



**Annual Report for WyomingPBS
Fiscal Year 2016**

General Manager's Report – Terry Dugas

The past year has been an exciting and challenging time for me and for the WyomingPBS staff. I had to get used to Wyoming, and the staff had to get used to me. So far, I've been able to live up to General Manager Ruby Calvert's advice to me as she was walking out the door, "Don't screw it up."

A good place to start this report is to update my three "first year" goals for WyomingPBS.

1) Increase coverage for the station.

Success in this area has been mixed. We were able to finally get our secondary channel, WyomingPBS Create, carried on Charter Cable. This will become even more important as we incorporate a new "PBSKids" channel into our line-up.

We are also expanding our over the air carriage into Lusk. This project has been delayed as the Engineering staff worked on emergency repairs over the past few months. However, I expect Lusk to be up and running by the end of the Fall.

The biggest failure has been in expanding our coverage on Dish Network. I continue to press for expanded coverage in the Laramie / Cheyenne region, however.

2) Improve the Network's broadcast and on-line capabilities.

Here, too, results have been mixed. We take two steps forward and a lightning strike back.

Due to the declining economy, we withdrew our "microwave migration" budget request. However, we continue to move forward on improving our signal. One of the initial tasks of our new Chief Technology Officer will be to evaluate our entire statewide network and migrate from microwave to IP where possible.

To further encourage on-line viewing, we have been aggressively expanding the number of WyomingPBS productions available for streaming. We continue to put all our new productions online and have also added over a dozen older programs from the series "Wyoming Chronicle" and "Main Street Wyoming."

3) Continue the outstanding tradition of local productions at WyomingPBS.

WyomingPBS producers continue making excellent programs in all our major series. In addition, we continue to work with independent producers to create signature programs like "Blizzard of '49," "Cheney: A Heartbeat Away," and "Over Wyoming."

"Blizzard of '49," "Cheney" and "Live from the Dennison Lodge" will be distributed nationally to PBS stations by NETA, further validating the quality of our programs.

So, where is WyomingPBS going in the future?

My “second year” goals are the same as my first.

1) Increase coverage for the station.

I'll continue to work to make the case for adding WyomingPBS to the Laramie/Cheyenne Dish Network.

However, we will also place an increased focus on promoting the availability of WyomingPBS both over the air and on-line. Through a variety of devices, you can watch WyomingPBS productions and PBS programs “Anytime, Anywhere.”

2) Improve the Network’s broadcast and on-line capabilities.

The new Chief Technology Officer is making a thorough review of our entire broadcast network. Greater attention to detail in maintenance and repair can make a significant impact on our reliability.

Continuing to move from microwave to Internet Protocol where possible will also increase our reliability.

We are also expanding our network to provide better coverage. We have several locations in the southern part of the state where a daisy chain of transmitters broadcast our over the air signal. Should one transmitter in the chain go off the air, we lose over the air coverage in large portions of the state. Expanding the network to provide redundant service is critical. So if we go off the air in Lander, for example, we still deliver a signal to the rest of Fremont County.

A major challenge for WyomingPBS will be migrating our transmitter and tower from Banner Ridge to Red Grade, outside of Sheridan. The land where the Banner Ridge transmitter sits will be deeded by the state to a private owner. The owner has agreed to give us one year to move. We are investigating sharing a tower site at Red Grade with Wyoming Public Media. This move will provide better over the air service to Sheridan.

We will greatly expand both the quality and quantity of our live on-line streaming. We currently use 1990’s technology to stream programs live. This Fall, we will explore moving to state of the art technology. This will allow us to stream all of our WyomingPBS productions at the same time as they are broadcast.

3) Continue the outstanding tradition of local productions at WyomingPBS.

As part of the FY 2017 budget process, I’ve met with each of the Producers. We have a solid production plan for our series. We will try, when possible, to concentrate our new episodes in July, November, February and May because the audience is measured then by Nielsen.

