

## Student Media Board

October 9, 2015

### Those in attendance:

Norma Young, Katie B. Evans, Spencer Smith, Lorie Bednar, Marissa Barnhart, Buddy Candela, Vivian Feke, Ryan Dunn, Julio Salazar, Utkarsh Menon, Anna Hoffman, Hannah Armenta, Emily Mills, Susan Zake, Kristan Dolan, Erik Alexeff, Kim Winebrenner, Samuel Hersh, Cindy Kristof, Bruce Zake, Gary Hanson, Kristen Traynar, Dan LeBeau, Mitch McKenney, Nancy Sinning, Ian Klein, Thor Wasbotten, Gretchen Dworznik, Mark Goodman, Mark Turner, Kevin Dilley, and Tami Bongiorno.

Meeting called to order by Della Marie Marshall. Marshall commended the turnout for the first Student Media Board (SMB) meeting. Mark Goodman reminded those in attendance that these meetings are open to the public. Everyone introduced themselves to those in attendance and stated whether they were voting or non-voting member.

Thor Wasbotten briefly explained how the board became one. Wasbotten explained how the merge occurred and the position of Director of Student Media developed. Wasbotten said every person in the room had part of helping the process. Wasbotten thanked everyone for their commitment to follow through on the project.

Marshall asked the Student Media Board to pick up the policies of the board. She said this will aide in answering questions regarding the board and its duties.

Marshall asked for a nomination for a chairperson to serve for the SMB. Della Marie is convening the meeting due to CSI being closely affiliated with student fees. Goodman nominated Susan Zake. Susan accepted. Marshall asked if there were any other nominations. None were given. Goodman motioned that Susan to become the chairperson of the board. Cindy Kristof seconded. All voting members all were in support, 10 unanimous. No opposition. Approved. Marshall then turned over the meeting to Susan.

Susan then asked the attendees to approve the minutes from the April 16, 2015 meeting. Marshall motioned to approve the minutes as provided. Wasbotten seconded. No opposition. Approved. Minutes approved unanimously.

Susan introduced Kevin Dilley to give his first Director's report. Dilley thanked everyone for coming and encouraged everyone to ask questions as he covers the focus areas that he will discuss.

Dilley stated he has four areas that he wants to focus on.

1. Clarity of Mission
  - Student Media currently does not have a mission statement.
    - i. Dilley is going to facilitate a discussion to create a mission
  - Each media unit currently has one or more, need to better define what the mission is.
2. Revenue and savings
3. Ideas and execution
  - Dilley stated that some of these ideas have already been discussed, especially in the task force meetings. He is going to help execute these ideas into reality.

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### 4. Data

- Dilley stressed the importance of data and how we are going to collect, build and utilize all data to better share our progress and gain more revenue and savings.

Dilley stated these are the main focus ideas that he has. This is not his vision or strategy; this is how he will get started to create this vision.

Big Numbers: Dilley stated he likes to tell stories based off of what we are starting with. Dilley explained the give back process from the Student Media units. Dilley explained that due to good fortune, such as give backs, both from the University HR and the media units, additional allocations and increased summer revenue, that we are now \$175 in the black as opposed to \$23,000 in the red that was approved from the last board meeting in April.

Norma Young briefly explained the vacation accrual give back to the newsroom that was just under \$7,000. Susan asked if this money is something that should happen more often. Young explained that her salary used to come from the newsroom budget. These funds were those set aside for vacation and sick time. Once her salary was moved to the business manager account, the University then refunded the additional money set aside to the newsroom. Young stated that now all non-student salaries are located outside of the newsroom account. Young said that even without that additional money, the Stater broke even for the summer.

Dilley explained the three accounts for Student Media – Contingency, Innovation and Capital accounts and stated what their balances were.

