



**Okemo Valley TV
Annual Meeting
Thursday, June 27, 2024, at 6:00 PM EDT**

Minutes

Present: Noah Schmidt, George O. Thomson, Newton Rose, Robert Greenawalt, Lisa Hamm-Greenawalt, Claire McKey Berkman, Wendell Perkins, Patrick Cody, Executive Director, Okemo Valley TV

Present on Zoom: Donna Lubrano, grant writer and consultant

Absent: Zachary McNaughton

I. Call to Order / Introductions. Noah Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM. Introductions were done. Guests included Jim Alic, who is on the advisory committee for the potential new radio station; John Eckel, Board candidate; Rachel Carner, artist/art teacher and Noah's fiancée; Rebekah Fontaine, operations coordinator; Peter Van Gorder, part-time employee; Sarah Devereux, part-time employee (recording in the control room); Gavin Greenawalt, part-time employee (editing in office). Guests for the Open House included David Bennett, owner of New England Cider Donuts, who donated pastries and water to the Open House.

II. Public Comment & Communications - none

III. Producer Awards & Recognitions. Patrick shared a video compilation of the year's videos and presented the following awards:

- a. Community Service Award: Will Simoneau, TechGym Youth Sports. Shoots youth sports all over southern Vermont.
- b. Outstanding Achievement: Rev. Joseph Arnold. Religious programming.
- c. Youth Programming: Amy McMullen, Cavendish Fletcher Community Library.
- d. Producer of the Year: Claire McKey Berkman, "Making Of" programming with Woodstock High School theater productions, through Yoh Theatre Players. She invited the Board to the July 27 premiere of her short film.
- e. Award of Achievement: Noah Schmidt, outgoing president, for Board service and involvement in the station.

- f. Community Impact Award: George Thomson for 19 years of service to the Board and a lifetime of service to the community.

IV. Building Project & Fundraising Report: Patrick is working with Donna to apply for grants and do building fundraising. The Ludlow Rotary has donated \$1,500, \$2,500 was granted by the Morro Trust in Dec. 2023. Patrick reviewed the history of the station and its growth, found on [Get Involved/Donate page](#) on the website. Claire, who uses the space, talked about ways the station could be more welcoming and user-friendly, as well as a place that's more functional for employees.

Donna Lubrano, the station's contract grant writer, talked via Zoom about how radio could provide an opportunity to get more funding. Patrick has given her a comprehensive list of grants available and she is finding others. She is creating a narrative that allows Patrick to put forward the current status and potential growth of the radio station. She is also looking at sponsorships and in-kind donations. Prospects include Shaw's, Citizens Bank with community development programs, and Chamber of Commerce relationships. She suggests sponsorship packages running from \$500-\$10,000 with tiered benefits, and will be asking the board to do outreach to key players.

She suggests setting a sponsorship goal of \$7,500-\$10,000 by year-end. She would reinvigorate past sponsorships, working with the Board on cold and warm leads, and suggested co-branding. She says a budget deficit could be a red flag that puts off potential funders. Wendell pointed out that the deficit is caused by spending to bring in more money, plus declining cable revenue. Donna says there are sections in a grant application to allow you to explain that, and explain action steps, which tells funders that we have a strategic plan and have other sources of support.

Wendell asked why the radio station is important. Donna said it shows growth potential and community support, and presents an opportunity to generate revenue. Noah said he appreciated the holistic view and how grant writing is connected to the station's overall goals.

Patrick declared that Board voting was officially closed. Lisa from the nominations committee and George Thomson, filling in for the absent Zachary, left to count ballots.

V. "State of the Station" Report: Annual Recap summary. Patrick will provide it in writing.

VI. FY2025 Budget Presentation & Vote: There was discussion about the budget deficit and it is an area of concern going forward, especially given declining cable revenues. Bob said the deficits are present because we are currently investing in ourselves, so he's comfortable with this year's budget, but we need to have serious discussion early in the fiscal year to implement steps to achieve our financial goals without deficits.

MOTION: Robert made a motion to approve the 2024-25 budget as presented. George seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

VII. Board Election – Lisa presented the winners of the Board Election: Stefan Beaumont, Sammy Blanchette, and Newton Rose. John Eckel, who came in 4th, was encouraged to stay involved and run again.

VIII. Other Business –

- I. Low-Power FM Radio. Jim Alic, former Executive VP of NBC, appeared on behalf of the radio advisory committee. They agreed on a request that went to town yesterday asking for \$20,000 for all capital stuff – transmitter, antennae, tower, software, computer, etc. to get on the air in the next three years. Ralph Pace is looking into ASCAP license fees. No talk of a program schedule yet. There's a lot of interest in music. Jim looked at the 6 other low-power FM stations. The most successful ones are in Bellows Falls, Brattleboro, Warren, and a couple of others. All are doing the same thing: hyper-local content, interesting music, weather, and local news. Opportunities exist for synergy with the TV station in technology and programming. The station and Board will be fully involved for a while, since we hold the license. Noah asked the committee to keep updates coming, perhaps as a Board agenda item each month. Our primary concern is not a drain but a growth opportunity. Peter asked about ownership of the station, and whether it could be transferred. Alic said the committee preferred the station stay together as one governance structure.
- II. The Woodstock Film Festival, which Claire is helping organize and promote, will be held July 25-27. Board members were encouraged to attend.

IX. Set / Confirm Next Meeting Date(s) – Patrick said he would send out a Doodle poll to set the date for the reorganizational meeting. (The date was later set for Tuesday, 7/23 at 4 PM)

X. Adjourn – Lisa made a motion to adjourn. Wendell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Hamm-Greenawalt
Secretary