

WTTW COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of the
PUBLIC MEETING of the
WTTW Community Advisory Board (CAB)
Tuesday August 18, 2015
WTTW Studios
5400 N St. Louis Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m.

Introductions were made by the following present members of the Community Advisory Board:

Joseph Morris, Chairman; Mary Lou Mockus, Vice Chairman; Ava Holly Berland, Secretary; Denise Avant; Joe Bosco
Leatrice Campbell; Barbara Cragan; Janice Goldstein; Linda Jackson; Derrick Kimbrough; Lennette Meredith;
Renee Summers; Maggie Steinz; Chester Szerlag; Rita Tandaric; Felicia Townsend and Christopher Vaughn

In addition, the following persons were present and introduced themselves:

Michael W. Gonzalez, WCCI's Trustee, Co-Chair of the Board's Community Engagement Committee, and CAB Liaison; V.J. McAleer, WCCI's Senior Vice President for Production and Community Partnerships and Management Liaison; and Yvonne Davis, Chicago Tonight's Administrative Assistant and Staff Liaison

Finally, the following members of the public were present:

Nneka Erundu; Jennifer Fletcher, CAB candidate; Susan Ivers, CAB candidate; and Shonna Pryor, CAB candidate

The Chair noted a quorum was present, and the meeting proceeded.

Revision and Adoption of the Agenda

The Chair requested approval and adoption of the Revised Agenda. The Chair explained that in Ms. Frost's absence, her scheduled WTTW Website and Interactive Features presentation -- and Ms. Anne Gleason's attendance -- will be deferred to the October Meeting. Ms. Tandaric so moved; Ms. [Avant Tandaric](#) seconded the motion; and, the Agenda was adopted unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

The Chair requested approval of the June 2015 Minutes. No objections were made, and the minutes were adopted unanimously.

Trustee's Liaison

Mr. Gonzalez stated that he regretted he was unable to attend -- but that he was gratified to note that the issue of the mayoral debate ("issue") previously raised was discussed at length at -- the June Meeting. He stated that the Trustees' Meeting also addressed the issue, and that he was satisfied with the "turn of events" (which he shared with Sylvia Puente, Director, Latino Policy Forum). He declined the Chair's request to share that outcome with CAB, preferring to wait until the results of the Community Engagement Committee's Survey regarding the issue.

Also, Mr. Gonzalez explained his involvement with and distributed flyers regarding WTTW's screening of "On Two Fronts" and panel discussion, which will explore the "rich history of Latino service in the Vietnam War."

Management Liaison

Following up on Mr. Gonzalez' last remarks, Mr. McAleer stated that WTTW will air "On Two Fronts" on September 22nd, and added that the program is a PBS "Independent Lens" offering. He also noted that WTTW will air another program focused on Vietnam program on October 17th.

Mr. McAleer reminded CAB that WTTW engages the community by scheduling screenings and public discussions at the Cultural Center monthly (for a schedule, see WTTW's website).

Reports of Officers and Committees

1) Membership and Nominating Committee

Ms. Meredith reported that CAB currently has a vacancy, and that there are three pending applications.

She also reported that the Committee selected Trey Cobb, who has demonstrated his commitment by attending past CAB and committee meetings. Although Mr. Cobb attended the April Meeting, he has not attended subsequent meetings or responded to her recent contact. If Mr. Cobb does not attend the October Meeting, Ms. Meredith stated that the Committee will select another candidate to fill Dr. Kerzejka's position.

2) Program Committee

Ms. Cragan shared excerpts of Paul Sassone's recent article, "Frequent PBS pledge drives make no sense." The article claimed that pledge drive's programming does not meet the high standards of regularly scheduled public broadcasting fare, and suggested that PBS review its mission statement to ensure that its standards are adhered during such drives. The Chair commended Ms. Cragan for bringing the article to CAB's attention, and suggested that the matter be placed on the agenda to be more fully flushed out.

Ms. Cragan also reported that the Committee met July 22nd, and discussed several interesting topics, including net neutrality, and alternatives to the children's fare regularly scheduled in the 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. time slot. In the latter regard, Mr. McAleer noted that WTTW Prime presents such an adult alternative.

Finally, Ms. Cragan moved to consider Shonna Pryor's Art and Context program proposal ("proposal"), and Ms. Steinz seconded the motion. Ms. Pryor presented the proposal.

The proposal strives to bridge current topics presented on "Chicago Tonight" with segments featuring students and professionals who have created responsive visual art, thereby bringing "a unique visual reference" to current topics through "art that can be accessed in the city and beyond." The segments would be curated/hosted by Ms. Pryor, a painting and drawing instructor at the Art Institute.

Ms. Cragan and Ms. Steinz endorsed the proposal, stating that it will provide the audience with a cultural, artistic and visual perspective highlighting topics of interest. In contrast, Ms. Campbell found the proposal somewhat abstract. Ms. Mockus questioned the logistics, noting that "Chicago Tonight" often addresses contemporary issues. She reminded CAB that the program's producer Mary Field stated that the program's segments are "news driven," and that she does not always know in advance what segments will be featured as it Ms. Pryor responded by stating the visual segments would relate to current ongoing newsworthy topics.

The Chair expressed discomfort with the proposal's launching of Ms. Pryor as host/curator. Mr. Vaughn agreed, finding the proposal reads like a resume.

Mr. Vaughn suggested that the proposal's segments would be better suited for WTTW web, augmenting "Chicago Tonight" broadcasts. The Chair recommended that the proposal be tweaked by the Program Committee, and be brought back for the October meeting, when Ms. Frost and Ms. Gleason will be presenting a review of WTTW's website.

Mr. Szerlag commended the proposal as "community engagement at its best." He suggested that it would be helpful if CAB could view a sample video, and Ms. Pryor agreed.

3) Outreach Committee

In Ms. Meroni's absence, no report was presented. Mr. Szerlag noted that the Committee's survey, mentioned by Mr. Gonzalez, has been electronically distributed.

4) Technology Committee

In Ms. Brown's absence, no report was presented.

5) Committee on Cultural Research and Development

The Chair noted that he will soon appoint a Chairman.

6) Committee on Education

Ms. Steinz reported that the Committee will be scheduling a meeting.

7) Secretary

The Secretary did not present a report, but thanked Ms. Mockus as always for taking and transcribing notes at the June Meeting.

8) Vice Chairman

The Vice Chair reported on the following matters.

Sesame Street will be partnering with -- and the series will run initially on -- HBO, and subsequently on public broadcast channels. Mr. McAleer responded to the Chair's inquiry, by stating that he did not have any inside information.

Net Neutrality, a controversial issue. The Vice Chair distributed recent articles, which questioned the propriety of the recent action by the Federal Communication Commission ("FCC") regarding internet service. Ms. Berland added that, since the 1980s, the FCC treated the internet as an unregulated "information service" under Title I of the Communications Act. However, in 2015, the FCC reclassified the internet as a common carrier service under Title II of the Act, subject to agency regulation. Ms. Mockus and Ms. Berland expressed concern that with regulation, innovation and competition in the internet marketplace may be curtailed. Ms. Berland added that the FCC's action has been appealed and the question of net neutrality ultimately will be decided by the courts.

9) Chairman

With smart phones beeping weather alerts, the Chair recommended that other matters be deferred to the October meeting and that CAB adjourns. Ms. Cragan moved for adjournment, Ms. Jackson seconded the motion.

Next Public CAB Meeting: October 20, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ava Holly Berland

