

KSPS Community Advisory Board Minutes – 3/9/17

Members attending in person: Shaun Higgins (Chair), Emily Geddes (Secretary), Becka Shelley, Terrie Ashby-Scott, Consuelo Larrabee

Members attending by phone: Bob Morrison

Members absent: Katy Durning (Vice-Chair), Marvo Reguindin

KSPS staff attending: Gary Stokes (General Manager), Cary Balzer (Program Director)

Public attendees: None

Opening Business

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm.

The minutes from the 2/9/17 meeting were approved (motion: Consuelo, second: Terrie). Emily will forward them to Dawn to be posted on the KSPS website, in compliance with Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) requirements, and to Linda Finney, Secretary of the Friends of KSPS board, in compliance with the bylaws.

General Manager Report

Gary reported on the recent Friends of KSPS board retreat and shared his “State of the Station 2017” presentation regarding successes, challenges, and goals for KSPS. Moving forward, there are five areas of focus for the station:

- Leverage the PBS brand to attract and grow a diverse audience
- Optimize our events and other engagement to grow the base
- Capital projects that will innovate as well as streamline costs
- Access for teachers, parents and other lifelong learners to our library of regional history
- Look for (or create) programs that allow viewers to talk to each other about key issues and concerns

The mission statement and strategic priorities were also updated. The mission statement now reads: “KSPS Public Television provides programs and events that entertain, engage and educate to enrich all the communities we serve.” The three strategic priorities are:

1. Building a foundation for a sustainable future
2. Facilitate community conversations
3. Inspire life-long learning

The station is in a pledge drive now and is currently ahead of goal by \$9,000. Pledging has done particularly well during *Victoria* and the Joe Bonamassa concert, with pledging online being robust while the phones have been quiet.

Paula Kerger, the president of PBS, will be in Spokane April 20-21. KSPS staff is working on putting together a schedule for while she’s here including a ticketed event Friday evening, an event with local college students, and taping of promos and spots.

Regarding federal funding, there are reasons to be hopeful. Gary had the opportunity to meet with Cathy McMorris Rodgers while in D.C. and shared the positive impact KSPS has on our community. A recent survey commissioned by PBS showed that 73% of Republicans support continued funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). The funding bill is currently in committee and will then be sent to the entire House for voting. KSPS will follow its progress closely throughout the process.

Unlike the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities, CPB is forward-funded. This means that even if the defunding bill passes, funding will continue through fiscal year 2019 giving KSPS some time to plan for additional income. The endowment at the Community Foundation is approximately \$700,000 which can only be used to purchase a building or if federal funding is lost.

Regarding the recent spectrum auction, Gary mentioned that KSPS will not be repacked, though we still do not know how translators will be affected.

Program Manager Report

Cary announced that *Mercy Street* will not be returning for a third season.

BBC Worldwide and ITV launched a new subscription-based streaming service called BritBox, which will provide access to iconic British TV shows and current series, with episodes available the day after airing in the U.K. The cost will be \$6.99/month and the new service will compete with Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, as well as with PBS stations. “Cord-cutting” is continuing with more consumers choosing to forego traditional pay-TV in favor of streaming services.

February 2017 ratings for PBS Newshour increased 11% over the same period last year, drawing 1.1 million viewers per episode. Ratings for broadcast network evening news decreased during that same time frame.

To celebrate Women’s History Month, KSPS World will be airing 50 films featuring women such as Alice Walker, Billie Jean King, and Mary Tyler Moore during the month of March.

Other upcoming programming includes:

- *Victorian Slum House*, a five-episode series to air on Tuesdays at 7:00 beginning May 2. Several modern British families will take up residence in a restored tenement in London’s East End to experience what life would have been like for the Victorian poor. *Hidden Killers*, a series about the dangerous substances used unknowingly during Victorian times, will run as an encore paired with *Victorian Slum House*.
- *Call the Midwife* will return for its sixth season on Sunday evenings beginning April 2.
- A two-part *Nature* series called *Dolphins: Spy in the Pod* will air May 3 and May 10, and will be paired with the two-part program *Plants Behaving Badly*.
- *Chef’s Flight* will air four episodes on Fridays in May featuring James Beard, Julia Child, Jacques Pepin, and Alice Waters.
- This Saturday for pledge there will be an all-day Rick Steves “binge” of the entire ninth season of his show.

PBS Kids 24/7 will debut in April on Comcast Cable channel 19. Some equipment must be purchased in order to move it to a 7-4 channel. Friday nights will feature *PBS Kids Family Night* movies from 7:00 to 9:00, repeated on Saturday and Sunday evenings. Gary noted that the PBS Kids phone app has a “Live” button in the upper right corner which provides access now to the east coast feed of PBS Kids 24/7.

Montana Public TV has produced a program regarding the opiate epidemic called *Painful Truth* which is being considered for airing on KSPS. KSPS is currently working on a program about the homeless issue in Spokane that will possibly air in the fall.

Other Discussion

Discussion ensued about holding a CAB meeting in a location other than the KSPS studio in order to be in compliance with our bylaws and to draw public attendees and comment from a broader portion of our viewing area. Locations should be large enough to accommodate public attendance, have video conferencing ability, and be accessible by public transportation. Libraries, community centers, universities, YMCA/YWCA, and retirement homes were suggested as possible locations. In order to publicize the change of location in Prevue and with on-air spots, the location needs to be set at least two months in advance. It was suggested that we aim for October this year, possibly at the Spokane Valley Library. Becka will speak with Nancy at the Spokane County Library System regarding that possibility and the CAB will finalize plans next month. Suggestions for future consideration included Moses Lake, Colfax, and Coeur d'Alene.

Emily noted that she enjoyed *Africa's Great Civilizations* with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Cary said it will be shown again on Sunday afternoons in April. Emily asked about the Rick Steves program on Iran available to view on his website. Cary noted that KSPS had aired it a few years ago and the rights have expired.

Becka raised the possibility of group trips as a fundraiser. Gary responded that they can be done, but are generally a lot of work for not much return, reaching only a handful of people who are likely committed KSPS supporters already. A trip including a tour of Buckingham Palace to coordinate with the second season of *Victoria* is possible.

Becka issued a challenge to CAB members to get five friends to become KSPS donors or sustainers. Gary again noted that only 10-15% of viewers support the station financially and if everyone who viewed even one program a month pledged at the basic level of \$4/month, not only would they all have access to Passport, but there would be no more need to have pledge drives.

Shaun will attend the Friends of KSPS board meeting on March 23 to report on the CAB's activities.

The next CAB meeting will be held on Thursday, April 13, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Action items

Emily:

- Forward approved February minutes to Dawn and Linda.

Becka:

- Contact Nancy at Spokane County Library system regarding meeting in October.

Shaun

- Attend the Friends of the KSPS board meeting and report on the CAB's activities

All CAB members:

- Becka's challenge – get five friends to become KSPS donors/sustainers;
- Contact your elected officials regarding the possible elimination of funding for the CPB;
- Consider what kind of locally created programming would be beneficial to the community;
- Continue gathering feedback on programming from friends, family, community members;
- Continue recruiting new applicants.