



Mendocino County Public Broadcasting

KZYX& Z Programming Policy

Approved by the Board of Directors December 9, 2008

Policy Mission Statement:

This policy outlines how programming decisions are made at KZYX&Z and describes the role of the people involved in those decisions. The policy is designed to:

1. Strengthen KZYX&Z by facilitating communication about programming;
2. Describe a process and criteria for programming decisions;
3. Set up and define guidelines for the work of a KZYX&Z Program Advisory Council.

This policy was developed by the Programming Policy Committee appointed by the Board of Directors of Mendocino County Public Broadcasting in 2004. The committee included KZYX&Z staff members, board members, a member of the Community Advisory Board (CAB), programmers and members of the listening community. A policy draft was presented first to KZYX&Z programmers in February 2006 and then to the general public for feedback from March to June 2006 before being presented to the board for approval. The MCPB Board of Directors approved this policy at the July 11, 2006 board meeting with the agreement to review the policy for effectiveness one year from the seating of the first Programming Advisory Council.

The work of the committee was guided by the following goals, which were agreed to by the committee and approved by the Board at the outset of its work:

“Our goal is to propose to the Board of Directors what might work best for our station. We will endeavor to arrive at a process that:

- Does justice to our mission statement and long range plans;
- Allows the station’s programming to evolve to meet the needs of our listeners and the wider community and that
- Assures KZYX&Z will continue to thrive now and in the future.”

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Part 1: Program Advisory Council

In order to provide a continuously improving listening experience that reflects the needs of our diverse audience, the Program Advisory Council shall be an advisory group that gives input to the Program Director and receives input from the listening audience.

The council is the first point of contact for the Program Director when faced with significant decisions or projects related to programming and programmers.

The relationship between the Program Advisory Council and the Program Director is collaborative. The Program Director has responsibility for making program decisions.

The Program Advisory Council works with the Program Director to:

1. Provide broad-based input to inform programming decisions.
2. Assess all programming (local and non-local) (*see Appendix 1.1, Best Practices*);
3. Invite and evaluate new program proposals.

1.1 Program Advisory Council Membership

Anyone interested in serving on the council must complete an application. The Program Advisory Council has six (6) members selected from that common pool of applicants:

- 1 person selected by programmers;
- 1 person selected by Community Advisory Board/Group (CAB/CAG);
- 1 person selected by the MCPB board of directors;
- the remaining three members will be selected by the above council members and the Program Director. Initially, the remaining three members will be selected by the Programming Policy Committee in keeping with the application and interview process outlined in Appendix 2 and 4. The initial as well as the ongoing selection of Program Advisory Council members will be guided by a “Matrix of Needs” (*see Appendix 3*) to assure diversity of council membership.

Programmers are welcome to serve as members of the Program Advisory Council, but no more than two programmers may serve on the council at any one time. A programmer is defined in the same manner as called for in the MCPB Bylaws for programmers running for board elections:

Anyone who is a regularly scheduled program host, board operator or substitute program host, as determined by the program director, between July 1 and December 31 of the year prior to the year in which the programmer would start their term on the council, or who will be in the first quarter (January 1-March 31) of the following year.

In order to ensure broad-based community representation, members of the MCPB board of directors and the CAB/CAG may not concurrently serve on the Program Advisory Council.

Programmers, CAB/CAG and the board will each select by ballot, by ranking their choice of the top four candidates. At least one of these has to be a non-programmer.

Members will serve a two-year term and may serve as many terms as desired if selected, but with a mandatory one year off after two consecutive terms. In the event of any council member being unable to serve their full terms, the remaining council members may decide to select a replacement from existing applications or solicit new applications to fill the remainder of the term. (*See appendix for initial terms and turnover*).

Openings on the Program Advisory Council and invitations to apply will be announced widely to on the air (KZYX&Z), via Radio Waves, press releases, newspaper articles, on the KZYX&Z website and through personal recruitment.

