

WHRO COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
MARCH 12, 2024

Members present:

Al Schweizer, Alison Schoew, Charlotte Hudgins Zito, Denise Fisher, Felicia Mebane, Hoda Zaki Lacy Shirey, Marcella Germanotta, Margaret Wiley, Meghan Higgins, Peg Snowden Volk, Rowena Finn, Season Roberts, Stephanie Robinson, Thomas Isenhour

WHRO Staff,

Nancy Rogan, Mechelle Hankerson

Meeting started at 6:03

Welcome – Charlotte Hudgins Zito welcomed everyone and passed to Season for the Ice Breaker.

Ice Breaker – Season Robinson asked each member what their favorite Karaoke song is.

Minute Approval – the board approved minutes from last meeting

Journalism

- Mechelle Hankerson shared updates from our newsroom.
 - We will have a new news website starting May 7th.
 - We have received private funding for a new general assignment reporter.
 - There will be a new grant proposal to the Evelyn G. Davis Foundation to go towards hiring news staff.
 - Maurice Jones will be handling the placement for the newsroom and the funds from the Evelyn G. Davis Foundations grant.
 - Journalism department has also received a 50,000.00 donation from a single donor for art coverage by freelance reporters.
 - Mechelle highlighted two stories that gained attention from other news outlets. One was a story about a student being bullied at Norview High School, may have been made worse due to a language breakdown at the school.
 - The other was about 400 million dollars coming into Newport News for military housing, mostly due to the suicide issues on the George Washington.

Current Community Trends

- Lacy talked about a recycling issue in Chesapeake. It seems that there were some serious problems with garbage and recycling all going to the same landfill. Also, the drop off site is overflowing and most people want to return to curbside pickup, but the city is looking for a 1 bin system.

- Rowena - Mentioned that GSA had a problem with a student dropping out of the program due to a language barrier. She also advised the group that she was having a showing at Virginia Tech coming soon.
- Hoda – Spotlited a local book author from Gloucester, his name is S. A. Crosby. Netflix is interested in doing a movie from one of his books. Maybe Curate could look at highlighting him and his new book.
- Allison – Gave a shout out for the Spelling Bee, said how much fun she had during the practice session.
- Nancy also advised that WHRO/Spelling Bee will be looking for a new corporate sponsor.
- Charlotte – Shared a story about her church Old Donation Episcopal in Virginia Beach. The church is one of oldest in country. They have been looking into the history and have found records of slaves. A slave named Rachel was owned by the parish priest at the time. A scholarship has been established in Rachel’s name.
- Group - Talked about the new Ken Burns documentary on the Revolutionary War, a lot of local filming will be included.
- Group spoke about Dark Sky Night and how we don’t have much dark sky to view locally.
- Charlotte will have her last meeting as President in June, Season will take over as Chair so the Vice Chair will be open.
- Members will need to advise if they will not be staying on as members.
- ELBOWs will be looking for new members to be presented to the board in November.
- Nancy requested volunteers to help with the planning.
 - Lacy, Ro, Meghan, and Season volunteered.
- Nancy is also looking for volunteers to help with the screenings of “Against the Current”.
 - Margie volunteered for April 11th screening.
 - Felicia volunteered for April 18th screening.

Adjourn - 7:20