

Tuners,

Thanks to everyone who came out for last Thursday night's meeting of the Committee for Better Birmingham Radio... not a huge crowd, thankfully, because we were able to cut past the yip-yap and concentrate on getting some tasks accomplished. I counted fifteen people, including some new faces, several of whom brought valuable knowledge and experience to the challenge at hand.

The issue of bringing more diversified radio content to local airwaves finds its proponents falling into four separate, dovetailed groups:

1. Advocates for persuading our existing public radio station, WBHM, to expand its range of music and talk programming beyond strictly news and classical.
2. Those who feel that a current commercial license-holder can be convinced to experiment with a multi-format schedule.
3. Existing broadcasters of internet-only programming.
4. Long-range visionaries in favor of a completely new station on a now-unused AM or FM frequency.

Since any one of these initiatives might possibly lead to the realization of our goal, we are willing to examine them all, and continue to indulge those who would concentrate their efforts in specific directions. There was a rough formation of sub-committees according to those divisions, with the following objectives in mind---

A. The establishment of a WEBSITE to collect/direct information and input on our venture. For now, it is likely to be a no-cost MySpace site, capable of explaining the project to interested visitors, as well as gathering their contact information for further support.

B. A complete SEARCH FOR local broadcast FREQUENCIES that may be currently owned by non-users, in the hopes that we will find an interested ally with an available spot already on the dial.

C. One-on-one CONTACT with local station administrators, program directors, and managers, to underscore the community interest in imaginative programming, and to get their ongoing response to our proposals.

D. The creation of a SAMPLE CD that could illustrate the sound and texture of progressive radio, to be freely distributed to anyone unfamiliar with the genre. We have already secured the permission of several independent stations from other regions to use sections of their broadcast for this piece.

E. Securing the involvement and SUPPORT OF OTHER CIVIC GROUPS whose interests and objectives would be furthered through the services of a community-oriented station.

F. Attracting a BENEFACTOR, to help underwrite the costs of direct promotion and development of the group's activities. Financial assistance could make possible a long list of

effective educational and PR tools, such as advertising, special events--- perhaps even the purchase of syndicated programs for paid airtime blocks on local stations.

G. Building a LIST OF POTENTIAL SPONSORS, whose advertising dollars would provide the commercial support for new content. This list would include local businesses currently dissatisfied with the cost or effectiveness of their radio advertising, as well as others who would need more specific demographics to consider radio promotion.

H. Broadening the PUBLIC AWARENESS of the group's enterprise, through media exposure, special events, and word-of-mouth. Luckily, we have nearly universal support for our intentions, we simply have to show people how they can rally for the cause.

If you have particular strengths in an area that would help us manage some of these lil' missions, tell me about it, and I'll put you together with those of like mind. For the moment, I am serving as the contact point for communication from anyone with ideas and comments... please share this message with someone who might be able to contribute momentum. There's been no better time than the present to help Birmingham's broadcasters listen up, catch up, and grow up. We can thank each other later for the simple steps we take now.... but I thank you now anyway. We'll meet again soon.

Stay tuned!

keith harrelson  
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THE COMMITTEE FOR BETTER BIRMINGHAM RADIO seeks to bring original, indigenous broadcasting to a frequency on the AM or FM dial, serving audiences in the Birmingham metropolitan market. We represent the thousands of listeners who have asked for a station offering a wide variety of music and content, reflecting the tastes and interests of more than one narrowly-defined demographic. We believe that community-bred radio can be fresh, informative, inclusive, immediate, unpredictable, and entertaining. It should provide programming that devotes airtime to a broad range of writers and performers not typically heard on corporate affiliates, including local music, eclectic playlists created by volunteer show hosts, and ongoing discussion of community issues.