**Friends of South Dakota Public Broadcasting Board Report**

Submitted by Ryan Howlett

October 11, 2019

The start to FY20 has definitely been dynamic. We have seen major initiatives across all three of our business lines. Here’s a quick synopsis.

**Membership**

There has been a massive amount of change in membership since the June Friends Board Meeting. The launch of Friends 2.0 has been largely successful, despite some anticipated and some unanticipated hiccups.

The business model has changed from a process that we managed totally in-house through the Brookings staff, to a process that we direct that utilizes a series of vendors for implementation. The new process allows us to be more targeting and segmentation, has a more modern look and feel, allows our staff to focus on being more strategic, which will ultimately net more dollars in net revenue to Friends and SDPB.

The new mail product still has a monthly renewal cycle for gifts, but also has a campaign model integrated on top of the renewal efforts (typically around membership drives). These campaigns have multiple parts efforts; acquisition to reach new donors, lapsed and deep lapsed to reach former donors, additional gift mail to request an additional contribution. There is also a digital and email overlay to the product. The product is a much more assertive product and way of asking for contributions. While it is still early, the first returns have been quite positive.

The Brookings office closed on July 31 and Peggy Bush, Jerry Cooley and Kevin Samis have all since retired. Janet Gerjets is still with Friends in a part-time role. She is mainly working with customer service issues (payments, address updates, et cetera), helps with overflow items, and assists with training/support for Adam Davenport (Database Manager) as he gets up to speed.

Wendy Bergan began her tenure with Friends on August 12. Wendy is a seasoned non-profit veteran, who steps into our on-air fundraising manager. Her first major product is producing the October radio drive (14-26). On-air fundraising manager is a new role for Friends and one that has been clearly lacking in recent times.

The largest headwind that we are currently facing is customer service. With the uptick in asking, both in the mail and digitally, and the new format of the asking, as well as a strong August membership drive, the team is fielding a substantial uptick in customer service calls.

**Compared to Membership the Underwriting and Major Giving updates are relatively calm.**

**Underwriting**

The team has begun to address the structural updates that need to be made in order to have a third underwriting salesperson. We hope that this will happen in early 2020, but many of the updates that need to occur for this to happen lie with the staff at the SDPB Network (mainly additional support for trafficking more underwriting spots).

On October 1st, the Create television channel was opened for limited underwriting sales. Create has been a popular station and has a very specific audience. The first sale was closed on October 1 – McCrory Gardens at SDSU.

**Major Giving**

Theresa Schake has completed her time with the Membership team and has transitioned over to the Major Gifts team. She is building her prospect list in Central and Northeast South Dakota. She will operate remotely just as Carol Johnson does.

The materials for the Sound Vision Campaign have been sent to the printer. This should enable the four members of the giving team to be out and about visiting donors. We feel that we have come through the majority of the set-up issues for the Sound Vision Campaign and are now transitioning to having more donor contact time available.

The reboot of the SDPB Legacy Society (formerly Heritage Circle) has been largely successful as well. Since last summer we have identified 47 estate gifts with an expected gift total of over $5M. We recognized 8 of the recipients on October 3rd in Sioux Falls and will do the same with families West River on October 17.