Okemo Valley TV
Board of Directors Annual Meeting
Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at 6:00 PM EDT

Minutes

Present: Wendell Perkins, Newton Rose, Claire McKey Berkman, Sammy Blanchette, Robert Greenawalt, Lisa Hamm-Greenawalt, Stefan J. Beaumont, Patrick Cody, Executive Director, Okemo Valley TV
Present on Zoom: None
Absent: None
Guests: Noah Schmidt, Michelle Stinson, John Hanlon, Shawn Kershaw, host of *To Whom It May Concern*; and Pasha (Donnelly).

Pre-Meeting: OVTV Executive Director Patrick Cody presented the 2025 Producer Awards

- Producers of the Year - The Average Daves (Dave VanGuilder and Dave Pettit), movie reviews
- Youth Program of the Year - Chicken Little, Cavendish After School
- Premiere of the Year - A Night of the Races, Mt. Holly Parent Teacher Group
- Outstanding Achievement - Vermont's 100 Covered Bridges, Phil Gatenby
- Community Impact Award - The Tasty Twist, Sammy Blanchette

I. Call to Order / Introductions. Wendell Perkins called the meeting to order at 637 PM. All introduced ourselves.
II. Public Comment & Communications - Audience member and former OVTV Board President Noah Schmidt said he thought it was cool to see the energy here and the awards going on, especially behind radio.
III. Community Engagement Reports - Lisa presented a summary of the goals and recent accomplishments, including that OVTV recently became a neighborhood sponsor of the Ludlow Farmers Market, and is planning to be an in-kind sponsor of the inaugural Triquest Triathlon at Camp Plymouth State Park on Sept. 6. She said the committee is working on enhancing underwriting opportunities in conjunction with WLUD radio;

organized this Open House; and has two other events in the planning stage on the horizon: a regional Oktoberfest fundraiser in early October, and a donor appreciation event, date to be determined. She encouraged all to become members of OVTV today.

IV. Personnel - Claire discussed that Sara D now works at Tuck Business school, and her boyfriend Willem came on board in her place. Gavin is working on assignment, Peter is working part-time. Rebekah, full-time, is leaving on parental leave for 8 weeks, and will return part-time. The committee this year updated personnel policies.

V. Radio Committee - Michelle thanked OVTV for having the Open House and letting all the people interested in radio come in and see the studio. She said we have a lot of work ahead of us, but a good group moving forward, ripping music, and working out policy and procedures. We have Okemo's permission for the antenna location, Ludlow Electric is ready to install it, and the town is ready to put a repeater on the high school to get the signal to the antenna on the mountain. Johnny asked how much radio programming would be live. Michelle responded that it would be up to the producers. Some committee members are going to the home of a former radio guy in Killington who has radio equipment to donate. Programming will be 24/7 with some automated software pre-loaded. The website page needs a name and logo. An audience member asked about local musicians; Michelle said Sammy's Tasty Twist program was a way in. Johnny would like to have a live show at Johnny's Kitchen, which hosts Blues Jam 5-8 every Saturday night.

VI. "State of the Station" Report - Patrick.

A. The biggest change this year is radio. Started audio only with Sammy's show, which was put out as audio only and got thousands of downloads. Podcasts are a possibility, but perhaps it could be an add-on service people pay for.

B. We are seeing more live streaming viewership, and not as many are using the OTT TV app. We need more community engagement to tell people about the app.

C. This has been a huge year for town and state support; we received ARPA funding for emergency alerts, and increases in town appropriations. This year, the station is starting to get *fee for service* allocations from Reading and Mt. Holly. We are doing more Board coverage than ever. Noah, who is on the Ludlow Town Board, recommended that for the amount of service provided to Ludlow – we are there 10 times a month – we request more money for the services, even double the ask. The Board agreed that we should ask every town board for $100 per meeting, rather than asking for a higher appropriation. Stefan said this needs to be put in motion for next year's budget. Noah suggests we say to the Select Board, this is what other communities are doing. In order to make sure you're supported under Open Meeting Law, we are asking for $100 per meeting. He said we could approach Brendan now, or at least by November for the next budget.

D. State Support - VAN (Vermont Access Network) provides a state appropriation every year to offset loss in cable revenues, and VAB (VT Association of

Broadcasters) (because of WLUD) is advocating for money put into state budget to support community radio. We project we'll receive $7,500 in the coming year.

E. Fee for Service - Supervisory Unions have money for after-school programs and we run some; we should receive a fee.

F. Collaborations - We are now involved as a community sponsor for the Farmers Market, exploring new partnerships with regional colleagues such as SAPA TV in Springfield, FOLA (Friends of Ludlow Auditorium) with some programming.