Dilley explained that he would like to find a way to fund this Innovation account. Dilley stated he would like some guidelines from the board for what they see fit for use of spending the Innovation funds. Goodman asked if Dilley would just like a set of rules or policy from the board. Dilley confirmed. Wasbotten asked what the process was for accepting proposals and reminded the board that anything over a certain amount must be approved by the board. Susan suggested a subcommittee of board members and students to gather ideas of guidelines. Goodman stated that he would not have a good understanding of what proper guidelines would be. Marshall cautioned the use of that money needs a way to be replenished. Marshall stated that the subcommittee needs to place a possibly policy or reimbursing the account for money used. Bongiorno stated that in March, the budget subcommittee placed a cap that the Innovation account must not dip below \$50,000. Wasbotten stated that there really is half of the fund that is available for students and the director to access. Bongiorno said in order for the fund to go below the set \$50,000, that a replenish method must be in place. Dilley stated that all of these points were helpful. McKenney asked if there was a policy in place to access this money quickly. Marshall said that it could easily be an email to members for approval. This will allow students to access the funds without the necessity of a full board meeting. Goodman stated he would like some guidelines in place before the money starts being utilized. Susan said maybe writing a purpose statement or mission for this money may help accessing the funds required for a designated project.

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Susan said that it usually costs money to make money and that this account was also designated for the incoming director to make some changes.

Dilley asked for a small group to create guidelines to present to the board for approval. Dilley, McKenney, Susan, Bongiorno, and Sinning all offered to serve. All student leaders offered to serve as well. Dilley said that he would like to meet once and get it quickly to the board. Dilley will set up a meeting soon.

Dilley then moved on to the projected deficit for Fiscal Year 2017 which is \$40,000. This is if we do not get any additional revenue, allocation, etc. The reason to share is not to decide what to do today, but to try and find a way to overcome this projected outcome. Dilley said this could be paid out of the Contingency or Capital fund, but he would like to find a way to avoid this.

Mark Turner asked if we budget for give backs. Bongiorno stated that we do not currently budget for give backs. Goodman explained that the give backs go back to the main fund to be reallocated. The University does not take back allocations that are given. Bongiorno explained that any additional revenue that a unit achieves remains with the unit and does not have to be given back. Dilley stated that he would like to work forward to create strategies to overcome the deficit.

Dilley turned the meeting over to Bongiorno to give a revenue update. Bongiorno stated that the sales team increased the summer revenue by 10% which allowed Student Media to break even. Bongiorno said that this year's Stater Homecoming issue was \$4,000 more in revenue than last year. This Homecoming edition was one of the largest in nearly a decade. Bongiorno said that the Stater is already past 40% to goal, BSR is 183% past goal and TV2 and KW are currently both past 50% to goal. Bongiorno stated that we are nearing the mid-semester point and almost all units are beyond 50% to goal.

Goodman asked what we can attribute this success to. Bongiorno stated that the addition of Dilley to the office has freed her up to attend more Kent Chamber events, visit clients more often and allow her to focus on her duties instead of being spread across two separate job functions. Bongiorno also said that the smaller staff is attributing to being more focused. Spencer Smith stated that he thinks the clients prefer the smaller staff. He stated that the staff is working together better and know the media well. Smith also stated that Bongiorno was able to spend more time with the staff now that the director position has been filled. Bongiorno agreed that having a full time professional staff has allowed for much more to get done.

Bongiorno explained the changes made to the distribution of both the Stater and the magazines across campus. She described the difference between last year's distribution and this coming year's distribution. Bongiorno said prior pick up of the Stater was 78% which is above the college newspaper average of 70%, but she stated that the distribution on campus needed cleaned up. Previously, contact was not made with the buildings having racks and that some of the drop points were no longer open. Bongiorno explained the policy she put in place to better inform the distribution point of their responsibilities and the general maintenance procedures in place. Bongiorno also said that Stater audits now occur monthly instead of only once a semester. After these changes, the Stater pick up rate is now more than 83%.

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Bongiorni then covered the audit/policies that the magazines now have for distribution. After the policies went into place, the pick up of the magazines went from 50% to more than 70%. Bongiorni stated that Student Media is much more accountable and now has data to better support the magazines when printing is being discussed in terms of quantity. Bongiorni explained the usage of Fleet Services for golf cart rental and that the magazines now also have monthly audits like the Stater. Bongiorni said that distribution is now closer in line with the image that Kent State Student Media wants the readers to have of us.

