

Williamsburg Advisory Council  
Monday, November 4, 2019

Members Present: Sean Driscoll, Elise Emanuel, Jane Frazier, Clyde Haulman, Judy Knudson, Sylvia Payne, Jim Rettig, Megan Rhyne, Jeff Rich, Rik Rikkola, Pat Rublein, John Shulson, Carol Talbot, Elaine Themo

Staff Present: Tom Burton, Deb Farmer, Nancy Rogan, Bert Schmidt

I. WELCOME – Judy Knudson called the meeting to order and introduced new member Jane Frazier, a former Career Coach at Tidewater Community College. She moved to Williamsburg last summer from Norfolk, where she raised her two children. She told the Council a bit about herself and then members introduced themselves to Ms. Frazier.

II. STATION REPORT – Bert Schmidt updated the group on staff changes – Deb Farmer’s retirement; Danny Epperson’s departure to a new position where he will be doing some world-wide travel; and the soon to occur hiring of the News Department reporters. He announced that the Education Department, in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Education, was working on creating a one-semester, African American History course for high school students, which should be ready in August. He reported that WHRO continues discussions with the Virginia Capital Foundation for enhancement of their interactive tours; he has met with the West Point and Surry school divisions, the newest members of our ownership group; and regular meetings have been occurring with Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation. He noted that “Inside Business” has recognized WHRO as one of the 2019 best places to work. This is based on a staff survey and brings WHRO closer to the goal of being an “employer of choice”. Mr. Schmidt also noted the lobby in Norfolk has been upgraded and work will soon begin on the canteen.

III. DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – Tom Burton expressed his thanks to Jeff Rich for his part in regaining The College of William and Mary as a WHRO corporate sponsor. Mr. Burton reported that in September, the 12-month average number of members was over 22,200 and the Legacy Society members increased to 201. He noted that WHRO continues to search for an additional major gifts officer and that Dory Morrison is progressing in her struggle with cancer. He also noted that the Board Alumni and Legacy Society luncheons held earlier this year were a great success and the back-to-back events are being planned again for this March. There is also an inaugural underwriting appreciation event being discussed. He also announced a fundraising event and the Hunter B. Andrews Society dinner with guest Clay Jenkinson coming up in February.

IV. CONTENT/INITIATIVE REPORT – Nancy Rogan highlighted several upcoming programs, including, among others, the line-up for “Great Performances”; “The Warrior Tradition” on Veterans Day; “Moving Hampton Roads” a transportation town hall; a documentary on the Virginia peanut industry; City Voices documentary; and season 4 of Curate. She also noted work being done with a grant from CPB as part of the American Graduate program focusing on skilled-job careers.

V. OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT – Mr. Schmidt noted WHRO was in the process of signing a 5-year lease renewal for the Williamsburg office.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2019.