

WNIN Community Advisory Board 11/14/12 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 3:37pm. Present were:

Carol Braden Clark, United Way
Mark Miller, VECTREN
Terry Hughes, Retired EVSC
Michelle Jackson, Toyota
Linda Cleek, USI
Ella Johnson, Office of the Mayor of Evansville
David Dial, WNIN
Bonnie Rheinhardt, WNIN
Steve Burger, WNIN

David Dial announced that he will be retiring effective 6/28/13. He is not involved with the Search Committee. Dave explained that the station is in good financial and programming shape. He commented that the recent election may help the future funding of public media.

Bonnie Rheinhardt reviewed local TV content and distribution. The number of hours produced by WNIN TV decreased 9% to a total of 206.5 hours for FY-12. 80% of local content was government programming. The remaining 20% was spread between Business, Education, Culture, and Health. Mark Miller asked if the numbers reflected program hours or air hours. Bonnie answered that all numbers are production hours. It was noted that Health programming has increased over the past year. Regional Voices featured 52 hours of programming, City and County Government Meetings made up 131 hours, and 7.5 hours were election programming. The Newsmakers series ended when Mizell Stewart left town, but the last 4.5 hours were produced in FY-12. The Lawmakers series included 5.5 hours, and Building a Healthier Tri-State featured 3.5 hours. WNIN produced a one hour live forum on children's health in Henderson, KY, a one-hour Christmas music special, and a half-hour featuring returning war veterans.

FY-12 production partners included the Welborn Baptist Foundation on Building a Healthier Tri-State, USI on the Community Read project, the Raymond B. Preston Foundation in the one-hour forum, and Bosse and Reitz High Schools in the production of EVSC Community Link and Feel The History. A list of Regional Voices speakers were included for review. It was noted that many of the Regional Voices programs are Rotary speakers and the Evansville Rotary is now providing some funding for the tapings. The Women's Hospital speaker series was also included in the Regional Voices series and included funding for the production costs.

There were 131 Governmental meetings recorded in FY-12 with a total of 393 airings on WNIN Cable 12. WNIN is still programming and airing the Indiana Channel on 9.2 between 4pm and 7pm each day.

Dave Dial explained that the Healthy Evansville partnership with WNIN is a good example of Community Engagement, something the WNIN Board of Directors had endorsed last year. This project includes activities and a web site that brings people and organizations together in the efforts to improve the health of our community. He stated that WNIN's community engagement efforts are a powerful tool for important issues and that more audiences are taking notice of these efforts.

Bonnie Rheinhardt announced that WNIN recently received a grant from the Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization to create and convene a Clean Air Partnership that will guide WNIN in the production of 24 monthly, half-hour programs over a two year period. This project will educate our citizens on how they can improve the quality of our air and touch on related subjects such as recycling, planting trees, air quality reports, efforts made by local government, etc. This is another example of community engagement making a difference in our community. Dave Dial explained that WNIN is a trusted media service and audience like and appreciate the services that WNIN provides. Community Engagement is a very important part of WNIN's mission. Mark Miller stated there is a wide range of important topics that could be included in WNIN's community engagement efforts. Dave agreed and asked the Board to consider what other topics WNIN can look into.

Terry Hughes asked if WNIN had made any progress in getting the School Board to agree to the recording and airing of their meetings. Dave explained that he has discussed this with the superintendents and offered the service. Carol Braden Clark asked why the School Board has not responded positively to the request. Dave stated they had not given any reason for their decision. Mark Miller asked if WNIN could expand its government coverage into outlying towns and cities. Dave and Bonnie explained that other communities have been approached with the offer, but most are recording their own meetings with home video cameras and supplying the recordings to local cable access channels. Most are not willing to absorb any of the cost of a professional production-and WNIN is not currently equipped to air live meetings from other locations. Carol Braden Clark asked what the approximate cost is to tape the meetings. Dave replied that WNIN receives about \$30,000 per year for coverage of the local meetings. He stated that WNIN wants to provide the service but simply cannot subsidize the cost of everything. Ella Johnson announced that WOW cable recently changed the placement of WNIN's secondary channel, 9.2. Staff replied they would look into the change.