Dilley then started covering several cost savings that we have found over the summer. Dilley stated although most of the savings are small, when placed together they do add up. Examples are elimination of several unused phones, fax numbers and services that were duplicated such as the email blast services. Dilley said that innovation is not only large things, it is also small things. Dilley then turned over the conversation to Katie Evans to discuss the new display sheet process that is currently saving Student Media more than \$450 per year and growing beyond that as well. Evans explained that the display forms were carbon copied and then proceeded throughout an elaborate filing system. Evans explained how the new digital process now produces these sheets at a fraction of a cent. Evans also stated that the sheets are now on the server, which allows for any mistakes or problems to be solved remotely. Evans then went on to explain how we are the first Student Media to really undertake this in-house. Bongiorni stated that CMBAM, the national Student Media organization that she is the president of, is comprised of more than 140 member schools and that Kent State is currently the only school doing the sheets digitally at this time. Dilley stated that the innovation of this is worth just as much if not more than the money saved. Evans said our goal would be to be paper-free by fall 2016.

Dilley then covered several slides detailing the industry print revenue trends as well as Kent State Student Media's trend. Wasbotten asked Mark Turner if this is similar to what is occurring at the Akron Beacon Journal (ABJ). Turner replied absolutely. Dilley then showed the board the allocation of the newsroom over the past five years. Goodman asked for an explanation of the allocation. Dilley explained that the allocation amount is directly from student fees and then each media unit is given an allocation amount to supplement their budget. Dilley showed the trend of campus, local and national advertising for the Stater. Dilley said this directly mirrors the industry trend. Dilley showed a slide that shows the decline of print advertising and the digital revenue that is coming in. Dilley explained that the digital is not coming in fast enough to compensate the decline in print. Wasbotten asked about the steep decline that occurred in 2013 for digital revenue. Evans and Bongiorni stated this was the housing crisis that occurred at Kent State. The Kentcribs and App revenue dropped significantly due to apartment complexes not having to advertise due to extreme demand.

Kevin moved on to the digital potential and what it can do for us in the future. Dilley said that even though our digital increase is slow, it is increasing. Wasbotten asked if the ABJ is experiencing the same. Turner confirmed that digital definitely does not pay the bills. Turner went on to explain that the engagement of the readers is the key to getting more revenue. Turned stated that strategy is having to be discussed and planned for as the shift moves from print to digital. Dilley said that Student Media will be doing the same. Dilley said that the cocurricular aspect of our world makes

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this discussion more important and difficult at the same time. Dilley said we need to follow the audience in order to follow the money. Dilley then spoke of the importance of mobile. Dilley said we have to be more focused on mobile since that is where our audience is. Dilley said that Student Media is the real world and that we need to approach it the same as the industry. He said mobile is the next wave of how people receive information, it is no longer a laptop. Dilley said we need to develop a strategy that is best for the students and the best for Student Media.

Dilley said that we are already moving forward with new ideas for revenue. He said that the office, newsroom and leaders met two weeks ago and developed sponsored tweets which was launched today. Expected income is nearly \$7,000 although Dilley stated that we may not hit that at the start simply because that is how the market is. Dilley said this is how fast we need to move. Dilley spoke of readership studies that will take place, including one that already occurred for the Burr that we are just waiting on the results. Dilley said data and web design rethinks are currently in action. He said that these are student-led and student-thinking because they are the ones that are going to lead us there. Dilley said that collaboration is also part of this discussion.

Dilley said that his next step as a director is to develop and facilitate the strategy that will connect these pieces together in order to be fiscally responsible and the best experience for the students. He plans on involving everyone for this direction. Dilley ended with "if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together." Dilley thanked everyone and asked if there were questions.

Susan asked to then move on to the election of the Fusion editor. Bruce Zake stated the problems finding an editor. Kieran Bindus has been acting as interim editor in the meantime. Bruce said that it was extremely hard to find an editor for Fusion, but was lucky to engage Kieran in a discussion about it in the ESL. Bindus spoke about being a grad student, an employee of KSU and how has previously worked for Fusion. Susan asked for a motion. Goodman motioned. Cindy Kristoff seconded. Wasbotten asked if because Kieran graduates in December, can they continue in the Spring? Goodman stated no. Bruce said that plans are in place due to this. Bindus explained that there is a managing editor and is training someone to be a successor. Bindus plans on continuing to help Fusion in the spring since will still be employed by Kent State. Bongiorni stated that the Fusion editor would be in the leader selection this fall for someone to run for spring 2016 only. Goodman asked for an amendment to the motion that Bindus only be for the Fall 2015. Marshall seconded. Kristof stated that Bindus has been employed by University Libraries for some time and is an excellent choice. All approved, non opposed. Motion passed.