“Wyoming Chronicle”

We plan to create 21 new “Chronicles” for FY 2017. Eight will air in January and February, covering issues related to the Legislature and State Government. Six will air in April and May. Six will air in October and November. A Christmas themed program will air in December.

“Wyoming Perspectives”

Because we air so few “Perspectives,” promoting the series is very difficult. So we will incorporate the 60 minute, live phone in format as a “Wyoming Chronicle Special.” We plan for three of these Specials in FY 2017, including the traditional “One on One” with the Governor.

“Main Street, Wyoming”

We will create five new “Main Streets” plus introduce a new format. Three of the programs will be traditional 30 minute single subject documentaries. Two will be a new “magazine format” made up of several five to seven minute “features.” These features will also be used as independent shorts on air and will be distributed heavily through social media.

“Farm to Fork”

We will create six new episodes, with three airing in September and October and three airing in May. Clustering the shows will allow us to schedule them at a regular time and promote them as “the Fall (and Spring) season of Farm to Fork.”

“Capitol Outlook”

For the upcoming legislative session, “Outlook” will return to 60 minutes. The 30 minute version airing last January, with additional content “on the web” was a valuable experiment. However, feedback from viewers reinforced the problems older audiences have watching programs on-line.

“Our Wyoming”

A major new initiative will be “Our Wyoming.” These are a series of short segments, approximately 7:00 in length, highlighting the people, places, and events that make Wyoming unique. As with the short “Main Street, Wyoming” segments, these features will appear on-line and on-air.

Other documentaries in production by WyomingPBS Producers include “Glaciers of the Winds,” a study of the receding glaciers in the Wind River range and “Hidden Falls of Yellowstone,” a study of the little seen falls in the Bechler region of the park.

We will also continue partnering with the many outstanding independent producers telling the story of the state. In November, we will air an independent production on the sport of “highpointing,” visiting the highest points in each state. The program features two high school girls who try to summit Gannett Peak.

In December, former WyomingPBS Producer Geoff O’Gara will tell the story of the “Green River Drift,” one of the nation’s oldest running cattle drives. Another former WyomingPBS Producer, Tom Manning, is working to tell the story of “The Bozeman Trail.”

We will also be hiring a part-time Education coordinator in FY 2017 to revitalize our efforts, focusing on the creation of Learning Objects to use in the classroom.

