

WTVP Community Broadcasting Advisory Council
Tuesday, April 12, 2011 Noon in the WTVP Conference Room

In attendance: Adam Sloan, Cindy Kennedy, Maggie Heppner, Steve Tarter, Linda Zears, Henry Litchfield, Sally Hanley, Andra Connor, Norma Rossi, Chet Tomczyk, Linda Miller.

Norma Rossi, former chairman and 10-year advisory board member, was honored for her service in a presentation to start the meeting. Norma expressed her appreciation, noting she was always happy to help Channel 47 in whatever capacity she could.

Adam Sloan offered up the minutes of the previous meeting for the group's approval. WTVP President Chet Tomczyk then provided an update on federal funding for public broadcasting. Tomczyk gave an account of his trip to Washington, D.C. along with other public broadcast officials to lobby for support of public broadcasting.

"I've been going to Congress for years but this was the toughest situation we've faced," he said of the budget-cutting mood in Washington. Tomczyk noted that bills had already been introduced to defund public broadcasting in general and public radio, specifically. Amid concerns of the federal government shutting down, funding for public broadcasting was maintained in the compromise budget measure, he reported. "The Corporation for Public Broadcasting was budgeted at \$445 million for 2013 (PBS is forward-funded by two years for planning purposes)," said Tomczyk, noting that the amount is the same as in previous years.

Public broadcasting did experience casualties, he said. Several programs including the "Ready to Teach" program were cut, said Tomczyk. "We were concerned that were going to get zeroed out but cooler heads prevailed," he said.

Tomczyk spoke of the opportunity for the station to receive a \$10,000 grant from Heart Technologies. Advisory members were provided information on how to nominate the station for the annual award.

Upcoming programs produced by WTVP include a documentary on Peoria High School and a show on the Boxcar People, Mexican immigrants who came to central Illinois to work on the railroad and literally lived out of boxcars.

In an answer to Sloan about what federal funding means to WTVP, Tomczyk said that the Peoria station receives 23 percent of its funds from the federal government. "Having that funding puts a lot of things in play. We never say we're okay but we're better off than we thought we'd be last week," he said.

Linda Miller talked about the "Teachers' Domain" digital learning site to be rolled out this fall with two tiers -- one that's free and a premium level with additional content for teachers to use in the classroom. Tomczyk added that Illinois Senator Dick Durbin had been particularly interested in the digital site and its importance to education when briefed in Washington.

Linda mentioned the documentary on the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria that would air on April 21 and noted that the station's annual auction was coming up fast (April 28 - May 1). Items offered for the art auction were on display at the station's first floor gallery.

Linda distributed programs to advisory board members for their review and report in order to further consideration for programming to be aired at the station.

Tomczyk informed the group that the station was relying on the advisory panel for input. "We need to know who's watching and what they want to watch. We need to know where we should put our local resources," he said.