Wasbotten stated we currently are seeking three advisers for Student Media, two of them being a cocurricular units. The units are A adviser, Stater adviser and Burr adviser for Spring. McKenney (Stater) is utilizing his professional leave and Ann Schierhorn (A) has retired. He is talking with the faculty next Friday to see who may be interested in serving in these roles. He asked for emails and requests for suggestions.

Dilley explained the specifics of the capital purchase requirements for the television studio. The equipment is currently 9 years old and is quickly depleting its life line. Tech has been currently been band-aiding the equipment to get by day-to-day. Dan LeBeau created a spreadsheet of the items needed and he also further listed them in order of importance. The top three items are critical

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needs. Wasbotten explained that funding is divided amongst Student Media and JMC depending on the amount of time and use of each piece. Wasbotten said that funding will come from different places depending on what equipment is fixed. Dilley said that these needs do not approach the larger issues of the aging studio, just those items that are needed to keep it working this fall. Dilley said that Student Media can contribute \$35,000 to the equipment without setting the accounts back. JMC can do \$25,000 as long as it fits with the picture of what we would purchase 2-3 years from now. Wasbotten said the faculty and college will regroup what the master plan is moving forward. The group is currently meeting with Mark Bussey to lay out the needs of the studio. There is also a smaller group that plan on visiting Ball State to view their studio.

Wasbotten is visiting Syracuse this weekend and plans on touring their studio. Gary Hanson visited News Channel 5 although said it is hard to decipher the difference between a professional studio and an educational one. Hanson said that we should visit Ohio University as well since they just redid their studio. Goodman asked what account would pay for this. Dilley said it would come from the Capital account which currently has a balance of \$224,000. Dilley said it would be a multi-year loan instead of one hit. Goodman asked LeBeau for the critical items' prices to better understand what we are undertaking. LeBeau said \$80-90k for the first item which is a video server that will last about 6-8 years. The second item is a graphic system which is roughly \$55k and will also last 6-8 years. The third system is the virtual set which ranges from \$80-120k. A hard set would be about \$125k. The final aspect are cameras which run roughly \$30k each. Goodman stated that \$35k won't even touch one of these things. Dilley said with the conjunction of the school, Student Media and possibly the college, will not provide enough to cover the costs. Marshall asked if she could first check on the status of missing equipment which was a reoccurring problem in the spring. LeBeau said the former Student Resource Lab is now the ESL. It now has procedures, security cameras and policies that has eliminated all problems. Bindus confirmed that this process is working well. Susan stated that the equipment Marshall is referring to is Student Media equipment that is not housed in the ESL due to its accessibility to Student Media students. LeBeau said he would like it all under one place, but it is simply not feasible.

Marshall asked if the needs on the list are brand new. LeBeau said that they are new, but are actually down-grades to what we have now. He said we have six servers that currently run together. LeBeau said they are selecting smarter choices and are only listing what is realistic to what the studio needs at this time. Marshall stated that she thought we had decided to go with a hard set since we didn't have the funds to continue with the virtual set. Susan was wondering if there are other options such as donations. LeBeau stated that Sports Time Ohio (STO) has now become Fox Sports. The CCI dean asked STO to keep us in mind if they plan on eliminating their old set.

Wasbotten said there are opportunities for the studio to be rented out which could bring in income. The problem we run into is that the studio is continually used all day for classes and Student Media. Wasbotten said renting is a great opportunity for us to recoup some of this money needed to upgrade and fix the studio.

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Dilley said that Student Media does have a plan if there is an emergency situation and if the money is needed quickly. Goodman stated that these Student Media accounts are for all of Student Media, not just one media unit. This would be unfair to the other units to pull all of the money from these accounts.