Steve presented the FM Year End report. Local service hours are down due to the station switching from locally produced classical music to a news/talk format on weekdays. However, with the switch, WNIN-FM now has live hosting from 6am-6pm Monday through Friday, with local newscasts once per hour. Previously, many of the hours were filled using automated breaks. Beginning in FY 13, local service hours will reflect greater hours of local news and content.

Steve also outlined the changes that took place in the format switch, and the community response to it. WNIN has had approximately 30 contacts from listeners, most of whom were against the switch. However, more recent communications are changing to a positive response as listeners get used to the new weekday format. WNIN also lost about \$1,000 in annual member giving

because of the switch, which has been offset by a very successful fall member drive. The drive brought 94 new members and \$10,000 in revenue compared to the Fall 2011 member drive.

Steve talked about the challenges of switching wnin.org and healthierevansville.org to the PBS Bento platform after the sudden shut down of IHETS in October. Despite a few ongoing glitches with Bento, WNIN has a new, dynamic platform that should serve us well in the future.

Steve commented on how well Bento serves mobile video. He talked about the fact that WNIN will have to incorporate some of the NPR Digital Strategies tools in order to properly host FM daily news content

Bonnie Rheinhardt provided the Board with a new channel line-up reflecting the changes that took effect in July. WNIN 9.2 now features the CREATE network. The CREATE network also remains on Cable 13. She reported that WNIN has received many very positive comments regarding the change, and the repeats of local programming that were on 9.2 don't seem to be missed. A block of weekly local programming repeats was added to 9.1.

Dave Dial reported on WNIN's recent election programming. TV did not produce any local debates this season, but partnered with the Courier Press to provide a series of interviews with local candidates. WNIN did air several statewide debates that produced by Indiana public media stations in partnership with the Indiana Debate Commission. WNIN carried all of these statewide debates on its main channel. Many Indiana station carried the content on their secondary channels. WNIN FM aired a series of programming prior to the election and provided extensive coverage on election night. Radio also provided a series of state-wide reports. He noted that commercial TV and radio are doing less programming about election and that this has an impact on our civic condition. He asked the Board to ensure that Public Media continues to produce meaningful election programming in the future. He announced that plans are being discussed to repurpose Radio's extensive election coverage to TV. Ella Johnson noted that TV stations made a lot of money on election ads this season and that many campaigns are questioning the effective use of these advertising budgets. Debates are an important means to provide in-depth information to voters and should not be overlooked. Dave stated that the local consolidation issue is a good example of the impact of advertising dollars. He felt that more information could have been imparted to the public through a series of programs on WNIN as opposed to ads on commercial TV and radio.

Dave reminded the Board that corporate support to WNIN is important, and very much needed, to continue the production of balanced and informative programming on local issues, and community engagement efforts.

Ella Johnson agreed that the community is not served by most election campaigns.

Carol Braden Clark asked what the cost is to produce a monthly program. Dave responded that a monthly program can run up to \$8000 a program. Ella Johnson noted that some campaigns spend \$2-3,000 per spot in high rated local programming on commercial stations.

Dave encouraged the Board to think about what they want to see/hear from WNIN TV and FM. He reminded everyone that local production costs money and that local and federal funds raised by WNIN go to NPR and PBS. State revenues stay in the station but have been drastically reduced. As a result WNIN production efforts are now concentrated on funded projects.

Michelle Jackson stated that the Toyota philanthropic budget has been cut 50%. She is not sure when or if that will ever come back fully---but Toyota (TMMI) does remain committed to give to the local community to the tune of 1 million annually. WNIN has not presented a specific campaign or proposal to Toyota TMMI. Youth and education remain Toyota's major focus and while Public Broadcasting does a great job with early education, Toyota has not been approached for anything specific to education that Michelle was aware of. She was not sure that programming outside of education would be a priority, but felt that shouldn't hinder WNIN from asking or discussing future possibilities or partnerships with Toyota.

Dave stated that there are many local companies that don't support WNIN and WNIN is the only local station devoted to providing a local service.