Funding

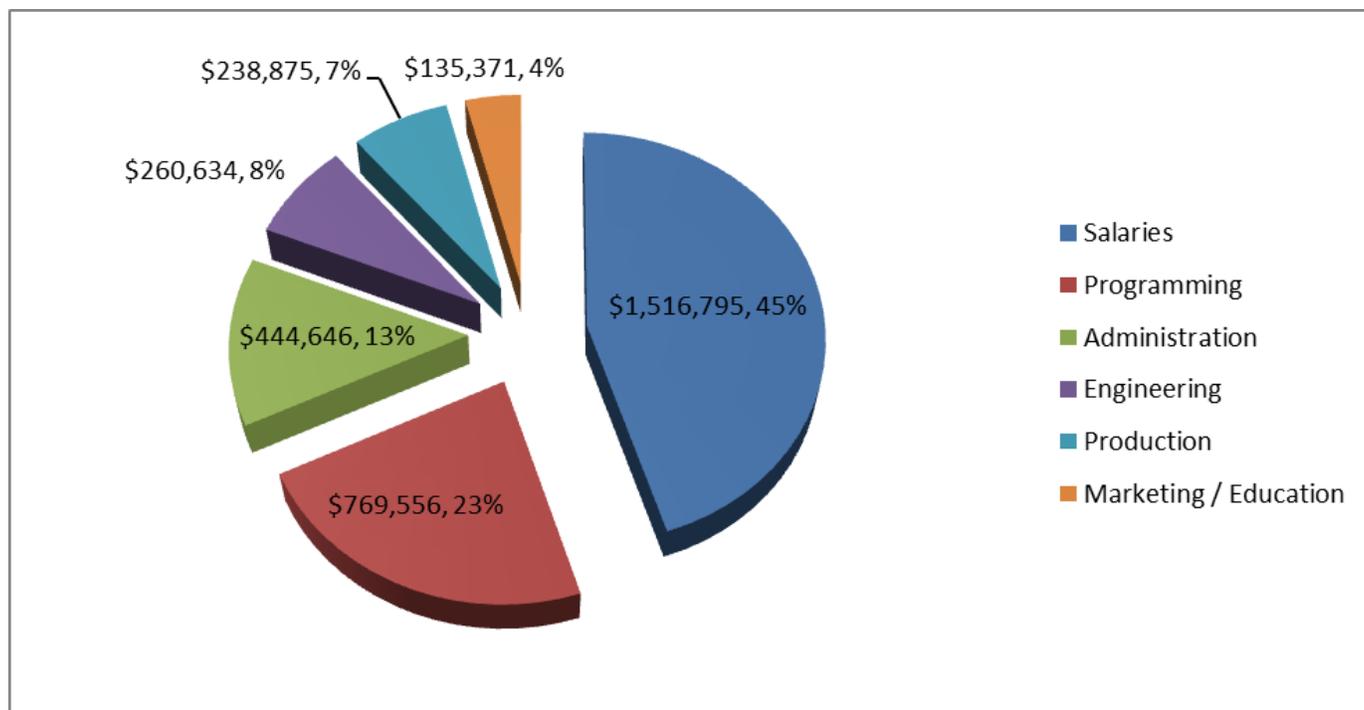
Fiscal Year 2016 Summary

Expenses

WPBS's estimated expenses for FY 2016 were \$3,365,877. Of that, 45% were in salaries and benefits, 23% in Programming, including PBS dues, 13% Administration, 8% Engineering, 7% Production, and 4% Marketing / Outreach / Education.

Salaries for this year were unusually high. Special retirement incentives for both the General Manager and the Assistant General Manager were paid in this Fiscal Year. Production expenses were also high as WyomingPBS produced three major documentaries with outside producers. Engineering was underfunded at 8%. 15% would be more appropriate for a network with our complexity.

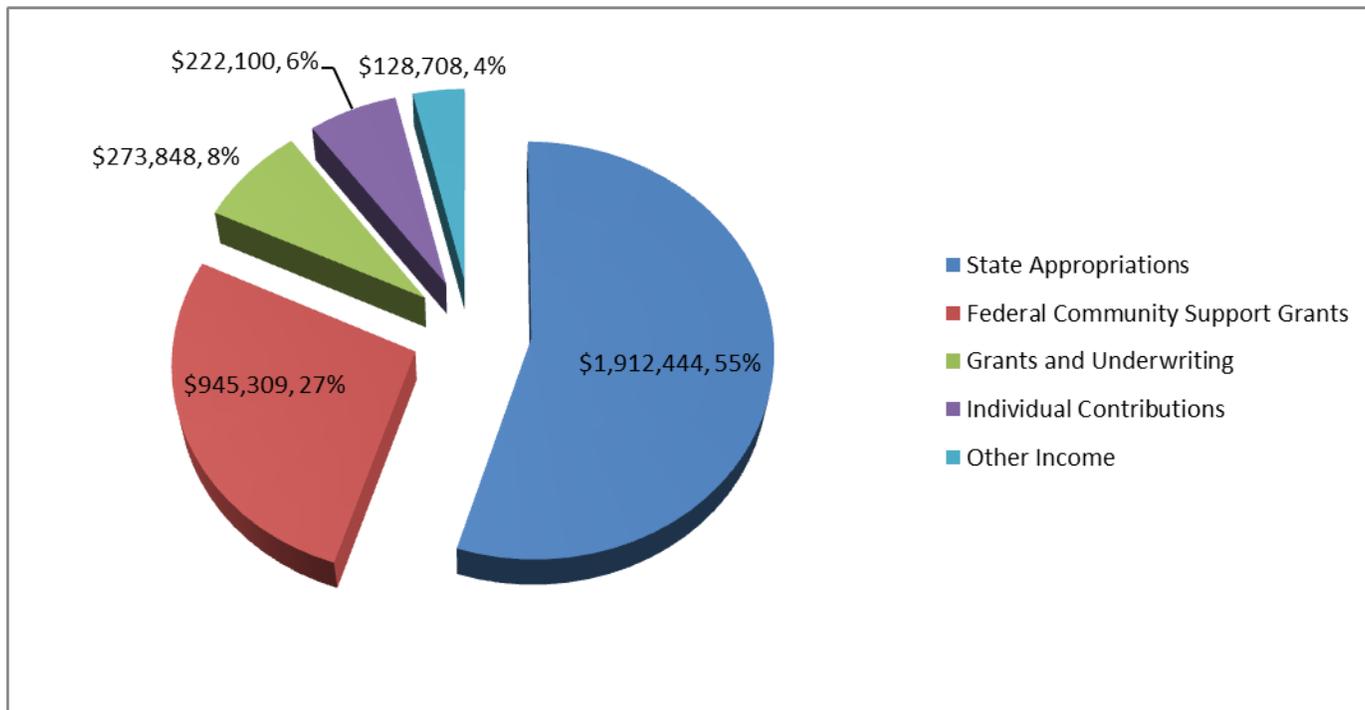
The Education component of WyomingPBS was significantly weakened when the Ready to Learn grant expired in FY 2015. Half of the Education expenditures in FY 2016 were on the Wind River Education Project.



