

WTVP Community Broadcast Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes Jan. 14, 2014
WTVP Studio, 101 State St.

In attendance: Adam Sloan, Steve Tarter, Andra Connor, Henry Litchfield, Tara Cobble, Linda Miller, Stacey Tomczyk, Chet Tomczyk

Station manager Chet Tomczyk reported that Champaign's public broadcast group of WILL stations has extended a memorandum of understanding for three more years, binding Peoria's WTVP and the University of Illinois public outlets together for that length of time.

"That does not mean me," said Tomczyk, who noted that his contract expires on June 30. The WTVP board and university have formed a search committee to hire an executive director to oversee major functions at both places, he said.

Tomczyk reported on upcoming events: A GOP debate was planned for the WTVP studios on Jan. 23, a program that is due to be aired on other public stations in Chicago, Champaign and the Quad Cities as well as on public radio.

Channel 47 was planning a "Doc Martin" marathon in February to raise money that would go towards renewing a British series that's building an audience with American viewers, said the WTVP GM.

A joint production with WILL is planned, allowing viewers to vote for their favorite British comedies, a long-time programming favorite on Saturday night for Channel 47, said Tomczyk, adding that discussions were also underway on the possibility of a fiber connection between Channel 47 and the University of Illinois Medical School in Peoria.

Tomczyk said planning was not completed on Linda Miller's replacement. Miller, who resigns on Feb. 1, has served at the station for some 25 years, most recently as program director.

Miller reported that the latest season of "Downton Abbey," the popular PBS show, topped 10 million U.S. viewers. "The show's almost as good as 'Duck Dynasty,'" suggested advisory board member Henry Litchfield.

Tomczyk noted that one of the scenes in "Downton Abbey" raised the issue of how much information should be conveyed to viewers in advance. "With a violent scene, how cautious do you get? How much warning do you put on it?" he asked.

Miller noted that the station "has been pilloried in the past" for pushing shows back, that is, running them later in the evening.

Information about the upcoming premier of the third season of "Sherlock," another popular PBS program, was also provided.

"PBS Learning Media continues to grow with 19,000 registered users," said Miller. Board member Tara Cobble suggested that the Learning media is especially valuable for home schooling.

Promotions director Stacey Tomczyk reported that the annual holiday book drive at Barnes & Noble generated over 3,800 books to be distributed by Channel 47 across the community..