

Administrative

- Welcome New Board Member: Carmine Iannace is now a member of the Board, filling one of the new appointed seats. According to the newly-revised By Laws, appointed seats are for the duration of a fiscal year. The Board is considering appointing additional seats.
- Strategic Planning: Following up on the discussion about the Vermont Community Foundation “Nonprofit Capacity Building” grant, things are now in motion with Abbey Harlow, a local nonprofit consultant ([Harlow Nonprofit Consulting](#)), to help with this work. In the more immediate future, Abbey will be doing some fundraising consulting work for us (more on that below). We will need to have a budget and timeline in place for this work to begin. At this stage, we just need to get things lined up so that we can be ready to move forward with it once a new Director is hired.

Buildings & Grounds

- Construction Schedule: We will be receiving a contract from DCI Concepts to act as the general contractor on the job. Ed D'Ottavio, who owns DCI, Mark Blachard (VIS Construction Consultants), & I met on Thursday to go over the scope of work, budget, scheduling & other logistics. The current plan is to start work on Monday March 2nd (Town Meeting eve), and for the project to last 4-6 weeks. During this time, we will be staying out of the facility during working hours, and only accessing the space as needed, in the evenings & on weekends. Prior to the start of the work, we will need to move all items that are currently in the lobby area, studio control room, and the back office & editing areas into the studio. We will be using this opportunity to take an equipment inventory. This will also be an opportunity to get rid of the junkier furniture & items that we don't need. We should schedule a volunteer work session, to load up items & take them to the transfer station. I have a utility trailer that can be used. Perhaps we can look at doing this on Thurs. March 5th (after Town Meeting Day & on a day when the transfer station is open).
- Roadside Sign: We have a new proposal with a design & quote for a replacement sign, which would be shared among BR Good Neighbors, the Town, LAST, & us.. Our share of the cost would be somewhere around \$600. I can share the design and gather any feedback at the upcoming Board meeting

Community Engagement & Outreach

- Building Project Budget & Financing Plan: The bid from DCI is just under \$80,000. We have a little over \$60,000 remaining that has been allocated / approved for this project. There is an opportunity for some savings, by truncating or removing some pieces in the scope of work (for instance, we could remove painting if we volunteer to paint it ourselves). The idea is to try to raise what we can through a local fundraising appeal, and make up any shortfall with a line of credit through our credit union (Heritage Family Credit Union). For the appeal, we have a draft of a letter that is ready to go out and is just awaiting Board input. This is an activity where Board involvement will be needed.
- Underwriting: As reported recently to the Board, we have raised \$3,750 so far during this fiscal year through underwriting sponsorships. Our current underwriters are Mary Davis Real Estate, VT Properties / William Raveis Real Estate, Heritage Family Credit Union, Open Door Vacation Rentals, Red Vault Productions, The Killarney, & FOLA. VTel is an in-kind underwriter.
- Membership Drive: This is a topic we need to re-visit and resume the discussion.

- Town Meeting: With Town Meeting Day coming up on Tuesday March 3rd, there are two things to emphasize: our coverage of 6 Town Meetings and, in 2 of those Towns, our requests for an increased budget appropriation. First, the coverage: we have 2 informational meetings to cover next Saturday, Feb. 28 (in Reading & Cavendish). We are able to staff those without problem. Then, on Monday, on Town Meeting eve, we will have 4 informational meetings to cover, all at the same time. We currently have 3 of us staff, and we are trying to get one of our fill-in staff to cover the 4th. Short of that, we will have to look for a volunteer. No matter what, this will be a challenge, as always...but, every year we get it done. The complicating factor this year is that we need someone to be present & to be able to speak at the meetings in Ludlow and in Plymouth - the 2 Towns where we are on the ballot with requests for increases to our appropriation. We will need to plan this out at the Board meeting.
- Comcast Community Liaison: In two separate instances, I have recently been informed by Comcast Xfinity cable customers (both named Carol, coincidentally) that they are no longer receiving our channels and they would like to get them back. In both cases, I was able to get them the help they needed, and bypass the 1-800 call center, by contacting Melissa Pierce, the longtime Government & Community Affairs Manager for Comcast in Vermont (and who serves as our primary contact for all things related to contractual & regulatory matters). It turns out that older cable boxes need to be replaced with newer technology, which is something Comcast will do for no charge (which is not something most customers know, and which was news to me). Melissa was able to get both Carols' cable box trouble immediately resolved. This made me realize that we have an undefined role that we can play as a local, "boots on the ground" community liaison for Comcast. It can be very cumbersome - and even daunting - for someone to navigate through the Comcast framework & try to get something resolved. Comcast doesn't have anyone local for a customer to contact, but they do have us...and there are many cases in which we can help. This is something that could be codified in some way, and perhaps publicized & promoted.
- VAN Legislative Advocacy: I have not been able to participate as closely with the legislative advocacy work during this session as I would like, but that seems to be OK, as we within VAN have some good people working hard on it. And not just VAN members, but I also need to give credit where it's due: Llu Mulvaney-Stanak (of WGDR community radio in Plainfield) has been working on behalf of all of the 9 community radio stations, in tandem with VAN, on this year's ask. It does seem that the teaming up of community TV / PEG with community radio has resonated with lawmakers. There is definitely support for the notion that "community media" is a valuable resource worth supporting with some State funding. With PEG / community TV, it's a case of the decline of cable funding. With community radio, it's a case of not having any meaningful, ongoing funding to support it. As far as how this all affects our org.: Should the request make it all the way through the budget process and get approved, it would translate out to approx. \$36K for Okemo Valley TV and \$7,500 for WLUD in the next fiscal year (FY27).
- After School Programs: The programs in Mount Holly and Cavendish continue to be run smoothly. Will & Peter are in Mount Holly on Wednesdays, and Rebekah is with Peter in Cavendish on Thursdays.
- Donor Appreciation Events: This is another topic for the Board meeting. We have discussed scheduling the next one for April.
- 25th Anniversary: As previously discussed, it is our 25th anniversary this year. Since we are conducting a fundraising campaign, among many other big things, how can we best leverage & incorporate a celebration of this into our work, in an effective way?

WLUD Update

- Mike Kershaw: Our one regular / consistent volunteer for the radio station has been Mike Kershaw, husband of Shawn, who hosts a TV show & podcast from our TV studio ("To Whom It May Concern"). They have also been at some of our events. Mike has been coming on a regular basis to help us rip CDs. Little by little, we are getting through the huge volume of CDs that were donated, and building up the WLUD music library.
- Staffing Model: At the last meeting, the consensus from the Board seemed to support the idea of shifting away from the expectation that WLUD would be an all-volunteer station, to one that will be "mostly

volunteer”, with some staffing resources allocated towards managing & overseeing operations. As such, I have begun spending a small portion of my time each week doing just that. At this stage, it’s a very small portion of time - perhaps just a few hours per week. But once we have a new Director in place, I could be spending a larger amount of time on that (we discussed possibly up to 10 hours).