

WILLIAM & MARY WCWM-FM ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

In accordance with the Board of Visitors' operating policies for WCWM-FM, the following report is submitted as an annual review of the station's operations for 2023-2024.

WCWM-FM (90.9 MHz.) is a student fee funded, student-run, radio station falling under William & Mary's Media Council. The operating budget for FY24 is \$23,525.33, which is derived from the Student Activities portion of the Student Fee allocated by the Media Council. This budget covers basic operating expenses such as a contracted engineer, license fees, streaming fees, electricity, phone service, memberships, subscriptions, computer leases and any invoices due to supporting legal counsel. Major repairs, equipment purchases or replacement items, when necessary, have the possibility to be supported and covered through the reserve fund maintained by the Media Council. Currently WCWM's special funding requests from the Media Council reserve fund are at \$18,512.00 and of this number \$17,600 was spent on Spring Fest.

WCWM's membership consists of students who show an interest in working at the station. Training sessions are on-going. In-person training in the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters has resulted in 92 fully trained members of the organization. There have been a total of around 25 new shows added to the schedule for a total of 85 shows.

WCWM contracts with RDX Systems with services that can include: monthly inspections, measurements, calibrations and monitoring transmission frequency to maintain WCWM transmitters in accordance with FCC regulations. RDX Systems is also used for consulting in areas of equipment upgrades, purchases, and installations. As indicated in the FY22 and FY23 submitted reports, WCWM has also utilized additional consultative services and communication with Nathan Moore of the UVA radio systems. Mr. Moore has expertise in digital transmission and has provided invaluable formal and informal consultation to student staff as they update and replace equipment.

The primary update for station operations has been highlighted in the last 4 annual BOV reports. Due to construction, a long-term suitable location for a broadcast antenna following the demolition of the Campus Center has never been identified. The original antenna on PBK was not allowed to be replaced following the completion of PBK because it would void the roof warranty. Both unresolved antenna issues and equipment failure mean that the FM broadcast for WCWM has been inactive since April 2022. The station does continue to stream digitally. Over the past year, Student Leadership Development and WCWM were exploring an option to place a new broadcast antenna on top of a utility space adjacent to PBK. In February 2024, we received official notice from Facilities Management that this possible space is not a viable option and would not be allowed to proceed. At this point, there is not an on-campus option available for an antenna that would allow the station to resume their terrestrial broadcast. This information was provided to the station leadership in March 2024. It is the strong recommendation of Student Leadership Development that the station move to a streaming-only platform. Incoming station leaders continue to search for transmitter solutions.

WCWM has continued to settle into their new space in the Sadler Center and continue to benefit from the equipment upgrades and the physical move. Station members are active users of their new space.

The WCWM Vinyl Record and CD Collection continues to be a valuable asset to the station with no long-term storage solution. WCWM has worked to reduce the collection and move key assets to new storage in Sadler and will be moving what remains in Campus Center to a storage unit imminently. The deadline to have all remaining vinyl removed from Campus Center is May 2024.

Programmatic Highlights from 2023-2024: WCWM focuses a great deal of effort with excellent programming provided in the following ways:

- WCWM held Mini-Fest in Fall 2023, again in collaboration with the Meridian Coffeehouse, another music-related student organization. It was hosted on the Crim Dell Meadow and featured a variety of student and local acts.
- WCWM Fest was held on March 23, 2024 in the Little Theatre in Campus Center. This was perhaps the largest Fest since before COVID, featuring several student bands, Richmond's Box Factory, and our headliner, Tanukichan, who was contracted to fly out from California and perform for \$9,000. We also resumed our relationship with local A/V contractor ProTones Audio. Additionally, we invited numerous student and local vendors to sell their wares at the event, including jewelry, art, vinyl, CDs, clothing, and much more.
- Vinyl Tap printed and distributed a Fall 2023 issue. The Spring 2024 issue has been published digitally as of April 12, and magazine staff are currently working with printers to secure a printed run by the end of the semester. Vinyl Tap has seen extraordinary growth this academic year.
- WCWM continues to partner with multicultural organizations on campus, including the African Cultural Society and PLUMAS, to create a platform for the organizations to host radio shows. We plan to partner with more multicultural organizations to provide show blocks for them.
- WCWM continues to work on rebuilding its alumni network and email list, which was largely lost during the pandemic.
- Quarterly Programming lists are uploaded to the FCC Public File for WCWM each quarter highlighting various community issues highlighted via station broadcast.

Additional Operational Challenges and Opportunities:

- Any funding for special projects for WCWM (outside of their regular operating budget) are a challenge. WCWM can request Media Council Funding for special projects but the anticipated costs for a transmission solution are likely to exceed the resources available through Media Council. (The streaming solution is a very cost-effective option and all equipment to make this transition has already been secured in FY23.)
- The lease for the primary transmitter in Charles City is set to expire in 2025. Staff in SLD are engaged in communication with Financial Operations (oversight for the lease) and Facilities Management as it relates to addressing the anticipated expiration date of the previously active transmitter in Charles City (which has not been actively used since April 2022).

Staff in SLD worked closely with station managers John Dietz '24 and Evelyn Hall '25 and technical director Janelle Krupicka '24.

Evelyn Hall '25 is the incoming station manager and with Catie Swansiger '26, they will be the co-station managers for 2024-2025. Eden Miller '25 will be the new technical director.

Submitted by:

Anne Arseneau, Director

Office of Student Leadership Development