VII. FY2026 Budget Presentation & Vote

A. Wendell says it's not prepared to approve yet, but we need to discuss some items as a Board before we can move forward with that. Treasurer Bob Greenawalt walked us through some issues. He thanked Patrick for getting the budget to the place it is. It's really close, nearly balanced, but Bob feels it is full of risk because of the following: It cuts some of Rebekah's position, projects$15K from the inaugural special event which is still question mark, restoration of a significant amount of VAN funding cut (Patrick said there is resolution on that, is within a couple hundred dollars), and projects a 4% reduction in PEG funds from what was received last year to what we're budgeting, when the reality could be as much as 10%. Wendell said the allocation was going from $174K to $155K, a $20K reduction. We're also budgeting $6K for underwriting, while our projection is $3,750.

B. So, he had some questions: Should we continue using Donna Lubrano as grants consultant? Patrick said we paid her just over $2,000 this year. She has brought in $35,000 in grants. Sammy said he didn't think she understood how small VT towns work; perhaps someone else would be better. If we decided to change it up, Lisa recommended Diane Stockton-Breese. Stefan said we should have a grant writer on board. Wendell said we should keep the amount in the budget, but perhaps it doesn't have to be Donna.

C. Bob said, should we keep $15K net income for the special event. We need to decide on a lower number to put into the budget. Lisa mentioned sponsors; Noah said perhaps require underwriting to be a sponsor, or this sponsorship comes with a year-long underwriting. We decided on $7,500 net.

D. Bob mentioned underwriting - do we want to keep $6K in budget? With $2k on the radio side, we're looking for $8K total. Patrick is confident the community engagement committee could meet the goal. He says underwriting and memberships are the model for funding these radio stations.

E. Memberships - Patrick said we just updated the policy to require anyone who uses our services to become a member, both TV and radio. This will be implemented automatically on the website.

F. Town appropriations - Bob asked how it's allocated between TV and radio. Things that were allocated to TV should continue, and going forward, radio would be broken out separately. He reminded the Board that radio is required to be cost-neutral, according to the original motion approving it. Noah said he sees radio allocation as a priority for the town of Ludlow.

G. Wendell said the current budget needs to be revised to reflect discussions, and Patrick has sent a link with a budget (TV and radio tabs hidden but accessible). Everyone's homework is to look at the budget and then we can approve the combined budget, which now has a $6,000 loss. We can also discuss whether to continue with the Roku app, which costs $7,000. As the change in bylaws scheduled for the July organizational meeting will likely include a change in the calendar year, the budget will have to be considered and voted on again in a few months.
   MOTION: Stefan made a motion to approve the budget as amended by Patrick in real time during the meeting. Claire seconded the motion. The Budget was unanimously approved.

VIII. Board of Directors Election

A. Newt - four people ran for the Board this year. Bob and Lisa withdrew in advance of this meeting. Newt thanked them for serving on the Board - Bob with his flair for finances, Lisa as secretary and with all sorts of communications roles, and both for reliability. The three winners of the Board election were Wendell Perkins, John Hanlon, and Trevor Barlow. They take on the new positions on July 1. Stefan will reach out to Trevor and John, and to Jacalyn, to inform them of results. Claire said she would be interested in staying on the Board after she moves to NYC in August, and would be interested in policy change to allow current and past residents to serve on the Board. Also, it was mentioned that all board members are now white men and we need more diversity.

IX. Other Business – Building proposal - Bob

A. In March, we approved funding for Patrick to engage VIS to provide some services. He passed around a copy to the building committee this week, and Bob is confused. Thought there would be an updated list of costs for items previously approved, such as doors, carpets, and edit suites. He asked Patrick to clarify. Patrick said the request was to allocate $73,500 we approved. Bob said that the number was down to $70K because we allocated $4,000 for radio/podcasting equipment. Patrick went to VIS, they submitted a proposal that's not specific because we don't know exactly what to do, the scope of work. The approval was for $4,000 for architectural drawings; it needs to be revised as the station's needs have changed. Bob pointed out that the Board has to sign off on any changes; all agreed. Patrick wants enclosed edit suites, with air flow. It all depends on the architectural drawings. Wendell pointed out that the radio changes were part of the original plans for podcasting, so in fact we are accomplishing what we had already planned, as opposed to derailing and over-emphasizing radio. He asked when does the Board will discuss this. Patrick said he needs to meet with the Building Committee to decide on these things. He also wants the general contractor to be more specific with the description of work.

X. Set/Confirm Next Meeting Date(s) – the next meeting was set for 6-7:30 PM on Tuesday, July 22.

XI. Adjournment. Bob made a motion to adjourn. Lisa seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Wendell adjourned the meeting at 845 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Hamm-Greenawalt
Secretary