

BCAT, Inc., Board Monthly Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Board Members present: Paul Wittman (PW), Ralph Hammond (RH), Scott Counsell (SC), Tony Melfi (TM)

Board Members attending remotely: Bob Dutton (RD)

Board Members not present: None

Staff Members present: Brian Hebert (BH)

Visitors present: None

Visitors attending remotely: None

Board Meeting held at Bedford TV Studio and virtually

General meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

Approval of BCAT Board Meeting Minutes of February 15, 2023

- The minutes of the BCAT Monthly Board meeting of February 15, 2023, were unanimously approved, pending final modifications made based on comments received via email prior to the meeting.

Executive Director Report Summary

Financial

- BH reported that as of Q3, the station is still well under budget, due to savings on salaries and health insurance. There may be an opportunity to use the surplus to invest in equipment.
- Another use of the surplus funds would be to allow our production coordinator to join BH at the Alliance for Community Media (ACM) conference in June - the station is currently budgeted for one attendee. The Board will ask BH for a request to approve this expenditure.
- BH is wrapping up purchases under the capital plan for Q4. We discussed how the procurement process with the town could be streamlined, as it has not always been smooth. The goal will be to expend all available funds during this fiscal year.
- The FY2022 tax returns and statements contained errors that are being corrected by the station's accountant.

Operations

- A new intern from Middlesex Community College has joined the staff.

Classes

- Classes are ongoing. We discussed our favorable arrangement with the Town of Bedford Recreation Department - they publicize BCAT's classes and receive 15% of class revenue, but in return the station benefits from more publicity and a higher response to class postings.
- Classes to be offered included an Introduction to Photography class, and a one-on-one editing class for a member who will be producing a nature video to be aired on the station.

Outreach

- A local realtor, Suzanne & Company, has signed on as an Elite Sponsor.
- There are currently four tiers of sponsorships: Elite, Premier, Standard & Basic. BCAT also offers sponsorships for sports coverage, BTV events and the Volunteer of the Month.
- A 'Dine & Donate' event will be held at the Chipotle Grill on June 13. And Trivia Night will be held at the Minuteman Diner on either August 24 or 31.
- We discussed other promotional initiatives, including a live YouTube stream of a sporting event at a local sponsoring venue.

Productions

- School sports being covered include baseball, softball and lacrosse. Volunteer participation for sports productions has been good.
- Government meetings are ongoing. The Council on Aging is sending recordings to the station to be posted. BH is looking into the feasibility of logging into the Zoom accounts of other town committees to retrieve their recordings and airing them.
- The March 27 Town Meeting held at the Bedford High School Auditorium will be broadcast live on YouTube and captured for playback on the station's TelVue server. There will be four camera feeds and a fifth feed for the PowerPoint presentations. The overflow room at the school will get a YouTube feed.

Strategic Planning

- BH has contacted other access stations in regard to identifying alternative funding sources - some are saving on overhead, and more stations are collecting fees. Overall, stations are reporting that cable revenues have continued their slow decline.
- BCAT's class enrollment revenues are up.
- The refurbishment of the production equipment in the Select Board Meeting Room is scheduled to take place in 2024.
- Discussions regarding the new grant agreement with the town are ongoing with Town Manager Sarah Stanton. Changes to the language have been proposed but will need to be approved.

New business

- No new station policies have been implemented, and no changes are required.
- The FY 2024 budget request is subject to funding approval at the March town meeting.
- Medical & dental insurance renewals for the station are due on March 31.
- License renewals for Comcast and Verizon are pending in 2024.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:00 PM

Executive Session: not held

Next Monthly Board Meeting: Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 7:00 PM

Prepared by: Scott Counsell, Clerk

