

WBAI Treasurer's Report or Ex-Treasurer's Report  
April 9, 2025

The WBAI local Finance Committee met on March 19, 2025. The National Finance Committee (NFC) met on March 25, and April 8, 2025. These meetings were held by teleconference.

At the March 19, 2025, local Finance Committee meeting the committee reelected M. Kay Williams as committee Secretary.

The interim General Manager reported that he was really pleased with WBAI's three hour coverage of the recent mass rally by labor and other organizations protesting the actions of the current Trump/Musk administration. He said that the station had \$50,885 cash in bank, and that there was \$790 in WBAI's PayPal account. He said that the station had raised \$75,770 of the on-air fund raiser's \$250,000 goal. He said that since the change in WBAI Management the station had gone from about 1,100 BAI Buddies to close to 1,300 which results in about \$24,000 in recurring monthly income. He said that he was also seeing a trend of people increasing their BAI Buddy commitment which he attributed to two volunteers who were calling folks up. He said that in the nine months from August 26, 2023, to June 6, 2024, the station had gotten \$133,415 in major gifts as defined as donations of \$500 or more. He said there had been revenue of \$15,375 from the City of New York for the "Vision Zero" public service announcements. He said that in the comparable period from June 7, 2024, to March 19, 2025, the station had brought in about \$334,000 in major gifts which includes a total of \$228,590 from Unions. He said that Business Manager Chris LaPilusa had gotten a sense of some of the flows of monthly expenses. He told the committee that WBAI's payroll expenses run about \$33,000 a month and \$15,000 or \$16,000 for each of the semi-monthly pay periods, and that Pacifica charges a "Payroll Processing Fee" of \$7,400 for every pay period, which Pacifica Management told him was because stations, more than just WBAI, had missed making payroll and that insurance payments had not been paid in the past. He said that Pacifica Management had wanted to create a cash reserve that could be counted on and that's why there's a Payroll Processing Fee every payroll period.

The interim General Manager told the committee that with regard to the Subsidiary Communications Authorization (SCA) at least one of the religious broadcasters, *Radio Maria*, was making monthly payments of \$3,500. He said that WBAI is therefore sending Pacifica close to \$18,000 on a monthly basis. Later in the meeting he noted that it had taken him six months to get the confirmation that *Radio Maria* was paying \$3,500 a month and he said that he was still trying to find out what became of the other SCA lease holder.

The interim General Manager told the committee that the Tower Rent bill was back over \$100,000 in arrears. He said that as a result WBAI Management was in the process of negotiating with Pacifica and pushing back on the Payroll Processing Fee. He said that it was disconcerting that he'd been involved with fund raising in the \$50,000 to \$60,000 range for creating national programming for the convention over the Summer prior to becoming interim General Manager and yet and yet Pacifica is charging WBAI for things related to that project. He said that three of the low power FM stations that are Pacifica affiliates that he'd been working with were paid \$5,000 each for their work on the convention coverage, but one station didn't cash their \$5,000

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check until February, and the bank wouldn't honor a check that old. He said that another check had to be issued and that \$5,000 was taken out of WBAI's account. He said that a technical worker on the convention had submitted a bill for \$2,700 for work on the convention and the interim General Manager noted that he'd raised the money for the convention and he made sure that the \$2,700 was not taken out of the WBAI account.

The interim General Manager told the committee that the station was paying studio rent at 388 Atlantic Ave. of \$2,500 a month and that we were getting some space back so that the station can create a News Room.

The interim General Manager said that there was an additional \$15,000 from Unions that had been raised as part of the on-air fund raiser. He said that some of the donations from Unions were sustaining sponsorships and so would continue through the year.

The committee discussed the report with the interim General Manager. I requested that he send us financial documents before the meeting, especially the current Accounts Payable. I asked him for the current Accounts Payable and he said that payroll was \$33,215 a month, the additional contract workers cost about \$6,000 a month, other monthly expenses are software services cost \$1,400, Studio Rent costs \$2,500, the copy machine lease is \$390, the Verizon Business account costs \$274, a service that allows people to call in on the phone and be put on the air costs \$459, Spectrum Cable costs \$554 and Tower Rent \$18,000. In answer to a question the interim General Manager said that monthly expenses were about \$80,000 to \$100,000 for WBAI. I asked about his previous statement that WBAI costs \$70,000 to \$75,000 a month to operate. He said that the Pacifica Payroll Processing Fee was something WBAI Management had just gotten its arms around and started asking questions about. I asked once again that he send the committee things like the Accounts Payable before local Finance Committee meetings so that we can get a handle on revenue and expenses. I noted that the Executive Director had said at a recent NFC meeting that we had been getting bank statements and other things but that this had not happened. The interim General Manager amended his previous statement and said that he'd just added up the figures and that WBAI cost closer to about \$85,000 a month to run. He said he would send it to me. Unfortunately, he has not sent it to me as of the time I'm sending out this Treasurer's Report.

