

WBAI Treasurer's Report or Ex-Treasurer's Report
May 14, 2025

The National Finance Committee (NFC) met on April 22, and May 13, 2025. The WBAI local Finance Committee met on April 16, 2025. These meetings were held by teleconference.

At the April 8, 2025, local Finance Committee meeting members discussed the sudden imposition of new bylaws that had not gone through the process for changing the bylaws and the fact that some people in Pacifica governance had run for their LSB by spreading disinformation about WBAI. Some members of the local Finance Committee did not believe that an actual order from a judge had been issued. The issue of the New Day et al. bylaws was discussed. I noted that the Chair of the PNB, who has had herself appointed to the questionable position of an *ex officio* member of the NFC, had said during the April 8, 2025, NFC meeting that, the changes in the bylaws do not alter in any way what procedures would be needed in order to sell a signal or sell a station, or sell an asset. She said this as a reassurance that people in Pacifica governance were not looking at selling a station. And at this local Finance Committee meeting we noted that both the bylaws that were adopted in 2003, and the ones being imposed by the New Day et al. faction also had a way to amend the bylaws, and that hadn't been adhered to.

The interim General Manager attended this local Finance Committee meeting and he told the committee that WBAI had about \$51,000 cash in bank and \$4,715 in a PayPal account. He said that the station had about 1,300 BAI Buddies which provided revenue of close to \$24,000 a month. He said that the Spring on-air fund raiser which had started on February 14, had a tally of \$111,459. The on-air fund raiser's goal is \$250,000. He said that about \$3,000 has come from foundations and \$20,750 has come from Unions. He said that since June 2024, there had been 104 Major Donors donating \$500 or more and that their average donation had been \$3,834. He said that in the time he's been interim General Manager the station had raised about \$355,000 in major gifts. He told about issues with streaming and archiving and he said that the archives were studio-based now and that they were more stable. He said that the following Monday he'd be announcing a \$5,000 gift from Public Square Amplified, a non-profit journalism project based in Newark, NJ. He said that the station had, "Put the finishing touches on a \$50,000 grant," from a major Brennan Center fellow for some programming and that WBAI would make some money on it because the cost of producing the programming will be less than the grant amount. He said that he was trying to get current BAI Buddies to add to their monthly donation amounts. He said he'd gotten positive feedback to what WBAI is doing. He said that WBAI was leading Pacifica editorially. He said that he'd been working with Arthur Schwartz on the Roche Family bequest that is for \$214,000. He said that it had cleared the final hurdle and the lawyer for the estate has to file one more tax document and that the station should get the bequest in the week after this meeting, which will retire the 4 Times Square debt.

The interim General Manager said that there was no reality in the idea that WBAI owes anything to anybody in the Pacifica network. He spoke again about the \$7,500 payroll processing fee that WBAI is charged by the National Office and said that while it's not called a Central Services fee it produces \$18,500 to support the network. He said that the station has a one year lease at 388 Atlantic Ave. He said that thanks to a benefactor WBAI is paid up four months in

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advance on that rent. He said that with 4,000 BAI Buddies and the recurring money from Unions that WBAI would hit the \$1,000,000 mark in revenue, which is his projection for WBAI's FY25 budget.

At the conclusion of the interim General Manager's report I noted that he had said at the last meeting that he'd send us a copy of the report he'd given then in writing, but he hadn't. I said that the committee needed to get financial information from him in writing. He said he would do his best to send us that. After some more discussion he said that the responsibility for the bills and the functioning of the license was with Pacifica and the Executive Director.

At the April 22, 2025, NFC meeting the Executive Director reported on some repeater transmitters, called "translators," that Pacifica stations in California and Texas have been using to boost their signal or get their signals over mountain ranges. The Executive Director reported that some of them haven't been used for years, and others needed thousands of dollars in repairs to be able to transmit again. She said that each of the translators was costing about \$1,000 to \$1,200 a month in fees. She said that one of them covers an area that gets a single \$100 donation per year from a single donor, but now it needs repairs that would cost \$7,000 to \$12,000, so it doesn't seem to be worth operating. The Executive Director said that Pacifica had petitioned the FCC on March 9, 2025, for temporary permission to go silent with those translators. She said that if they were just left in their current state the FCC could fine Pacifica. She said that Pacifica does not want to sell any of the licenses to operate those translators because they could end up in the hands of entities that are in opposition to Pacifica's mission. So Pacifica is looking for non-profit broadcasters that have a similar mission to Pacifica with the idea of selling them those licenses. The plan is to have whatever non-profit gets those frequencies to share half the cost of dismantling the current transmitters as well as the transfer costs charged by the FCC. It was noted at this meeting that the annual costs for some of those translators was not listed in station budgets; it was speculated that those expenses may have been folded in with other expenses.

