



Director Report – March 2026

Administrative

- Strategic Planning: Abbey Harlow (Harlow Nonprofit Consulting) is standing by to assist the Board with strategic planning. We have done some minimal prep work for that already. We have that \$5K grant from the VT Community Foundation for that work, though the total cost would be \$7,500 or \$10,000, depending on the level of Abbey's involvement & how much of the workload that the Board is willing to do. We will need to decide on that so we can get on the calendar.
- Board Appointment: Michelle Stinson is open to a Board appointment. She has been involved with the radio effort and the organization in general, one way or another, since the early days. She is a former staff member (she worked for us from 2006 - 2014), and prior to that was on the Board.

Buildings & Grounds

- Construction Schedule: As mentioned, Ed D'Ottavio (DCI Concepts) is overseeing the job as general contractor. It is a 4-6 week schedule, and a lot of progress has been made in the first week of work. It is looking great, and he expects that they will be closer to a 4 week timeline (which means finishing up in the first week of April). The one possible hold up on his end is the delivery of the doors, but right now it looks as if everything else in his scope will be completed by the end of that 1st week of April. In order to keep things under his bid amount of \$80K, we needed to omit a couple of the aspects of the job from his scope of work: painting & flooring. This is the other possible hold up, as far as being able to move everything into place and resuming operations. For painting, it sounded like the consensus was that we would do that ourselves, by hosting volunteer painting parties. The walls will all be primed, we would just need to hit each room with 2 coats of paint. With enough people, we could get it done over one weekend. For the flooring, I have a couple of contractors to contact for pricing. I would love to be able to take care of installing the flooring in all areas (not just the current scope), since it will cost us more & be more disruptive to have only some of it done now, then some more later.. Shutting down operations and moving furniture & equipment around is costly, both in time and money. Going forward, with whatever remains as a final scope of work to finish the building, I suggest that we work directly with Ed / DCI on a design / build concept. It will save time & money. Ed has demonstrated an ability to bring value-added engineering ideas, a willingness to work with our budget, and an understanding of our needs. I have already spoken with him about the remaining work - he says it would be an approx. 2 week project which he could fit in during late Fall or Winter.
- Roadside Sign: Krey Kellington from Black River Good Neighbors has been taking the lead on the new sign. We have a quote - our share for a new sign would be \$670. Then there is the option of replacing the existing posts with steel ones, which would last longer (the current posts are OK for the time being but would need to be replaced at some point anyway). It would make sense to replace them now, but doing so would add about \$365 to our total cost (we are splitting the cost of the sign replacement with BRGN and the Town). As I mentioned to them, ordinarily, this would make sense but whereas our funds are very tight right now, with the building renovations, the timing of this added expense is not great.

Community Engagement & Outreach

- Fundraising Appeal & Financing Plan: At the last Board meeting (Feb. 24), we discussed addressing the \$20,000 funding gap for the current scope of the building project through a fundraising effort. Any difference could then be made up by taking out a line of credit. A draft letter was distributed to Board members. Stefan & I recorded a video 2 weeks ago, which has been shared on the TV channels, the website, and the e-newsletter. It could also be sent out as something supplemental to include in your emails. The information in the video is now a bit outdated, as a lot has been happening with the progress over the last 2 weeks, with much progress being made. I would like to make ongoing shorter videos that we can send out. But we need a commitment on the outreach effort. I have reached out to Board members and to WLUD volunteers, but so far I am not getting much of a response.
- Membership Drive: This discussion still needs to happen - specifically, how to incorporate plugging memberships in all of our community engagement correspondence & marketing.
- Town Meeting: Once again, we covered (recorded, streamed, televised, & archived) 6 Town Meetings (3 of them live). It is always a bear of a task, but it is not as daunting as it once was, before we had AV systems in some of the Town Halls & offices. These days, our set ups are more nimble, and much of the work is streamlined & automated. It still requires a lot of coordination, and stretching our thin human resources to the brink.
- Open House / Donor Appreciation: We previously discussed scheduling the next “donor appreciation” event in April, but most recently discussed instead having this be an open house to show off our newly-renovated space. This is a great idea. Let’s pick a date in late April and send out invites.
- 25th Anniversary: With all of the exciting new stuff going on - WLUD launch, newly-renovated building, a new Director, along with a new strategic plan & potential rebrand - there is a lot of opportunity to celebrate and engage with the community. And having this all land on the year of our 25th anniversary is the best opportunity of all, as it allows us to neatly package all of these new things into a singular message. This has led me to thinking it is a good time to engage our Community Engagement committee. We have gotten away from committee work of late, as there’s so much going on, but I think the 25th anniversary is a good impetus for re-initiating such work. We don’t want the opportunity to pass us by. One idea I have is to “dust off” some of our programming from 2001, and start sharing them, as a new series, as a way to celebrate 25 years. Once we are set back up, we can get some of those programs digitized & into our digital archive so that they can be broadcast, streamed, & shared. It can be a new weekly series (of old shows) that we run through the remainder of the year. How can we best tie that into a membership drive & fundraising effort?

WLUD Update

- Staffing Model: The Board has supported the concept of a staffing model for WLUD whereby we allocate up to 10 hours per week of Okemo Valley TV staffing to address WLUD needs. I have been taking this on and will provide a brief “bird’s eye” view report of the current status and a way forward, to organize volunteers & get needed tasks completed.
- Generator: I have one estimate for \$14K from Brookfield Generator Systems (who takes care of the existing generator on the property, for the Community Center), to install a new back up generator for our facility. The electrician who is currently working on our renovation project also installs generators- I will be getting an estimate from him as well.
- Ludlow ARPA Funds: We have about \$18,000 remaining in Ludlow’s ARPA funds, to be used towards WLUD capital expenses. All funds must be used by the end of 2026. However, I have been informed that any reimbursements must be made in the same fiscal year that the expenses were incurred. Since the fiscal year ends June 30th, this means anything we spend in the next 2 ½ months must be submitted immediately for reimbursement. The big capital expenses are for the transmitter, antenna, emergency alert system, and the balance of the generator installation. It is unlikely that all of this will be purchased before June 30th, which is OK. I just wanted to flag this here so that we are all aware of the timeline.