In the event that the Program Advisory Council is meeting as the Community Advisory Board, programming members of the Program Advisory Council may not take part in Community Advisory Board deliberations.

1.2 Guidelines for the Work of the Program Advisory Council

The Program Advisory Council will meet quarterly. The council will:

- Seek out, invite and consider public input in advance of Program Advisory Council meetings.
- Seek consensus whenever possible; Consensus is achieved when everyone on the team has had ample opportunity to have his or her ideas considered and can fully support the team's decision. Consensus decisions mean that the entire team has come to agreement on a course of action, even if individuals might have a different preference. If consensus cannot be reached, differing opinions will be documented in the written meeting notes of each council meeting. The Program Director will take all points of view into consideration.
- Work within the framework of the MCPB Station Handbook and Strategic Plan.
- Provide written recommendations to the Program Director following each meeting.

If the Program Director in conjunction with the General Manager and the Board of Directors agrees that the Program Advisory Council is no longer fulfilling its function, the Board of Directors may dissolve the council and either begin the process of forming a new one or devise new policies for program decisions.

In the context of the ongoing work of Program Advisory Council and Program Director, it is anticipated that the Board of Directors as a whole, or individual directors, will have no direct input or influence on programming decisions, unless disputes are brought to the board under the procedures outlined in the KZYX&Z Station Handbook.

Part 2: Programming Decisions

Programming is our most effective audience-building tool. The purpose of programming is to serve our listeners, our mission and the directives of our strategic plan:

Our goal is to entertain, inform and contribute to the enjoyment, enrichment and wellness of our diverse community. We provide programming as a platform for expressing our common humanity.

Balanced Programming

- *We are dedicated to excellent programming that responds to the needs of our community as a complement to other media.*
- *We pledge to be a responsible, responsive and inclusive medium for news, information, music, performing arts, and entertainment.*

We are committed to the finest in national, international and locally produced programs We provide a forum for open dialog and diverse perspectives on issues of local interests.

Programming is an evolutionary process. KZYX&Z will continuously embrace creative change and be open to new programming that serves current listeners and attracts new ones.

This policy outlines the process for assessing current programming, for making program changes and for providing feedback to our programmers and to our community.

2.1 Program Assessment

The Program Advisory Council works with the Program Director to assess all programming on a regular basis to further the goals of the MCPB Strategic Plan and to ensure compliance with the KZYZ&Z Station Handbook.

The Program Advisory Council will define a list of criteria, questions, and standards used in the assessment process to:

1. Recognize excellence in programming;
2. Identify areas in need of improvement;
3. Make recommendations for change.

2.2 Program Changes

It is recognized that programming on KZYZ&Z needs to evolve over time in order to continue to meet the needs of our listeners and remain a vital and relevant resource for our community. These changes should be proactive and based on increasing listener service as well as programming goals set forth in the strategic plan. This is true for individual programs and the program schedule as a whole.

The Program Director is responsible for programming decisions. The Program Advisory Council advises the Program Director on these matters.

Program change can occur when any one of the following occurs:

- A program slot becomes available when a programmer leaves their program.
- A recommendation is made through the assessment and discovery process.
- Opportunities arise for special programming such as holidays or political events.
- KZYZ&Z management determines that a change is needed.

The Program Director will publicly invite proposals for new local programming on a regular basis and when the need for a new program arises. The Program Director and the Program Advisory Council will review all proposals at the quarterly meeting. When a proposal is accepted, the person making the proposal will be referred to appropriate staff for training and program development.

Proposals that are not accepted may be revised and resubmitted.

New programs added to the schedule will be reviewed by the Programming Council after 90 days or during the first Program Advisory Council meeting following the third program, whichever comes first.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Best Practices

The following “best practices” will guide the work of the Program Director and the Programming Council in assessing locally produced programming.