The Executive Director told the NFC that Pacifica was completely caught up with interest payments on the FJC loan now.

The NFC then went into executive session. The report out was, "The NFC went into executive session to discuss financial and personnel issues of a confidential nature."

At the May 13, 2025, NFC meeting the Chair declared that a quorum was now three members because the Treasurers are no longer members and do not count toward a quorum. So the meeting started with three members.

Three sets of draft minutes were approved, one of which I objected to because the results of a roll call vote were not listed in the minutes as they had been reported at the meeting [See below for more on this.]

The Executive Director talked about budget reviews and read the list of dates on which there will be budget reviews. **WBAI will have its FY25 budget compliance reviewed at the next NFC meeting on May 27.**

The NFC reviewed WPFW's FY25 budget compliance at this meeting.

The question was asked of the Executive Director whether all stations had moved their

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bank account to the Bank of America as mandated by the PNB. The Executive Director said that they had not. In answer to a further question she said that KPFA had not and that WPFW had wanted to keep one account open in a local bank that they are using to fund their relocation and that she has view access to that account. The Executive Director said that all stations have PayPal accounts. There followed a discussion about KPFA not complying with a PNB mandate to move all bank accounts in Pacifica to Bank of America. The Executive Director said that people at KPFA were adamant about not moving over. She said that she has view-only access to the KPFA accounts.

The Executive Director said the National Office was working on the audits and on getting the IRS 990 forms don. She said that the FY22 IRS 990 form had been done and would be posted.

During these discussions the Executive Director said that stations do not have petty cash accounts or credit cards. She said that stations could use their PayPal accounts to pay for some things and that she uses her personal credit card for some Pacifica expenses and gets reimbursed. She said that Pacifica has a debit card and that the National Business Manager is in charge of it. She said that the National Office has some part time workers who were working with stations essentially as their Business Managers. She said that one was working with WBAI and WPFW on what bills to pay.

The Executive Director said that if she sees that revenue doesn't match expenses for any part of Pacifica that she goes back to the stations and makes changes in their budgets.

The NFC then discussed a motion passed by the PNB some time in the past requiring station Managements to review program grids to see what programs are raising money, and which ones aren't.

I noted above about objecting to approving the minutes of the April 8, 2025, NFC meeting. This was because at the April 8, meeting the Secretary had announced the vote count total for the motion to invite the Treasurers to be "resource persons" on the NFC as "Passed 5 for, 3 against, 1 abstention." Apparently there was confusion about the vote of the KPFA Treasurer. But after the vote count was announced he made no mention of his difference with that vote count. This got into a lot of E-mail discussion on the NFC mailing list after I corrected the draft minutes of that meeting by noting the 5-3-1 vote on that motion. The KPFA Treasurer didn't attend the next meeting when I had submitted my correction and the NFC had passed the corrected minutes. But he started a campaign on the E-mail list with a lot of vitriol and demands that he be listed as not voting. I noted the, "If you snooze, you lose" rule in Roberts Rules of Order RONR (12th ed.) 45:9. In the end he seems to have gotten his way with the NFC Chair and Secretary also being from KPFA. Of note was his name calling and an attack on New York. Can WBAI expect to be fairly treated at the May 27, NFC meeting when our FY25 budget compliance is reviewed?

Staff got an E-mail from the interim General Manager yesterday wherein he says that WBAI has raised \$150,000 of our \$250,000 goal for this on-air fund raiser, which began on February 14. So we've only raised 60% of the goal after three months of pitching. In that E-mail he says that he requests, "that ALL producers become a WBAI Buddy at whatever level they can

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afford by the end of this month.” At the local Finance Committee meeting reported on above he said that the station had about 1,300 BAI Buddies and needed about 4,000 BAI Buddies to start braking even. There are only a couple of hundred producers at WBAI. In the past the suggestion that producers each become donors has been rejected by almost everyone at WBAI as a “pay to play” idea.

I’m hoping that WBAI will not be mauled by the people who hate WBAI, and in some cases apparently New York City, at the next NFC meeting. Overall I still remain pessimistic about the future of WBAI and Pacifica.

The next NFC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday May 27, 2025, at 8:30 PM (ET). The next local Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 7:00 PM (ET). These meetings will be held by teleconference.

R. Paul Martin
WBAI LSB Treasurer