MMCTV Board Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

October 12, 2026 (at MMCTV & online)

Board members present: Jay Furr, David Weaver, Tim Chamberlin. **Board members absent:** Ted Lyman
Staff present: Angelike Contis, Erin Wagg, Tom Astle, Jim Hering, Ruth Miller
Guests: Ben Havas (MMU student/MMCTV field producer); Logan Hegg (WRUJ volunteer, via Zoom)

Meeting called to order at 6.05

MINUTES 7/13/26*: Motion to approve July 13, 2026 minutes by Tim, seconded by David. Passes unanimously.*

STAFF UPDATES:

- **Recent productions.** Executive Director highlighted videos including a Community Senior Center presentation on Vermont's first female pilot, MMU sports, and pre-election clerk videos.
- **Meetings:** Ruth reports the number has increased after late-summer slump, due to budget season.
- **Zoom Rooms pilot.** Tom showed Erin and Angelike how Zoom Rooms could work for town hybrid conference rooms. Having a fixed setup could bypass issues with shared laptops and items moved and we can use much of existing equipment. We may need to add a 2nd computer/device for Zoom Room control. We will test a license this winter before bringing to towns.
- **Remote access.** We need an alternative, due to cost and security issues. Tom will help on this, and also meet with Jim to look at remote access issues with his device.
- **Programming.** Jim has successfully juggled using some time off by scheduling a week in advance before each week-long break. Election and sports content is heavy right now. Jim invited board members and staff to build playlists of one to three hours on a theme for him to schedule. Erin was suggested as a natural first curator.
- **Sports:** MMU team covered 1-2 games/week in fall sports. MMU student Isaac will cover boys' hockey. Hockey streams drew strong viewership last year.
- **Most-Viewed (Youtube) videos of the past year:** (1) Richmond Fourth of July parade, (2) MMU graduation, (3) Beta Technologies presentation for the Community Senior Center, (4) Camel's Hump drama show, (5) Harvest Market parade.

- **Upcoming events:** Richmond Selectboard appropriations, October 13; Angelike asks if board members available (no) for appropriations request of $5,500, up from $5,000 due to rising costs. MMCTV to give tech support/record October 17 Jericho Open House at MMU. MMCTV will present, film, and staff a table. October 20, Community Media Day**:** Open house at MMCTV with pizza and WRUJ DJs, after school till about 6pm. **October 31, Halloween:** MMCTV will help haunt the town hall in evening (plus trick or treating candy help) and Halloween on the (Volunteers) Green music 10am - 2 p.m. with Ben, middle schoolers, DJs, and staff. Speakers are needed.

THIRD QUARTER FINANCIALS

The Executive Director received the Q3 statements the day of the meeting.

- About $20,000 more in operating expenses than revenue, in line with the budgeted deficit.
- State of Vermont payment of more than $20,000 is expected for FY27, to again offset declining cable revenue/increasing costs. It should roughly cover shortfall.
- Comcast reported that cable subscribers in the three towns have fallen by about half since the last update. Comcast considers exact figure proprietary.
- Total current assets are $16,500 lower than a year ago.
- WRUJ fundraising is $11,734 so far, separate from $8,743 in state emergency response grant (for transmitter/EAS system). Across 2025 and 2026, radio brought in about $23,000 and spent about $16,000, before the antenna purchase and pending bills.
- Compensation is within budget. MMCTV is hiring more individuals than ever for small jobs.
- WRUJ accounting**:** Angelike and Kate spent time documenting records of all financial WRUJ income/expenses in 2025 and 2026. Angelike will see if bookkeepers can set up more radio accounting categories to help in this. The state's grant auditor approved our records for the $8,700 radio grant and advised separate categories for each grant as well as a division of duties.
- Board members were encouraged to review the statements and send questions or schedule a dedicated finance meeting. New revenue ideas are welcome given the falling Comcast revenue.

Vermont Access Network (VAN) Updates

The Executive Director chairs VAN's advocacy committee. This will be a very challenging/busy year. VAN is looking to pursue FY28 funding as well as advancing some new legislation aiming to capture tech/viewing changes. The Executive Director will attend the ACM Northeast conference in November.

Board vacancy

The bylaws call for five directors, and there are currently four. Angelike previously invited MMCTV collaborator and MMU student Ben Havas to consider the role. Ben introduced himself and wants to be more involved and to bring a younger voice and an inside view of MMU events. ***Tim nominated Ben to the MMU Board, noting that MMCTV's previous student director, Ver, served well. David seconded the nomination. The motion passed.*** The board appointed Ben to complete the remaining year of Ver's term.

