

WBAI Treasurer's Report  
May 10, 2023

The National Finance Committee (NFC) met on April 25, and May 9, 2023. The local Finance Committee met on April 19, 2023. All of those meetings were held by teleconference.

At the April 19, 2023, local Finance Committee meeting participants discussed the intricacies of applying for CPB membership. It was noted that last year some members of the 2022, PNB had been against applying for CPB membership. We were told by Jim Dingeman that this year the 2023, PNB is in favor of joining the CPB. There was a discussion about all of the documentation that must be sent in to the CPB when trying to qualify.

The General Manager did not attend the meeting, so there was no General Manager's report. When a member contacted him he sent the committee an order form dated 12/07/2020, from the Radio Research Consortium for Nielsen Audio PPM Data. The cost of the service was quoted for five years. For 2023, the cost was to be \$14,280. The General Manager's E-mail had also included his version of the "Monthly Income Statement For the Five Months Ending Tuesday, February 28, 2023" which was very similar to the one that was produced by the National Office and which I'd sent to the LSB and local Finance Committee on April 27.

At the April 25, 2023, NFC meeting the committee held elections for officers. James Sagurton was reelected Chair and I was reelected Secretary of the committee.

The Executive Director told the committee that she and the National Business Manager had been going over the "Pacifica Foundation Consolidated Monthly Income Statement For the Five Months Ending Tuesday, February 28, 2023" with the General Managers, Business Managers and Directors. She said that there were still some questions about the coding of the revenue for some stations where almost all revenue is listed under Listener Support. She said that some stations had to make changes in their figures, but WBAI didn't have any major changes. She said that all divisions had made payroll and that all of the current health insurance premiums had been paid. She said that the National Office did have to cover some health insurance payments for some divisions and that those will need to be paid back when those divisions are able to do so. She told the NFC of all of the work that has to be done in order to apply for CPB membership.

The Executive Director noted that if Pacifica keeps approving deficit budgets we can't move forward. She said that part of station Management's job is creating a realistic budget and sticking to it. She said that if revenue goals are not made that the budgets are just on paper and are not taken seriously. She stressed the importance of putting the information on revenue and expenses in each station's accounting system. If that's not done or is delayed the state of the station's finances can't be determined. She noted that WBAI has bills entered as expenses but they're not paid and that gives a false impression of the actual financial state of the station. It makes it look as if the station has more money than it does.

The Executive Director said that there were quite a few legal bills floating around and in the previous couple of weeks Pacifica had gotten an exorbitant amount of bills from law firms, including something with regard to a case that's not even familiar to her. She said she needed

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more information and would ask Pacifica's General Counsel about the details.

The Executive Director said that an *Allegiance* bill for WBAI had been paid by donors, and now she's asking if they will pay other bills.

The Executive Director said that there were a lot of new vendors saying that Pacifica owes them money. She said that she had 100% faith that we'll get it all sorted out, but it's a minor nuisance now for the National Business Manager and herself.

The Executive Director said that she'd asked all General Managers to get their membership lists updated from March 2022, to March 2023.

It was at this meeting that authorization was given to release the "Monthly Income Statement For the Five Months Ending Tuesday, February 28, 2023."

The Executive Director told the NFC that last year the auditors had refused to be on the calls because people were questioning the ability of the auditors to do accounting. The auditors said they wouldn't have employees on those calls ever again. This is what I call a stupid, unnecessary problem for Pacifica. Too many people involved in Pacifica governance do not know how to behave themselves. The Executive Director said that just getting money to pay the auditors is a problem.

At this meeting the NFC discussed budget timelines. I was tasked with putting together a proposal for a new budget timeline to be considered at the next NFC meeting.

The May 9, 2023, NFC meeting was mostly taken up with the consideration of the draft WPFW FY23 budget proposal. During these discussions it was noted that WPFW and WBAI are collaborating and sharing resources on a number of things, including some news items from WPFW being broadcast on WBAI.

The Executive Director reported that she had successfully submitted the application for a Community Service Grant (CSG) for FY24 to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) on May 8. She said she'd gotten confirmation that the CPB had received the request and she said if the CPB has any questions they'll reach out to her in the next month or two. She said that there should be further conversations with CPB people in July and August and any announcement from the CPB will be made in October. She said that the submission was 500+ pages long and included quite a few exhibits. She noted that WBAI and WPFW have Web pages that show information about the stations and governance which is information that the CPB wants shown. She said that this needs to be implemented at all Pacifica station Web sites. She said that she has a long template of things that need to be put in place. She said that one thing that it's imperative to have but which we don't have is the ratings; a lot of funding is determined by ratings. She said that stations are not subscribed to Nielsen. As I related above, the WBAI General Manager had sent the local Finance Committee what looks like an order form for getting the Nielsen ratings. From what the Executive Director said I think that WBAI is not getting the Nielsen ratings from the Radio Research Consortium at this time. The Executive Director said that she'd told the CPB that Pacifica had stopped subscribing to the Nielsen ratings for financial reasons and so we don't have the accurate numbers that we need.

When the Executive Director was asked about getting the CPB to handle music licensing for us she said that we have to qualify for CPB membership first. She said that we need to go in

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as brand new and we need to say that we're doing what they want. She said that she gets E-mails about grants all the time, but we must be in good standing with the CPB to apply for those grants.

The Executive Director said that she and the National Business Manager now had the view-only access to all of the Pacifica bank accounts for all divisions that they had been trying to get for some time. She said that there are still issues with regard to signatories in some places because Pacifica changes the makeup of the PNB so often.

I'd sent in a draft budget timeline for FY23 for this meeting but the NFC did not get to that agenda item before adjournment time. It will probably be on the next meeting's agenda.

It's very good that Pacifica has applied for CPB membership this time. From what the Executive Director said last night it sounds like the way Pacifica is applying for CPB membership is slightly different from the way it's been done before, but that may just be a semantic issue. As mentioned in the April 12, 2023, Treasurer's Report Pacifica is applying for CPB membership, and applying for the Community Service Grant, as a network this time, as opposed to as five stations, as was done in the past. I don't know if that affects how it's all applied for.

It would be great if Pacifica did start getting the CSG, although that would probably not be possible until a year to a year and a half from now, **if Pacifica qualifies**. I really hope that the lack of Nielsen ratings doesn't sink out application.

I haven't heard of any new crises in the past month, which is good, but WPFW submitted a deficit budget, and although they expect that they will save a lot of money by moving to new premises soon they will still end up with a deficit budget for FY23, and KPFK is still not fully recovered. As I've pointed out in the past, WBAI is not self-sufficient and so must rely on the rest of Pacifica for financial help from time to time. The concerns about not being able to pay crucial bills is still there. How WBAI is going to be able to pay Central Services fees in the future is still a mystery. I am still pessimistic about the future.

The next NFC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday May 23, 2023, at 8:30 PM (ET). The next local Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 7:00 PM (ET). These meetings will be held by teleconference.

R. Paul Martin  
WBAI LSB Treasurer