

Minutes for the regular National Finance Committee meeting June 27, 2023.

Meeting convened at 8:36 PM (ET) a quorum being present, the Chair and Secretary being present.

Attending: Sharon Adams, Elizabeth von Gunten, Kamau Harris, Julie Hewitt, Kim Kaufman, R. Paul Martin (Secretary), James McFadden, Sean Kelly McPherson, James Sagurton (Chair) also attending were Pacifica Executive Director Stephanie D. Wells and Director of Engineering and Compliance, Jon Almeleh.

Agenda:

1. Convene meeting
2. Roll call
3. Adopt agenda
4. Minutes (5 minutes)
5. Recent Issues with *Great Plains*, Director of Engineering and Compliance, Jon Almeleh (15 minutes)
6. Report from the Executive Director (30 minutes)
7. Adjourn no later than 10:15 PM (ET)

Motion: (James Sagurton) “To adopt the agenda.” (Passed without objection)

The Committee discussed the motion.

Minutes 8:38 PM (ET)

Motion: (R. Paul Martin) “To approve the minutes of the June 13, 2023, meeting.” (Passed without objection)

Recent Issues with *Great Plains*, Director of Engineering and Compliance, Jon Almeleh 8:40

The Director of Engineering and Compliance told the committee, “This is the history of Pacifica and *Great Plains* and the issues we have had with it in the last year. This should hopefully support your narrative:

“Microsoft *Great Plains* has been used as Pacifica’s accounting system since before I was hired, in 2006. KPFK’s IT specialist who worked for the station since 2003, was hired to handle the national servers/*Great Plains* and other IT in 2015.

“In 2018, Pacifica’s server hardware running *MS server 2003*, which resided at the National Office in Berkeley, was upgraded as those computers were very old and needed to be replaced. Pacifica could not afford the licenses for newer versions of *Great Plains* which is now known as

Microsoft Dynamics. Our existing version *Great Plains 2016* needs to run on a *MS Server 2003*. For security reasons *Great Plains* needed to be run in a *MS Server 2003* virtualized environment under *MS Server 2012*, which made the upgrade complicated and more costly than if we had just been able to run it under *MS Server 2012*.

“Also in 2018 NETA was contracted to provide financial oversight for Pacifica’s business operations and audits. They were unfamiliar with *Great Plains 2012* and used to *MS MAS 500*. So our Business Managers would enter data in *Great Plains 2016* and NETA would export the data and import it into *MAS 500*.

“In 2020 when the national office was sold, the national servers which hosted *Great Plains* were moved from Berkeley to KPFK’s building. In May 2021, the KPFK/National Office IT person left Pacifica. We were without a national IT person until April 2022.

“In October, 2021 a consultant was hired to restructure KPFK’s network and bring down Internet and Phone system costs. The individual arrived at KPFK in January 2022, to reconfigure these services and the network. What he found was that nothing was labeled and it was very difficult to set things up. The National Servers were not part of that project but since the servers were housed at KPFK we found ourselves with two commingled networks.

“In April 2022, the contractor decided he was through providing support for the KPFK network/phone system.

“In October 2022, KPFK station staff made some changes to the network which entangled the KPFK and Pacifica Radio Archives networks which interfered with communications with the National Office server and *Great Plains* for about 10 or 11 days.

“I worked with KPFK staff and volunteers and we were able to detangle those two networks and found that the WIFI router was misconfigured and was also interfering with the National Office Server. Finally Fred Blair and Michael Novick were able to help me to restore the network to allow the Business Managers to connect to *Great Plains*. We hired some *Great Plains* specialists who resolved some permissions issues, created additional user accounts, helped us create the Affiliates Program Unit’s database and helped us resolve other database issues.

“Also In October 2022, NETA and Pacifica parted ways and we were left to our own financial devices.

“In January 2023 we lost connection to the sever again when someone went into the terminal room at KPFK and disconnected the cables used for the National Server from the main Ethernet switch so they could plug something else in its place. We made a rule after that that the network was not to be touched without authorization.