Branding, messaging, and 30th anniversary

MMCTV turns 30 in 2027. The board discussed how to mark it, such as events, fundraising, or merchandise. The 20th anniversary harvest event and its commemorative glasses were recalled. The Executive Director wants to start using the 30-year message on the website and in outreach now.

A working group (David, the Executive Director, Beth, and Madeline) met this summer to discuss branding and messaging. David summarized several pressures on the brand:

- The cable channel is fading as a way people watch MMCTV.
- Younger viewers may not connect with the word "TV."
- At the senior center WRUJ meeting, attendees thought of radio as a dial and music, not streaming.
- The WRUJ logo carries no MMCTV branding, so the two run as separate brands with separate finances.
- Peer stations are dropping "TV" from their names.

He noted that a 30th anniversary is a natural moment to "honor the legacy by moving to the future." Fundraising from residents will require a clear case for what MMCTV is and what would be lost.

The idea of "RUJ Media" as an umbrella name came up in the working group. In discussion:

- Members agreed MMCTV currently has far more recognition than WRUJ.
- MMCTV was described as a trusted institution, and WRUJ as newer energy with many volunteers and fundraising.
- Logan said the name should honor 30 years while supporting future channels, and that RUJ is short and easy to say.
- RUJ ties to Richmond, Underhill, and Jericho, while MMCTV coverage is currently Richmond-heavy.
- PBS and Vermont Public were cited as rebrand examples.
- David cautioned that he is new to the community. He invited anyone who sees strong attachment to the current name to say so.

Suggested next steps:

- Ask Media Factory and JAM (White River Junction) how they evaluated their rebrands.
- Survey the community about what people value in MMCTV, as part of the Executive Director's community input work.
- Possibly involve an MMU, UVM, or St. Michael's class.
- Consider a non-binding naming input process.

The Executive Director noted that marketing capacity is limited. For example, no newsletter has gone out in three months.

Related items:

- Madeline is updating the MMCTV WordPress site and building out the WRUJ site.
-

- October is Archives Month. Middlebury digitized more than 100 remaining MMCTV VHS tapes for free and posted them to the Internet Archive. The archive could be featured for the 30th anniversary.

WRUJ radio update

- **FM launch:** WRUJ may go on air around the new year.
- **Antenna installation:** Burlington Communications quoted about $2,600 to raise the Richmond highway department antenna on the town center and mount WRUJ's antenna below it, at the licensed spot, without interference. Installation is targeted for November 18 to 20 and takes about a day. The selectboard needs to give a final OK. MMCTV hopes to film the climb.
- **Equipment:** An antenna (about $1,000) and a cavity filter (about $800) were bought from BSW on the advice of radio engineer Chip.
- **Translator license:** The FCC has opened a rare window for translator licenses. Kate and others are seeking private donors to help us apply. A tower site in Jericho, found through Pete Davis, will be visited soon. Engineering studies have cost $100 to $200 each.
- **Programming:** WRUJ has five regular shows: four weekly and one monthly. A programming meeting is set for Wednesday with Logan, Kate, and the Executive Director.
- **FCC compliance:** FM broadcast requires station ID at the top of the hour, emergency alert equipment (purchased), and content rules. WGDR is helping with training and rulebooks.
- **Volunteers:** Kate has done some paid work, about $1,000, and far more volunteer hours.
- **Lessons for MMCTV:** The radio effort has shown where MMCTV can improve, including accounting detail and protocols for volunteers using the building.

Adjournment - With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7.10pm

Action items

Action	Owner	Timing
Find outdoor speakers for the Halloween music table on Volunteers Green	Executive Director / staff	Before Oct 31
Meet to set up new remote access for Jim	Tom, Jim	Not set
Test a Zoom Rooms license before offering it to towns	Tom, staff	This winter
Build themed playlists for the channel schedule (open to board and staff)	Volunteers; Erin suggested	Ongoing
Review Q3 financials and send questions, or schedule a one-on-one	All board members	Before next meeting
Work with the accountant to add detailed WRUJ revenue and expense categories	Executive Director	Not set
Continue the branding working group: contact Media Factory and JAM, plan community input, and develop 30th anniversary ideas, including the archive	Working group (David, Executive Director, Beth, Madeline)	Report at next meeting
Coordinate the antenna installation and get select board approval to move the highway antenna	Executive Director, Burlington Communications	Install Nov 18 to 20
Visit the Jericho tower site and pursue translator license funding	Kate and radio volunteers	Coming weeks
WRUJ programming meeting	Logan, Kate, Executive Director	Wednesday [confirm date]