Wasbotten said they had found a possible donor, but it did not pan out. Wasbotten sought a naming right for the studio. He said that it is extremely difficult to get money for equipment. Donations are typically for scholarships or something that goes directly to the students. The studio needs nearly 2 million dollars. This is not an easy task. Wasbotten said that we may need to look at other options to ensure students can still operate just on a much smaller level. Wasbotten is concerned that we could not teach a full production class. Susan stated that recruitment would also be hit. Wasbotten said they are trying to raise money, it is just coming in slowly and not at the level we need. Nancy Sinning was wondering if we can lease the equipment as opposed to buying. Wasbotten said there is nothing stated that says that we can't. Although he said that a loan for 1.7 million dollars is not an option since it would be leveraging our students and taking a risk of the possibility of incoming money to go down.

Wasbotten mentioned that he would like to lease the space out to outside uses. This could bring money in to replace the equipment. He stated that we could place a set in the newsroom and a temporary small control room. He said we could do the newscast up in the newsroom and that would free up the studio for other uses. Susan confirmed that this would not necessarily take away time from the students. Wasbotten said only moving the news would still allow TV2 to utilize the studio for the original programming. He stated this also allows for us to have two studios and two control rooms. Wasbotten said that if it were approved the move forward, it would be done correctly and would result in a smarter and better investment for both the school and TV2. He said this will create a flexibility for us to bring in revenue. Wasbotten said this could also result in more work for our students as the clients coming in would hire our students as crew.

Vivian Feke stated that she would want to produce a show from a full fledged newsroom, not a small compact mini control room. Kristan Traynor asked if our newsroom could even handle that type of space takeover. Wasbotten said that control rooms could easily be placed within an office of his size. Wasbotten said that we could fit a 4-person desk and a separate control room within what we are working with. He stated that it would be done professionally and with the students in mind.

Marshal wants bottom line costs and a committee to work on the proposals. Marshall stated that the discussion is great to have, but in reality we do not have the funds. Goodman wants something in writing for the second studio costs. Wasbotten stated that he and Dilley are serving on a committee with Bussey and the tech crew of the University. Dilley wants the board to be aware that Student Media needs to be part of an emergency plan to fix this immediate problem.

Goodman won't approve money without proposal but needs to see something in writing for specifics. Dilley stated that we are working day-to-day with the equipment and it could fail at any time. Susan asked if there is a deadline. Wasbotten said we should know more within 2-3 weeks. We know what's needed, but we do not currently have the money to do anything.

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Susan wanted to know if we seeking a traditional control room or something above that. Wasbotten said the committee is to plan an emergency back up if it fails tomorrow. Susan asked if there are students currently on this committee. Wasbotten said Bussey did not ask for students. Susan stated that we need to get their perspective. Wasbotten will ask Bussey if he is open to inviting students.

Marshall motioned that a subcommittee be pulled together to gather figures and create the total investment and make a proposal of what is needed and done. Goodman amended that Student Media Board be added to this committee. Susan asked for for approval. All approved. No opposed. Motion passed.

Dilley stated the last item could be sent via email. Dilley said the proposal is a purchase of a golf cart to make distribution more efficient and for promotion marketing for all media units. He said we are not seeking an expensive solution just something more reasonable. The idea is that we already have a \$4,000 delivery fund that was approved last spring. This proposal is a one-time purchase and will not require any additional board funding. Dilley stated that Fleet Services continually becomes a scheduling issue resulting in us not getting on stands.

Bongiorni confirmed that this does not require additional funds. She said the purchase would only take a little more than half of this delivery fund, leaving well enough funds to handle the maintenance work for the cart. Bongiorni stated she spoke with the fire marshal and that we could store the cart at the loading dock without breaking any codes. We would not have to provide or schedule any of the training with the University. Bongiorni stated that in the past six semesters we have spent more than \$2,800 with Fleet Services. Susan then pointed out that this would be a cost-justified purchase which in turn could then be used for a variety of uses than just distribution. Bongiorni confirmed. Bongiorni stated that an audit for the magazines on a cart takes roughly seven hours. By car, a magazine audit can take more than 17-1/2 hours. Wasbotten also stated that the University is about to undertake some major construction which would also hinder us using a regular vehicle. Bongiorni stated that she has all of the numbers and Dilley will send it to the board for review.

Susan asked if there was any additional business. Marshall motioned to adjourn. Kristof seconded. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.