“In the last few months, the only problems with *Great Plains* have been resolved by rebooting processes or making configuration changes. The server hardware is now seven years old which means that it needs to be replaced. Our plan is to move the virtualization to a cloud server once

we have the funds for this project and the monthly hosting fees.”

In answer to a question the Director of Engineering and Compliance said that the last six months of difficulties with *Great Plains* impacts the National Business Manager’s job by making her play catchup. He said that not all Business Managers have been trained and the National Business Manager hasn’t been able to interface with other units with people who are not trained on *Great Plains*. He agreed that the problems were a combination of tech issues and human issues with a lack of training, lack of extra staff, etc.

In answer to a question the Director of Engineering and Compliance said that he didn’t know what the cost of putting it into the cloud would be and no quote had been received yet. He said that it might cost about \$1,000 for the initial configuration and then maybe \$600 to \$1,000 a month after that.

The committee discussed mirroring the *Great Plains* databases. The Director of Engineering and Compliance said that Pacifica was using versions of software that were from 12 to 13 years old and he didn’t know if we could sync that. He said we’d have to decide which database was the most current and that there could be issues. He said that a later version of the MS software would be great but the licenses are way more expensive than we can afford.

The committee had a further discussion of backups and mirror servers.

The Executive Director and committee members thanked the Director of Engineering and Compliance for his report.

Report from the Executive Director 9:07 PM (ET)

The Executive Director told the committee that the consolidated financials for the period ending April 30, 2023, had arrived the day before the meeting and she’d sent them to the Secretary on the day of this meeting who distributed them to the committee mailing list. She said that they’d been sent to all General Managers, etc. She said that if the General Managers needed to make changes she’d send out a revised spreadsheet.

In answer to a question the Executive Director said that the audit was ready to begin but Pacifica didn’t have the money to pay for it. She said she was in touch with the auditors. She said that Pacifica was three months behind on the interest payments for the Economic Injury Disaster Loan. In answer to a question the Executive Director said that Pacifica’s Aged Payables were about \$2.3 million, not counting Central Services that were in arrears. She said that now that the *Great Plains* issues had been resolved she was hoping that we might return to more regular financial reports so we can anticipate and review financials at the second NFC meeting of the month.

The committee discussed getting a consolidated balance sheet. The Executive Director said that it’s a matter of catching up. A committee member noted that we only got balance sheets when an audit was done.

In answer to a question the Executive Director said that we had not made any payments on the FJC loan. She said that another payment was due in three days and we didn't have the money to pay it. She said that she was keeping FJC informed. She said that we were also behind in the Economic Injury Disaster Loan payments, and that we owed three months at that point. She said that Pacifica will have four offers for the KPFK building to select from.

With regard to Aged Payables the Executive Director said that they vary. She said that a substantial amount was interest payments. She said that there were large payables to vendors on the order of \$67,000 to \$97,000 that are multiple years old, and there are also legal bills. She said that the General Counsel was not sending bills and was not in the Aged Payables. She said that almost every week a new bill pops up, usually for about \$3,000 to \$11,000. She said that maybe some fell through the cracks and stations were afraid to bring them up. She said we'd be making arrangements for payment and she was letting the bigger vendors know that we're selling a building.

In answer to a question the Executive Director said that the status of Pacific's preparations for the audit on a scale of 0 to 10 we were at about 8.5 to 9. The committee discussed the audit and the possibility of getting a grant or donation to cover it.

The committee discussed consolidating all bank accounts in Pacifica. The Executive Director said that if this does happen that every division would still have its own bank account. The Executive Director talked about having checks and balances with such a system. The Executive Director said that we should discuss consolidating bank accounts at the next meeting and she'd provide comparisons.

There was a discussion with regard to some stations almost being ready to present their FY24 budgets to the NFC.

The Executive Director talked about the necessity of sexual harassment prevention training. She said that if some people had gotten it at their workplace that they wouldn't have to do it again for Pacifica. She said that not everyone in Pacifica wants to do it, but that she wants everyone to do it. It was noted that the CPB requires it.

Motion: (R. Paul Martin) "To adjourn." (Passed without objection)

Adjourned 10:05 PM (ET)

Submitted by R. Paul Martin, Secretary.