

Ken Laufer Candidate Statement

I'm Ken Laufer, WBAI listener since the 60s, member in 1996 of the SaveOurStation coalition. My job as a teacher of developmentally disabled High School students indicates that I have a lot of patience and am very tactful. If elected to the LSB, I'll use this diplomacy in seeing that meetings are conducted in a civil and respectful manner.

The current LSB majority, calling themselves the Justice and Unity Coalition, has had a destructive effect on WBAI and the local Board. Under their leadership for the past 3 years, WBAI faces the most serious financial woes in its history, with losses of listeners and financial support, due, in part, to the failure of JUC members to carry out their Board responsibilities. The LSBs committees do not function; some have not had a quorum in months. Budget discussions are rushed through. Programming is not evaluated. After stalling for 3 years, the LSB railroaded through an evaluation of the Program Director when the committee doing the evaluation was chaired by the PD's assistant!

I think that the firing without due process of Gary Null was one of the worst mistakes in Pacifica history, resulting in huge loss of revenue and listeners: an example of not seeing the forest for the trees..the trees being Gary's sometimes outrageous statements, the forest his vast audience and anti-establishment activism which fit WBAI like a glove! The messy firing of Robert Knight was another costly mistake.

The JUC Board majority has consistently stood against openness and transparency. When Pacifica Director Patty Heffley tried to see where our money was going, the JUC and their allies opposed her every step of the way with one roadblock after another. She should not have had to jump through hoops to look at the financial books. What were they hiding?

My LSB attendance record will be 100% (less acts of God.) I already attend every meeting in the audience. Votes have been lost by members not being there. To address our financial emergency I would vote to put the burden of the crisis on management, where it belongs, instead of the hard and long working underpaid staff. The JUC folks, while claiming to be workers' friends, actually voted to have staff bear the brunt of budget cuts, just as corporate CEOs do.

Let's bring back the Free Music Store, especially for contemporary classical music. (A voluntary admission would raise funds.) Full disclosure: I have a Masters degree from Juilliard, but perhaps a lot of you, like me, delight in the jazzed-up version of Bach's "Italian Concerto" as the theme-song of Janet Coleman's arts program. We could use a bit more classical music in between programs when there is time to fill. Please vote for me and/or other independent listener-candidates for LSB.

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