

VIA Community Advisory Board

Thursday, May 16, 2019 12 noon

The Community Advisory Board met at noon on May 16, 2019 at VIA. In attendance were Tom Hall (chair), Judy Hall, Elaine Herzog, Tonyehn Verkitus, George Coulter, Caryn Powers, Bill Hudon, Dick Briden and Murray Small. Absent: Tony Brooks, Linda Keene, Midori Yamanouchi. Tom Curra, Chris Norton, and Dina Orlando represented WVIA.

Tom Hall (chair) called the meeting to order, and the CAB approved minutes of the January 2019 meeting.

Chris Norton updated the CAB on the VIA Strategic Planning process that has been in progress since November. Staff members formed three teams to write goals in their areas of Development, Content, and Technology. The next step is for each staff member to propose individual goals aligning with the team goals. Meanwhile the leadership team is drafting a FY 2020 budget that reflects the organizational goals. Following board approval in June the station leadership team will begin tracking progress toward these goals throughout the fiscal year.

Tom Curra reviewed the Digital Culture Accelerator program now in progress. The leadership team has participated in regular webinars, conference calls, and face-to-face meetings with trainers and has chosen a first major project for the DCA program, learning the podcast business model in preparation to develop a podcast service.

The statewide *Battling Opioids* project continues, as VIA again took a lead role in producing Part 2 programming for statewide broadcast in April, and VIA participated in the PA Pain and Addiction Summit in Wilkes-Barre in April and the Susquehanna County SARI public meeting in May. Planning is underway for Part 3 content for September. Caryn Powers noted the credibility of reporting on the opioid crisis, including whistleblowers within the pharmaceutical industry.

Recent public service content and community engagement highlights include 4 screenings and Community Conversations with the documentary *God Knows Where I Am*, Masterpiece *Les Miserables* preview screenings with commentary by university historians, and *American Creed* political dialogues at the Albright Library. *Our Town* programs highlighted Honesdale and Nanticoke this season, with South Williamsport planned for June 17. Judy Hall asked to what degree the *Our Town* programs boost membership, and Tom Curra explained some succeed better than others, but all are intended to attract local sponsorship support as well as individual membership support.

VIA hosted the 12th Congressional District special election candidate debate May 2. VIA has been producing bi-weekly web features known as *Short Takes*, and a list of recent titles was distributed. Upcoming projects include the new radio weekly half-hour public affairs program, *Keystone Edition*, airing Sundays at 7:30 AM and 4:30 PM. VIA is planning preview screenings and community engagement activities tied into three PBS priorities over the summer: *Summer of Space* (50th anniversary of the moon landing), *Woodstock* (also 50th anniversary), and the next Ken Burns documentary *Country Music*. Dick Briden noted that the Wayne County Historical Society was collecting “I remember Woodstock” stories.

Chris Norton briefed the CAB on several community initiatives, including 3 *Victoria* preview screenings in Pittston, Lewisburg, and Tunkhannock. The February *Insider Experience* will feature upcoming PBS highlights as well as local projects. The statewide *Battling Opioids* includes the recent December broadcast, a January Community Conversation at Dallas High School for February broadcast, the premiere of the next statewide broadcast in April followed by VIA’s participation in the PA Pain and Addiction Summit at Mohegan Sun Pocono. *God Knows Where I Am* documentary screenings and community conversations happened in Selinsgrove and Danville in November and December, with two more coming in East Stroudsburg and Scranton in April and May.

The CAB reviewed notes from several “Listening Sessions” conducted by VIA and offered suggestions to Tom Hall to consider when preparing his annual report to the board about how well VIA fulfills its public service mission: ArtScene and the overall arts focus, community engagement events, public affairs programming, and national PBS and NPR content. Reviewing the calendar, the CAB selected these dates for the upcoming year’s meetings:

Thursdays **September 19, 2019** **January 16, 2020** **May 20, 2020** all at 12 noon at VIA.

The meeting was adjourned. Next meeting: **September 19, 2019** at noon at VIA.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Norton