The interim General Manager answered a question about the Payroll Processing Fee saying that a number of items were related to it including the Health Insurance premiums and the \$5,000 a month retainer for the Pacifica General Counsel which is paid by Pacifica. He said that he had received positive response to negotiating it downward. He said that Pacifica does need to look at its financial structure with regard to what the stations are responsible for. He said that all bills are Pacifica's and they take \$18,500 month from WBAI and let the Tower Rent go delinquent. He said that he thought that we'd find an accommodation with Pacifica.

The interim General Manager told the committee that BAI Buddies, needed to bring in \$50,000 to \$60,000 per month. He said that people were working the phones and having conversations with people.

In answer to a question the interim General Manager said that he did not have any more on the accounting for the approximately \$220,000 bequest that WBAI had gotten. He said that it was on the same list of inquires as the second SCA lease holder. He also said that he was asking

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for more details on the Payroll Processing Fee.

At the March 25, 2025, NFC meeting we ran into issues with the NFC Chair not wanting to run the meeting according to *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (12th ed.) (RONR 12) which is mandated as the parliamentary authority for Pacifica, as per Article 16 of the bylaws. He did not keep track of an amended motion, having only the amendment passed. I pointed out that we still needed to pass the amended motion. He was unsure if we'd passed it, we hadn't. He said that his fellow KPFA member on the NFC had suggested that the meetings be run more like a conversation instead of motions and seconds and discussions. Of course this violates the rules that the bylaws mandate for running meetings. As I tried to explain why order is a good thing the PNB Chair started shouting over me and trying to move the meeting on without the motion being passed. James Sagurton raised a point of order saying that I should be allowed to complete my statement and the Chair just went on without recognizing him. When James Sagurton challenged the ruling of the Chair the Chair said, "Everyone who supports James Sagurton's Continued interruptions please say," At this point both James Sagurton and I objected to that kind of phrasing, which is so clearly prejudicial intended to berate a member and in violation of RONR 12. The Chair then said, "I'm not going to play nice." In the course of the back and forth he told James Sagurton that if he didn't like it he should leave. After more back and forth the Chair said, "Oh, piss off James." This is not how a Chair is supposed to behave.

I'm relating this incident because it illustrates the New Day et al. faction's attitude that they can just do what they please and sweep aside anyone who doesn't agree with them. It's clear that the NFC Chair does not know how to run a meeting, at least he does not understand how to run a meeting that's fair to all participants.

The Chair then made a statement which I think it is important for everyone at WBAI, and everyone around the Pacifica network, and beyond, to know about. He said, "**This is why nothing ever gets done. It's because WBAI consistently interrupts everybody with pointless order pointless points of orders,**" at this point I spoke up and we both spoke at once with me referring to people trying to railroad things. This illustrates the hostility of the New Day et al. faction, and they are now openly showing their hostility.

The Executive Director said that taxes and audits were taking her full time. She talked about the timing for the consideration of the FY26 draft budgets. She gave this schedule: KPFA April 22, WPFW May 13, **WBAI May 27**, KPFT June 10, Pacifica Affiliates Network June 24, KPFA July 8, National Office and Pacifica Radio Archives July 22. She said that the NFC would have station financials to look at. She said that she could not give us a date for when the consolidated financials for the first quarter of FY25 would be available.

The KPFA Treasurer questioned WBAI's rent at 388 Atlantic Ave. and the Executive Director explained that she had been involved with the discussion with the landlord and that there is an agreement in writing that's under discussion, she said we've been paying rent and we have a good relationship with the landlord at 388 Atlantic Ave. She said that Pacifica would probably be signing everything related to the studio rent the next day. She said that there were a few things that she wanted to tweak e.g. WBAI should not be responsible for the building's air conditioning system.

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The NFC discussed a proposal from a former NFC member regarding more timely financial reporting. The lack of personnel and money to do this was noted.

