

KPFT Town Hall Meeting
May 18, 2019 ~ 9 a.m. to Noon
St. John Missionary Baptist Church
2702 Emancipation Avenue, Houston, TX 77004

Executive Summary

The purpose of the KPFT Community Advisory Board (the CAB) is to advise and promote communication between programmers, listeners, and community-based organizations to increase community awareness, facilitate better programming and develop ways to positively impact those communities throughout the KPFT listening area. The current CAB was formed in September 2018 at SHAPE Community Center and met at least once each month. CAB members (see Attachment 1) come from the Houston community and the membership is very diverse in age, ethnicity and culture.

After several months, the CAB decided on a town hall meeting that would help to provide participatory research that would offer data for an analysis that addressed whether the station is meeting the standards of public broadcasting through programming and policy. It was decided that the model, Table Discussion Sessions, would be interactive and flexible in its design for a town hall meeting. We culled through dozens of topic choices, and the results are included in the program (see Attachment 2), which lists these topics along with guidelines for engagement. Our goal was to create an atmosphere of respect and comfort, allowing participants an active and influential role in decisions which might affect their lives and relationship with KPFT. The CAB marketing campaign presented this information to the public and KPFT's programmers, staff and listeners with flyers and social media. We also pulled together a list of 60 non-profit organizations and groups, plus individual activists and podcasters who are making a difference in today's political and social climate.

The meeting was held at the historic St. John Missionary Baptist Church on Emancipation Avenue. More than 42 participants attended (see Attachment 3). The plan was to have one facilitator and scribe for each table, but during the course of the morning, people drifted toward a more shared leadership with several people capturing the essence of the day. The diversity of the group included men and women, younger and older people, and was profoundly diverse ethnically. The atmosphere was circumspect, but respectful. People engaged with one another, providing needed information and analysis about the station's policies and standards as well as an overarching analysis of independent media as a whole.

Analysis:

Independent media is threatened when the needs of the public are not addressed nor given a platform to address these concerns. The participants agreed that there is no one way to do media (see The Analysis Matrix, Attachment 4), but there were serious concerns as it relates to this station's policies and standards, listed below.

1. **Access and Equity.** Resources, information and tools should be accessible to the community. A specific concern was that the archives of Pacifica are not being made available for use by the public. By not providing creative methods of educating the public with news and information, training, and events and trends, there is a negative impact to the various communities within the listening area. Programmers need to have more interaction with each other, sharing experiences and knowledge, and being provided the same access and equity at KPFT.
2. **Social Concerns.** When there is a lack of awareness of social issues that affect different communities, there can be an increase in the marginalization and disenfranchisement of many. Issues like immigration or police brutality affect all, but when not addressed adequately, these social concerns go unaddressed. Those things that affect communities that the station serves, should be provided a means to be heard and responded to in a respectful and timely manner.
3. **Cultures Within Cultures.** The mission of the station is to create understanding between nations (cultures, community, ethnicities, generations, sexual orientation, and class.). When ignored and given no indication of acknowledging racism and other forms of oppression, there is a challenge to eradicating this part of a culture that oppresses. Systems of oppression are rife throughout the station, and this type of culture supports bad behavior. Those who resist these behaviors are often denied a voice and platform to fix the problems to create better models for understanding and addressing conflict.
4. **Stories Within Stories.** With no one way to do media, there needs to be a more creative approach to programming. There should be a commitment to facts and truth, agitating the mind and the heart, empathetic and factual. In addition, there should be balanced reporting to both far left and right leanings recognizing that here is usually more to any one story presented. There should be attention paid to the impact to listeners because an educated public is an empowered public. The station should be committed to empowering communities.
5. **Come Into the 21st Century.** Strengthening communication by increasing the various platforms available for building bigger and more diverse audiences, ways in which to engage, and to be aware of the various ways people get their media should be paramount in the running of an independent media outlet. These platforms should be identified and made available for all. Education and training should be made available to programmers and bringing programmers together to exchange ideas, experiences and training can only be an asset to the station.

Recommendation:

KPFT should be working to be independent media that is inclusive, diverse and gives equity and access to its programmers, staff, and listeners. In order to create this fair and equitable atmosphere, the station should be guided by CPB standards and the mission of the Pacifica Foundation. The following is recommended:

1. Review the Mission of Pacifica and create a mandate for following it.
2. Provide access to the archives for programmers and listeners, which includes placing archives on a platform that is accessible with a comprehensive search engine.
3. Develop a plan to eradicate an oppressive culture within KPFT.
4. Identify and utilize the various audio and video platforms that would allow for better public access.
5. Provide the KPFT committees of Cultures of Inclusion, Programming, Development and Outreach with the matrix to create plans to address the concerns of programmers and listeners.
6. Respond to the public with a commitment of hearing what was said, and addressing the needs of the programmers and public.

This information is being sent to the participants and made available to the public at www.kpftcommunityadvisoryboard.org. The KPFT CAB will provide this same report to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The KPT Community Advisory Board