

MINUTES OF THE WLRN
COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (CAB)
MEETING
November 10, 2005

CALL TO ORDER: Frederick “Buck” Thornburg, CAB Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

CAB Members, WLRN staff and guests in attendance: Buck Thornburg, Patricia Maldonado, James Swain, Arlington Sands, Peggy Hall, Jackie Esco, Ted Eldredge, Alan Greer, John LaBonia, Bernadette Siy, Melissa Bert, Joan Robbins, Blair Walker, Al Jones, Marie Ines Castro, Ron Levitt, Robert Goddard, Darrell Payne, Adrienne Kennedy, Betsy Kaplan, Larry Smith, David Young, David LeRoy, Kristen Kuebler.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made and seconded to approve minutes from the previous special meeting (09-8-05). CAB members present approved the minutes.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: John LaBonia said that WLRN contracted with research firm TRAC Media to conduct audience research studies for both the radio and television stations to find out how we can better serve our communities. TRAC Media has been conducting their studies for about a year consisting of telephone, on-line, member and face-to-face surveys.

David LeRoy and Kristen Kuebler presented a brief summary of their ‘listening projects’. They said that the study included 400 respondents to a telephone survey, radio and television member mail survey, an Internet survey and face-to-face interviews with viewers and listeners. Data collected is presented in four separate reports.

Results show that viewership for Channel 17, the secondary station in the market, has shown significant increase while competing with the primary station WPBT. That situation is extremely unusual. Most PBS stations nationwide are experiencing a downward trend in viewership while Channel 17’s numbers have increased, especially in primetime. Other interesting items to note: WLRN-TV has a large African-American viewership; in Miami-Dade, the proliferation of Hispanic cable and satellite channels has a significant effect on the number of Hispanic viewers for public television; majority of the viewers like the diversity in programming; the TV station offers a wide variety of genres; and WLRN-TV is perceived as having significant impact on the community.

For radio, the results show that largest listenership is from Broward and appeal is mainly to whites and African Americans. The surveys also showed that exposure to a college education increased the likelihood that a person would listen to public radio and age was not a factor; people who listen want more news. WLRN radio is also perceived as a powerful community resource.

Complete results of the TRAC surveys will be posted on the WLRN website. Bound reports will also be circulated to the School Board and other interested constituents and will be presented to appropriate media.

STATION REPORT: Buck Thornburg asked John LaBonia to give a short report on special programs that were presented after the hurricanes. John mentioned two special radio call-in programs that were well received by listeners. He also said that parents always thank us for the children’s programming on Ch17. Ted Eldredge added that the last Arbitron radio survey shows that the listeners from Palm Beach County are at the highest numbers in the history of the station. It has doubled since the last radio survey.

ISSUES AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE: Darrell reported that he did a presentation with the Perrine/Cutler Ridge Council that was very well received. The feedback showed that members were listeners and viewers. There was even one council member who enjoyed the school board meetings stating that, being way down south, this was a way for the community to stay connected.

The outreach committee would appreciate any referrals for presentations. He currently has contacts with Chamber South, American Business Women's Association, Homestead Chamber of Commerce, Women' Chamber of Commerce, Miami Dadeland Pinecrest Rotary, Coral Gable Chamber of Commerce, Miami-Dade Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (will circulate survey), and the SFL Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The Hispanic Affairs Advisory Board and the Doral Rotary would like presentations scheduled in January or February.

Blair Walker said he has been in touch with the Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce and they are interested in meeting regarding a presentation.

Ron Levitt suggested making a presentation to the South Florida Press Club to present the results of the TRAC survey.

Melissa Bert reported that she worked with station staff to update the CAB section of the website. The CAB survey is now featured more prominently and is easily accessible. A new WLRN website will be launched soon. It was suggested that the survey be included in the Friends of WLRN e-newsletter that is circulated to station members. Melissa also suggested that sub-committee meetings be posted as well if scheduled in advanced.

MISSION STATEMENT: James Swain reported that the committee has had several meetings and are close to bringing a draft of the statement to the CAB. The mission statement will include the concept of the CAB as a diverse group with the overarching goal to ensure that the station continues to produce relevant, high quality programs and also to define the board's role as advisors. Also to be incorporated will be the member role as watchdogs for adherence to the Editorial Integrity Policy and as a sounding board for feedback from the community. Also to be included is the role of the CAB in the delivery of the Annual Programming Report for the Stations. Anyone with suggestions for areas that need to be covered in the mission statement, please email him.

Buck Thornburg asked John LaBonia to give a brief report regarding storm damage to the stations. John said that the downtown facilities sustained mostly satellite dish damage to equipment on the roof. There was also significant damage to a tower in Broward that is presently undergoing repairs.

John also talked about plans to construct a new 100,000-watt FM radio station in the Keys to be funded through PTFP federal grants with matching funds from the State of Florida.

NEW BUSINESS: Darrell Payne invited the CAB members to a get together on December 1st from 6 – 8pm. John LaBonia said that WLRN will host a luncheon in recognition of Darrell Payne's role as past chair of the CAB.

Buck stated that focus of the next meeting on January 12th will be to educate the board about the stations and how they operate plus the discussion of the mission statement.

The meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.