At this meeting the PNB Chair stated that Pacifica has been insolvent since 2022. This is not correct. Pacifica has been illiquid since before that year. Insolvent means you not only can't pay your bills but your assets can't cover your liabilities. Illiquid means you lack sufficient cash flow to pay your bills, but your assets are greater than your liabilities. It's an important difference.

The April 8, 2025, NFC meeting started as no other ever has in my 17 years on the committee. **The PNB Chair told us that the New Day et al. bylaws had been approved by a California judge and that those bylaws were in effect.** She said that the position of LSB Treasurer no longer existed. So the NFC suddenly had a much smaller membership. She also said that LSB members will no longer be delegates and can't serve on national committees.

James Sagurton contended that the new bylaws do not really replace the pre-existing bylaws due to the way in which it was done. When he again just mentioned that it was a continuing breach for the PNB Chair to be on the NFC the NFC Chair called him out of order and threatened to put him in the waiting room. I said that from what I can see there was just a bunch of self-dealing going on with regard to the court proceedings. The NFC Chair then asked what this had to do with the NFC, and I said that it would take the Treasurers off the NFC and the Treasurers just might be in touch with things locally. The NFC Chair then started speaking over me and making some odd, false accusation about the Treasurers not being able to do that previously. James Sagurton called the NFC Chair to order for trying to speak over me. I went on to say that the Chair hasn't been on the NFC for long and hasn't seen the Treasurers prevent some idiotic things from being done by Directors who think they know it all. I said that the new bylaws are terrible and the way it was done did not smell very good.

So this may be how the NFC works from now on.

The Executive Director reported that all of the stations and the Pacifica Radio Archives were paying Central Services fees now with KPFK and WBAI paying "a small percentage" of their Central Services fees.

The Executive Director said that the National Office is posting all of the General Manager positions on a rolling basis. **So far two people have applied for the WBAI General Manager position.** The WBAI position will be officially posted with a 45 day deadline on May 30, She said that there will be interview panels that will involve volunteers, Staff, co-workers and peers.

The Executive Director said that she did not have the consolidated financials for the first quarter of FY25 yet and she didn't know when we would have them. She said that it would be helpful to have the National Business Manager attend the NFC meetings, but she has a family obligation every Tuesday night. She said she'd try to get her to attend.

There was a short discussion of how the accounting was done for the approximately \$220,000 bequest that had been for WBAI last year. The Executive Director said that she needs a copy of the bequest and that once we close the books they are closed and it's almost impossible to change the accounting of things then. She seemed to say that we shouldn't talk about who

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owes whom what. The PNB Chair said she appreciated that.

The Executive Director talked about the coverage of the protest marches over the weekend and told about WBAI putting together the feeds from various affiliates and other stations to make a three hour special covering the protests.

There was a discussion about there no longer being local Finance Committees. The Executive Director said that she hoped that Pacifica wouldn't push aside the volunteers who can help us. She said she would reach out.

There was a discussion of the meaning of the phrase "self-sustaining" in all versions of the bylaws. I think that someone clearly wants to aim that at WBAI.

The PNB Chair made the following **Motion:** (Susan Young) "That the 2025, Treasurers be invited to continue to serve on the NFC as resource persons in a non-voting capacity." (Passed 5 for, 3 against, 1 abstention) Yes, they had us vote on this motion about how we can't vote anymore. After this the meeting adjourned.

So the NFC looks like it may be functionally seriously impaired. The New Day et al. faction's bylaws have been enacted by acts of self-dealing by that faction in front of a friendly California judge. The WBAI local Finance Committee is now extinct, according to the New Day et al. faction, after having served for over 21 years, as are all other local Finance Committees.

I think we are watching the destruction of Pacifica here. The way that NFC meetings are being run now is unprecedented. There have been serious disagreements on the NFC in the past, but the worst of them have not been quite like this.

The PNB Chair said that the New Day et al. bylaws have the same requirements for selling a station or other assets that the Pacifica bylaws have had in them for the past 21 years.

All of the now former Treasurers have been invited to continue as "resource persons." I have to consider whether or not I'm going to do that. On the one hand I do not need the abuse of the New Day et al. super majority but on the other hand WBAI is going to need all of the help it can get with the new situation, unless we can all find a way to reverse this travesty.

I am more pessimistic than ever about WBAI and Pacifica's survival.

R. Paul Martin  
WBAI LSB Treasurer