

WBAI Treasurer's Report
March 12, 2025

The WBAI local Finance Committee met on February 19, 2025. The National Finance Committee (NFC) met on February 25, 2025. These meetings were held by teleconference.

The WBAI interim General Manager did not attend the February 19, 2025, local Finance Committee meeting due to a prior family obligation, but he sent a written report just before the meeting started. Here is the report he sent:

Subject: IGM Report
Date: Wed, 19 Feb 2025 23:10:22 +0000
From: Robert Hennelly
To: R. Paul Martin, wbailsbfinancecommittee , WBAI General Manager, Doug Wood

Our last payroll was \$22,000 and it's been paid.
WBAI cash in the bank \$46,928.28 with PayPal \$6,547.29 as of 2/19/25. 2/17/25 \$36,853.95.
We paid \$2,500 in rent to the owners of 388 Atlantic. Rebecca Myles has started as News Director and grants administrator.
We are in pledge drive mode aiming to get \$250,000. We started on Feb. 14 and we have gotten close to \$15,000 as of 2-19 with another \$2,500 pledged today by Michael Barasch 9/11 WTC attorney.
That \$15,000 is from listeners including two returning major donors who gave \$2,000 and \$3,000.
Our Buddies are at 1,290 generating \$23,835.31 per month.
There are \$15,000 in union pledges somewhere from the invoice approval to check process.
Tower rent is at \$90,000 in arrears and we will be making a payment in the near future.
Thanks

Bob Hennelly
IGM

I read the interim General Manager's written report to the committee and the committee discussed it at length. Members said that they wished that they could have discussed the report with the interim General Manager in person. It was noted that access to the *Allegiance* information on WBAI's revenue has been blocked; it had been available previously. It was pretty universally agreed that WBAI needs more listeners in order to realize more revenue.

The Tower Rent arrearage referenced by the interim General Manager is significant. It

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sounds like it hadn't been paid for a few months. Also, the \$2,500 that was paid in rent to the owners of 388 Atlantic Ave. sounds like it would cover only part of one month's rent. It would be good to hear from the interim General Manager about the details there.

The committee also discussed concerns about the current right-wing administration in Washington, D.C. using the FCC to attack WBAI and Pacifica because of the content of many of our radio programs.

The February 25, 2025, NFC meeting was unusual in a number of ways. The day before the meeting Susan Young, the Chair of the PNB, wrote to tell me that she would be serving as an *ex officio* member of the NFC and that her membership on the NFC would have rights of full participation but would not count toward a quorum. This was the result of a motion that the PNB had passed at its February 20, 2025, meeting. I have found that in the agenda of that meeting there was a proposed motion that said, "Moved to name the Chair to be an *ex officio* member of all PNB committees with full rights of participation as provided in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 12th edition, 50:16." This sort of maneuver certainly hasn't been tried in Pacifica before, to my knowledge. With this development a voting member has been added to the NFC. A copy of the part of the bylaws that stipulates the membership of the NFC is appended to this report.

This NFC meeting was also unusual in that it was the first NFC meeting to be held on Zoom, which a majority of the committee had voted to switch to at the January 14, 2025, meeting.

This was the first meeting of what's being called the 2025, NFC. Some new Directors had been elected to the NFC. There were elections for Chair and Secretary *pro tem*. Fred Dodsworth and James Sagurton were nominated for Chair *pro tem* and I was nominated for Secretary *pro tem*. Fred Dodsworth was elected with six votes to James Sagurton's four votes. I ran unopposed and so was Secretary *pro tem* for this meeting. There were then nominations for permanent Chair and Secretary of the committee. Fred Dodsworth and James Sagurton were nominated for Chair. Aki Tanaka and I were nominated for Secretary. The Chair of the PNB said that PNB Secretary Julie Hewitt would conduct these elections via Opa Vote for the NFC. On March 9, the PNB Chair told committee members that Fred Dodsworth had been elected Chair and Aki Tanaka had been elected Secretary.

The Executive Director told the committee that the full FY24 consolidated financials which had been shared with the committee at the last meeting had received no requests for revisions and so they could be distributed. I sent them to the LSB and local Finance Committee mailing lists the next morning.