Income

WPBS's estimated income for FY 2016 was \$3,482,409. Of that, 55% came from the State of Wyoming, 27% from Federal Funding, 8% from programming and production related grants and underwriting, 6% from individual Member contributions, and 4% from sources such as contract production and rental from our network of towers.

Grants and Underwriting was above average since special funding was raised to offset the cost of the three major outside productions. Any overage will be carried forward to FY 2017.



Fiscal Year 2017 Summary

The estimated funding from the state is \$1,718,326.50.

We are predicting flat funding from the WyomingPBS Foundation and reduced funding from Grants and Underwriting. However, our funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting will increase by approximately \$80,000. As a result, the estimated WyomingPBS budget for FY 2017 will be approximately \$3.2 million, a reduction of \$280,000 from FY 2016. To help meet this shortfall, we will reduce personnel costs by approximately \$200,000.

To reach this target, two positions at WyomingPBS have been eliminated – Network Operations Technician and Promotions Producer. A third position, Assistant General Manager, will not be filled in FY 2017. Existing staff will take on the responsibilities of those positions.

Fortunately, the loss of these positions will not impact our ability to create programs. The production staff is intact, and funding for local programs comes from grants, underwriting, and “Members like you.”

However, because we need to increase our Engineering and Education efforts, Fiscal Year 2017 will prove challenging.

Audience

WyomingPBS's audience is measured four times a year by the Nielsen Ratings service, February, May, July, and November. In May of 2010, approximately 31,500 citizens of Wyoming watched WyomingPBS at least once a week. In May of 2016, approximately 32,600 citizens watched at least once a week. Minimum change over six years might be alarming. However, commercial broadcasters in the state lost over 56% of their weekly viewers during this same time. WyomingPBS's ability to hold viewers in the face of cable and online competition comes from the unique programming we offer.

While broadcast viewing has remained stable, online viewing of WyomingPBS content has dramatically increased. During calendar year 2010, WyomingPBS videos were watched online a little over 1,000 times. During calendar year 2015, WyomingPBS videos were watched over 150,000 times online. If current trends continue, WyomingPBS videos will be viewed over 200,000 times online by the end of 2016.

Strategic Plan Update

Because CWC was updating their strategic plan, I delayed the start of updating the WyomingPBS Strategic Plan. However, we need to move forward independent of CWC because of their timeline and changes in senior Administrative positions. I'll start initial work in September, with a concentrated effort to take place in the Spring of 2017.

Respectfully submitted by Terry Dugas, General Manager of Wyoming PBS