

**February 2, 2017, 6:00 – 8:00pm**

**Meeting Minutes: The Sounding Board, Chicago Public Media**

1. Welcome and New Member Update
  - a. Six new members were welcomed to the Sounding Board: Erin McDuffie, Daniel Quero, Jackie Rosa, Anita Kavuu, Rosie Nolan, William Lee
2. CPM Content Discussion
  - a. The View from Room 205: Linda Lutton, Education Reporter; Cate Cahan, Editor
    - i. Lutton led a discussion on her piece *The View from Room 205*, which the Sounding Board was asked to listen to in advance
    - ii. Lutton shared that she completed the piece as part of her Spencer Fellowship at the Columbia University Journalism School
    - iii. Cahan mentioned that this was a very ambitious project for WBEZ to pursue given that the time investment was more than one year
    - iv. In response to a question from the Sounding Board, Lutton said that she kept the piece to just one hour because this made it easier to distribute to other geographies
    - v. In response to a question from the Sounding Board, Lutton said she shares the concern and understands the criticism of comingling poverty and brown communities, but she chose to tell this story because it's a function of where she lives—it's a story of Chicago.
    - vi. In response to a question from the Sounding Board, Lutton said she really struggled with the decision to include the part about the teachers looking at the standardized tests—ultimately, she realized she is a reporter on behalf of the public, and was very careful to include this at the end of the piece so that context had been provided
    - vii. Numerous Sounding Board members recommended follow-up reporting to ensure the piece's impact is maximized, and Lutton and Cahan said they are working on this
  - b. Vocolo / Barbershop Show Update: Silvia Rivera, Managing Director of Vocolo
    - i. Rivera shared that The Barbershop Show initially went on hiatus when producer Ayana Contreras accepted a new position with Sound Opinions. Longtime host Richard Steele decided to discontinue his role and production of the show was subsequently cancelled.
    - ii. In response to a question from the Sounding Board, Rivera explained that Vocolo, WBEZ, and Sound Opinions are unique brands / business models within the Chicago Public Media (CPM) umbrella
      1. Vocolo has operated at a deficit that has been offset by support from CPM
      2. To generate enough revenue to be self-sustaining, Vocolo will need to build a larger audience, and Vocolo is currently developing a promotional campaign to achieve this
  - c. Post-Election Political Coverage and Engagement; Update on the Newsroom Re-org and Coverage Changes: Joel Meyer, Executive Producer of Talk Programming and Podcasts
    - i. A Sounding Board member shared concerns she has gathered from a handful of long-time listeners about sources of NPR/WBEZ funding, including whether the Koch Brothers are funders and how that may influence coverage. This member also referenced recent stories related to the election in which interviewed individuals

shared pejorative statements or false “facts” without the interviewer correcting the record. This member shared that the listeners she’s spoken to have reconsidered listening to and supporting NPR/WBEZ in light of this election coverage.

- ii. The Sounding Board engaged in a lengthy discussion about the importance of sharing differing points of view in addition to the responsibility of NPR/WBEZ hosts to correct false information and ensure that if offensive statements are broadcast, they have a purpose within the context of the story
- iii. Meyer shared that the output of CPM’s three-year strategic plan is to reorganize the newsroom into three areas: Education, Criminal Justice, Politics
- iv. The Content Development Unit will be focused on piloting new content and projects (an example of unique programming in this vein is the *Making Oprah* podcast)

### 3. Public Comments

- a. A member of the public requested that the Sounding Board agendas be made public prior to meetings and available on the CPM Website