The committee then talked about WBAI. The Executive Director said that WBAI had been in deficit for years and so she had made changes to the station's Management. She said that the WBAI business model had needed overhaul and she said that WBAI had "sold premiums." The high cost of some premiums was noted. She said that things had not been properly managed. She said that the station had increased the BAI Buddy base by 204 participants, and had increased Major Donors, sponsorships and grants. She said that WBAI was the cornerstone of creating national programming.

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The WBAI interim General Manager said that WBAI had suffered a major reputational loss by not delivering premiums on time or in some cases not delivering them at all and that the Federal Trade Commission requires delivery of the premiums within 30 to 60 days, while many WBAI premiums were still not fulfilled long after that time period had elapsed. He noted that WBAI now does not have to purchase and send out premiums and only has to produce programming. He said that Unions were making commitments to WBAI and that there are two million Union households. He said that WBAI was working on a contract to do a 12 part series on Trump and Musk for the Brennan Center for \$12,000.

The WBAI Web master, who is now also the WBAI Business Manager, said that many people were displeased with WBAI not delivering the premiums they'd paid for. He noted that the water filters that had been a WBAI premium had a backlog of a thousand units that had not been shipped. He said that the station had been able to increase the revenue from BAI Buddies to about \$24,000 per month and that he hoped to double that.

There was a discussion between the Executive Director and James Sagurton about the need for up to date financial reports. James Sagurton said that some reports were very late.

There was a lot of discussion about premiums and the non-fulfillment of them over time at this committee meeting. The Executive Director said that she had a list of 3,000 premiums and that there had been a gross violation of Federal Trade Commission rules. She said the situation was being dealt with now.

The NFC then adjourned to executive session. The report out from that executive session was, "The NFC went into executive session to address confidential personnel, financial and legal matters related to WBAI."

The NFC meeting scheduled for March 11, 2025, was cancelled.

So the NFC had the big WBAI talk. The Executive Director seems pleased with the station's progress under the new interim General Manager. The NFC is now stacked with people who have made very negative statements about WBAI, and also with some members who, from what I've seen of their activities on their own LSBs and on the PNB, have no sense of fairness at all.

There remain questions about the exact state of WBAI's finances. We have not been getting monthly Accounts Payable statements from Management, and the first quarter Income Statement from all of Pacifica has still not been issued by the National Office. The interim General Manager has said that WBAI needs about \$70,000 to \$75,000 a month to operate these days, that's about \$50,000 less than previous Management's calculation, and the Business Manager is telling us that they aspire to double the number of BAI Buddies. Sounds rosy.

While the detailed look at WBAI that was held by the NFC on February 25, was not all that bad for the station we do not know what the consolidated financials for the first quarter of FY25 will show. If they do not show significant improvement there could be problems for WBAI.

We also must keep in mind that page 247 of the infamous "Project 2025" document mentions the Pacifica Foundation in an unfriendly way. All of Pacifica could be facing a full

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attack from the Trump administration within the next couple of years. I don't see us as ready for that.

The next NFC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday March 25, 2025, at 8:30 PM (ET). The next local Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at 7:00 PM (ET). These meetings will be held by teleconference.

R. Paul Martin
WBAI LSB Treasurer

APPENDIX

Pacifica Bylaws, "Article Eight, Other Committees of the Board of Directors, Section 3: Standing Committees

"In addition to the LSBs for each of the Foundation's radio stations, the Board of Directors shall also have the following standing committees: ... (C) a Finance Committee, which shall review and recommend the annual budget for board approval and shall monitor and report Foundation financial activities at least quarterly and shall include as members the Chief Financial Officer, a Director from each radio station area and the treasurers of each LSB. (The chair of the Finance Committee shall be a Director who may be referred to as the Board "Treasurer". However, the Board Treasurer shall not be an officer of the Foundation. The Foundation's Chief Financial Officer shall be an employee of the Foundation and shall not be the Board Treasurer. The Board Treasurer shall not represent him/herself to any party as an officer of the Foundation nor may s/he sign documents on behalf of the Foundation requiring the signature of the Chief Financial Officer nor represent him/herself to have any authority to bind the Foundation.)".