

**MINUTES OF THE WLRN**  
**COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (CAB) MEETING**

**March 20, 2009**

**CALL TO ORDER:** General Manager John LaBonia called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

**CAB Members, WLRN Staff and guests in attendance:** Jo Asmundsson, Maria Ines Castro, Jacquelyn Esco, Albert Jones, Alan Greer, Betsy Kaplan, Denise Izquierdo (for Dr. Karp), Patricia Maldonado, Darrell Payne, Joan Robbins, Larry Smith, Buck Thornburg, David Young, Peter Maerz, Adrienne Kennedy, Ginette Grey, John LaBonia, Bernadette Siy, Ted Eldredge, Dan Grech and Alicia Zuckerman.

Members with excused absences: Ron Levitt, Jimmy Morales, Jeanne Westphal, Noreen Frye, Blair Walker, James Swain.

Absent members: Susan Angulo, David Berley, Dr. Robert Goddard, Alex Herrera, Gerardo Rodriguez-Menendez.

John LaBonia thanked the CAB members who volunteered to answer telephones for the radio drive. The take for the morning was around \$30k-\$40K. CAB Chair James Swain was one of the volunteers but he had to leave and could not stay for the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the previous CAB meeting held on January 22, 2009. Members present accepted and approved the minutes.

**UNDER THE SUN RADIO PROJECT:** John LaBonia stated that the two pilot programs for the WLRN radio series *Under the Sun* are completed and have premiered. The shows have received very positive feedback. An event was held at Books & Books where the producers played pieces from the programs to an audience of over 250 people. The project also received a small grant from the Florida Humanities Council.

At the CAB meeting, producers Dan Grech and Alicia Zuckerman handed out copies of the first episode of the radio program and highlighted some of the segments. The producers are hoping that the CAB members will be the ambassadors for the program and assist with getting the word out to the South Florida community and possibly assist the station with finding program support and funding.

John LaBonia said that producing quality, national programs is very expensive. The station is paying special emphasis on producing local radio and television content. He said that smaller affordable productions that have a potential for return are more likely to be produced in the future.

Al Jones asked what happened to the show *News & Notes*. John explained that NPR cancelled the series. He heard from one of the NPR board members that a main reason is that very few stations carried the program. John also stated that the NPR West bureau will be shut down as well.

Darrell Payne said he heard Tavis Smiley was coming back to the radio schedule. Peter Maerz said that Tavis has been concentrating on his TV show and that he is only producing a weekly radio program. The Tavis Smiley show airs Saturdays at 2:30pm.

**DIGITAL TRANSITION UPDATE:** John LaBonia said that the FCC has delayed the analog shut-off for television to June 12, 2009. All the local stations have agreed to keep their analog signals on until June 12<sup>th</sup> even if they are already simultaneously transmitting a digital signal.

**WLRN AUDIT:** WLRN completed their audit from M-DCPS. John mentioned that Buck Thornburg has just been appointed to the District's Audit Committee and Buck stated that the station's audit was outstanding. John said that WLRN is financially healthy and he wants it to remain that way so he is being very conservative with station spending.

**GM REPORT:** The *Muhammad Ali: Made in Miami* documentary is now being distributed through PBS Home Video and Paramount Entertainment. It has sold over 10,000 copies. WLRN has another documentary in the pipeline for national distribution entitled, "Nixon's the One: How Tricky Dick Stole the 60's."

WLRN-TV just received three Telly Awards for three local documentary productions: *Muhammad Ali: Made in Miami*, *Discover South Florida*, and *All Shook Up*.

Channel 17 will be premiering a new HD documentary presented by WLRN called *Breath of Hope*. It features new medical therapies and technologies for the treatment of a specific type of lung cancer that is highly curable. WLRN will also be distributing three local productions nationally through NETA (National Educational Telecommunications Association)—*Breath of Hope*, *Souvenirs*, and *El Sabor Tipico*. The station has committed to producing two new documentaries. The first deals with a women's homeless shelter and the second is a travelogue highlighting weird and interesting places to visit in Florida.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Bernadette Siy introduced Ready To Learn (RTL) Coordinator Lisa Bethune who invited the CAB members to attend the upcoming RTL Earth Day Open House on Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup>. She talked about the many community partners who will be participating in the event and listed the wide range of activities for children. Lisa said that she was expecting over 400 kids to visit the station. Lisa also offered to make a power point presentation at a future meeting highlighting RTL's educational outreach and community activities.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 14, 2009. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.