

WTTW COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES of the
PUBLIC MEETING of the
WTTW Community Advisory Board (CAB)
Tuesday, October 21, 2014
WTTW Studios
5400 N St. Louis Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

The Chair found a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

Self-introductions were made by the following present members of the Community Advisory Board:

Joseph Morris, Chairman
Jeff Berkowitz
Helen Bracey
Yvette Brown
Leatrice Campbell
Barbara Cragan
Jan Goldstein
Ron Kurzejka
Lennette Meredith
Mary Lou Mockus
Eb Moran
Sharon Meroni
Heather Penn
Maggie Steinz
Renee Summers
Norma Sutton
Arlene Swartzman
Chet Szerlag
Rita Tandaric
Felicia L. Townsend

In addition, self-introductions were made by the following present persons:

V.J. McAleer, Sr. Vice President of WWCI for Production and Community Partnerships and
Management Liaison
Mr. Michael Gonzalez, WTTW Board of Trustees Member

Finally, self-introductions were made by the following present members of the public:

Ralph Rivera, IL Family Institute
Denise Avant, CAB candidate
Joe Bosco, CAB candidate
Peggy Radenako

Following self-introductions, Ms. Meredith mentioned the attendance of the two CAB candidates. Also, the Chair mentioned and introduced the attendance of Mr. Rivera, representative of the Illinois Family Institute. Mr. Rivera presented an opposing perspective on the recently aired program, "POV: After Tiller."

Approval of Minutes

The Chair requested approval of the August 2014 Minutes. Ms. Cragan so moved; Mr. Vaughn seconded the motion; and the minutes were adopted unanimously.

Adoption of the Agenda.

The Chair requested adoption of the agenda. Ms. Meroni so moved; Ms. Tandaric seconded the motion; and the Agenda was adopted unanimously.

Public Comment

At the Chair's invitation, Mr. Rivera offered his commentary on the recently televised program, "POV: After Tiller." In addition to his oral commentary, Mr. Rivera submitted a written statement, a copy of which is attached.

Responding to Mr. Rivera, Mr. Berkowitz asked whether the station had been contacted regarding, or considered presenting, additional programming from a pro-life perspective to balance the aired program. Sharing her family's experience with a cherished Downs Syndrome sibling, Ms. Campbell wondered how the suffering of the aborted child could be shown on film. Ms. Rademaker observed that this program is clearly presented as a "point of view" and is just that.

Mr. Rivera concluded by stating he recognized and appreciated WTTW's generally balanced presentations. Mr. Berkowitz asked if Dan Soles had been contacted. Mr. Gonzalez addressed Mr. Rivera, stating his appreciation for this expression of public comment, and addressed Mr. Berkowitz' concern, by noting he "will make sure he talks to Dan Soles regarding the need to respond and strive for balance."

Trustees' Liaison

Mr. Michael Gonzalez expressed his pleasure attending the CAB Meeting.

Management Liaison

In anticipation of the up-coming elections, Mr. McAleer reported that preparation for candidate forums were progressing.

Also, Mr. McAleer noted the continuation of the monthly series of segments -- produced in collaboration with the Catalyst, the Chicago Sun-Times and the Chicago History Museum -- which are posted on the WTTW Web Page.

Finally, responding to an inquiry, Mr. McAleer stated that the much anticipated "Nature Cat" series "is moving along."

Officers' and Committees' Reports

1) Chairman

The Chair began noting his recent appearance on "Chicago Tonight" as a commentator on recent Supreme Court decisions. In passing, the Chair mentioned that he had a cordial conversation with Carol Marin. Ms. Marin expressed her appreciation for CAB's interest in and observations regarding "Chicago Tonight." Also, the Chair thanked Mr. Rivera for his thoughtful comments.

The Chair then turned to the planning for the preparation of the 2014 Annual Report, outlining the following themes that require attention: (1) defining our diverse public's needs in terms of education and culture; and (2) consideration of the main areas studied throughout the year in order to present a report reflecting the consensus achieved, along with any minority report in disagreement. The Chair stated that he will strive to circulate a Draft Report around November 1st, and requested Members' review and edits in text. He then proposed meeting on November 11th at 6:00 p.m. to address the Draft. He noted that attending members will be responsible for providing any refreshments, and that no minutes will be taken.

Also, the Chair called attention to the document, "WTTW NEWS STANDARDS," distributed at the outset of the meeting. He thanked Mr. McAleer for pursuing the CAB's request to provide this document. The Chair proposed the formation of a committee to study, and consider as appropriate any revisions, to the standards – and volunteered to lead the committee.

2) Membership

Ms. Sutton reported that an ad hoc group of several CAB Members met on September 13th at Ms. Berland's home, for the purpose of considering the membership application and recruitment process. Further, Ms. Sutton reported that the group reached a consensus that: (1) the Bylaws, as written regarding membership criteria, afford the Committee flexibility in evaluating candidates to ensure that CAB represents the community served by WTTW; and (2) the current nomination process is and has generally worked well. Thus, they recommended no revisions to the current Bylaws and the nomination process.

The Chair commended the group, and observed that the current process has worked well as evident by the composition of CAB. Whereas there may never be a "perfect mix," the Chair remarked, "we have achieved a pretty darn good mix." The Chair offered to withdraw the Morris/Mockus proposed "Resolution on Guidance for the Membership Committee, in favor of the group's recommendation. The Chair noted that the application will be revised as to reflect attendance requirements and meeting evenings (third rather than second Tuesday of the month.)

Finally, Mr. Bosco was nominated and accepted by unanimous vote for membership on the CAB.

3. Program Committee

Ms. Cragan reported that the Chair’s proposal for the station to adopt a Content Acquisition Agenda had been forwarded to Mr. Dan Soles, Senior Vice President and Chief Television Content Officer. Mr. Soles had responded with a thoughtful analysis and explanation of the process the station employs. Ms. Cragan distributed copies of Mr. Soles’ reply, a copy of which is attached.

Ms. Townsend submitted a program proposal recommending that “Chicago Tonight” produce a segment addressing transferable skills in the professional job market, a copy of which will be included with these minutes. Mr. McAleer responded, and a copy of his written response is attached.

4. Outreach Committee

Ms. Meroni announced that the committee will meet in November.

5. Technology Committee

Ms. Brown reported that the committee is developing another information presentation.

6. Cultural Research and Development Committee

Mr. Berkowitz announced the committee will meet in November.

7. Education Committee

Ms. Steinz reported that the Committee met with Carmen Schmidt, Education Outreach Director for WTTW. According to Ms. Steinz, the meeting resulted in a superb review of PBS’ and WTTW’s extensive resources available to educators, parents and students. Ms. Stein also referenced the Committee’s on-going and expanding work with First Robotics. Finally, she elaborated on the increasing focus on civics education, long a serious concern of the committee.

Old Business: The Chair suggested that his “Resolution on Adoption of a Content Acquisition Agenda,” and Mr. Soles’ response, be held in abeyance until Mr. Soles joins CAB for the February meeting.

The Chair also plans to re-send the link to Ms. Penn’s technology tutorial, presented to CAB earlier this year.

New Business: None

Next Public CAB Meetings: November 11 and December 16, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lou Mockus
Vice Chairman

Attachments:

Mr. Rivera's Statement

Mr. Soles' Response to Content Acquisition Proposal

Job Market Program Proposal

Mr. McAleer's Response to the Program Proposal