The best programmers:

- a) Create programming that is interesting, engaging and entertaining, timely, topical and relevant.
- b) Are reliable, show up on time, give plenty of notice.
- c) Are technically proficient and strive to increase their skills.
- d) Are respectful of staff, other volunteers and listeners.
- e) Understand that any program is a collaboration among programmers, the Program Director, the Program Advisory Council and listeners.
- f) Are adaptable regarding timeslots and program changes.
- g) Realize they are part of a whole and are committed to the overall success of the station.
- h) Promote and support our station, including full participation in pledge drives.

Appendix 2 Desired Qualities for Program Advisory Council Members

Program Advisory Council members will be selected with the following characteristics in mind:

- Understanding the mission of community radio.
- Good listeners in every sense of the word (to the radio, in meetings).
- Diverse backgrounds with a variety of ages and tastes.
- Open-mindedness and ability to work well with others.
- No agenda or a single issue to promote.
- Willingness and ability to focus on serving the interests of our listenership as a whole.
- Ability to help reach greater audiences and make us representative of our community.
- Knowledge of what good radio sounds like.

Experience and background in radio programming is welcome and valued, but not required.

Appendix 3: Program Advisory Council Selection Process and Timelines

1. Publish opening and collect applications: 45 days.
2. Conduct ballot process for the members selected by board, CAG/CAB and programmers: 30 days.
3. Fill out matrix of needs; interview and select the three remaining members: 30 days.

Initially, random assignment of terms, evenly divided between the three members selected by programmers, CAG and board and the three remaining members:

To assure a gradual turnover of the Program Advisory Council, initial council members will serve staggered terms to assure a gradual turnover. The members selected by the board, programmers and CAB/CAG will serve a one or two year term, randomly assigned. The members selected by the Programming Policy Committee will serve a one or two year term, randomly assigned.

Appendix 4: Matrix of Needs for Program Advisory Council Members

The purpose of the matrix is to assure that the council composition reflects the diversity of our community.

This matrix is a working document that will be completed initially by the Program Policy Committee and later by the Program Advisory Council annually for new applicants. It informs the appointment process and the vote of programmers, the CAB/CAG and the Board of Directors for representatives on the council.

	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4	Member 5	Member 6
CONSTITUENCY						
Programmer – 2 max						
Volunteer						
Underwriter						
Member						
Organizer/Activist						
Education						
Arts/Culture						
Business						
Government						
Labor						
Cultural Community						
AFFINITY						
Public Affairs/Talk						
Local News						
National News						
Spoken Word/ Comedy / Drama						
Alternative Music						
Blues/R&B/Soul						
Classical						
Folk/Bluegrass/Am						
Jazz						
World						
Rock						
GEOGRAPHY						
Coast						
Anderson Valley						
Inland						
DEMOGRAPHIC						
Female						
Male						
Other Gender						
Person of Color						
Under 30						
30 – 45						
45 – 60						
60 – 75						
Over 75						

Appendix 5: KZYZ&Z Program Advisory Council Application (2 pages)

1) Contact Info:

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: (Daytime) _____ (Evening) _____
Email: _____

2) Demographic Information:

Completion of this section is optional. This information will help make sure that the KZYZ&Z Program Advisory Council reflects the diversity of our current and potential listening community.

Age: _____ Gender: _____ Sexual Orientation: _____
Ethnicity/Cultural Affiliation: _____

3) Affiliation with KZYZ&X (please check all that apply):

Member Underwriter
 Listener/non-member Programmer
 Volunteer Other (pls. describe) _____

4) Your Programming Interests (please check all that apply):

Public Affairs/Talk Classical
 Local News Folk/Bluegrass/Am
 National News Jazz
 Spoken Word / Comedy / Drama World
 Alternative Music Rock
 Blues/R&B/Soul

5) Background Information:

1. How long have you been a listener?
2. How long have you lived in the KZYZ&Z broadcast area?
3. Do you have any previous involvement with the station? If so, what?

4. Please list current or relevant affiliations with other community groups or professional organizations.

5. In your opinion, what is the mission of community radio as it relates to KZYZ&Z?

