent than would be the case if the station kept all of its current space. He said that he did not know what the rent would be for April.

The General Manager said that the Executive Director had made some demands and that there was talk of cutting with the cuts maybe including some producers' shows, board ops, getting rid of General Managers and Program Directors and asking Management to work as volunteers, which he said was not going to happen. He said that he hoped to get some PSAs back and along with underwriting maybe that could reduce the amount of money needed to be raised per hour by producers.

Much of the April 23, 2024, NFC meeting was devoted to the WPFW draft FY24 budget proposal. It was a deficit budget and it was passed on to the PNB.

The NFC passed the following motion:

Motion: (Susan Young) "To schedule a special NFC meeting to address WBAI financial management on Tuesday, April 30, 2024, at 8:30 PM (ET)." (Passed without objection)

That meeting was scheduled as an executive session meeting.

At this meeting I related the WBAI General Manager's suggestion that the Executive Director and/or National Business Manager give reports to the local Finance Committee since he said that he could no longer do that.

In her report the Executive Director told the NFC that Pacifica's Accounts Payable was about \$1.3 Million and had lessened a bit because WBAI had paid about \$50,000 toward the Tower Rent arrearage, and she said that some other things had also decreased the debt.

The Executive Director said that she was still working on removing the leins on the Los Angeles property which had been put in place when Pacifica had gotten too far behind in its interest payments on the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and the FJC loan. She said that she was working with FJC and also with the Small Business Administration (SBA) general counsel trying to bring Pacifica's EIDL, which had been referred to the United States Treasury Department for collection, back to the SBA so they could remove that lein and then close escrow on that building.

The Executive Director said that she was still working on filling the working teams which will help to support things like underwriting. She said that she was seeking volunteers to work on the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) compliance team to gain membership in the CPB for Pacifica . She said that letters had been sent from the CPB to Pacifica in 2013, 2020, and 2023, which outline what Pacifica needed to do to again become a member of the CPB and she wanted volunteers to help Pacifica comply with those requirements. She said that she was also looking for volunteers to work on grid review and program sharing. She said that she was working with the Community Advisory Boards to get a better understanding of the communities Pacifica serves. She said that she wants to create a catalogue of sorts of all the programs in Pacifica so we can share programs across the network.

The NFC agreed to release the "Pacifica Foundation Consolidated Monthly Income

(MORE)

Statement For the Three Months Ending Sunday, December 31, 2023” to the LSBs. I sent that consolidated financials spreadsheet to the WBAI LSB and the local Finance Committee on April 24. I am including that document again with this Treasurer’s Report.

The purpose of the April 30, 2024, NFC meeting was listed on KPFTX.ORG as being “to address WBAI financial management.” The report out is, “The NFC met with the Executive Director, National Business Manager and WBAI General Manager to begin the process required by the PNB to review the financial situation at WBAI. The committee discussed confidential topics regarding personnel, financial and contractual matters.”

The emergency on-air fund raiser for paying the arrearage in the Tower Rent managed to make a big dent in that bill. There’s another emergency on-air fund raiser going on now to pay off the rest of it and get current. Listeners have been generous and I’m hoping that donor fatigue does not set in. Pacifica Management and WBAI Management have met and will continue to meet with Pacifica governance to talk about how to keep WBAI from falling so far behind in the future.

There are going to be changes made. WBAI is going to lose more space at 388 Atlantic Ave. There may be other cuts as well. Earlier this year the NFC discussed the trend in Pacifica to have General Managers and Program Directors at stations that are struggling financially keep working at their jobs without pay. At some stations this has resulted in Management personnel leaving the station and someone active in governance being appointed to be Management on a volunteer basis. At the April 17, local Finance Committee meeting the WBAI General Manager said that that was not going to happen at WBAI. At the NFC I talked about trying to pay attention to raising more revenue as a way to keep WBAI from continuing to operate at a deficit. Others have suggested this too, but such endeavors would take time to get going and in the short term it will be the cuts to expenses that will be the focus of the attempts to make WBAI self sustaining. Changes will be here soon.

I remain pessimistic about WBAI and Pacifica’s future. It has been said on the NFC in the past that you can’t cut your way to prosperity. Given the depth to which the financial situation at WBAI has sunk something must be done that will show results very soon, and cuts are the obvious means to do so in a Pacifica that has a \$1.3 Million Accounts Payable and multiple stations running deficits. The days of getting help from the other stations are over. We now have to see what will happen to WBAI and hope that we can continue to operate.

The next NFC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday May 14, 2024, at 8:30 PM (ET). The next local Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 15, 2024, at 7:00 PM (ET). These meetings will be held by teleconference.

R. Paul Martin
WBAI LSB Treasurer