

2023 CORPORATION FOR Public Broadcasting (CPB)

Station Activity Survey (SAS)

Section 6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

1. Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs, and interests through your station's vital local services, such as multiplatform long and short-form content, digital and in-person engagement, education services, community information, partnership support, and other activities, and audiences you reached or new audiences you engaged.

WTIP North Shore Community Radio, in Cook County Minnesota, in the middle of our 25th Birthday year, 2023, launched the creation of a Strategic Framework. This was a new process for WTIP, navigating change in times of uncertainty and evolving into a new era. The many ideas and reflections that we heard were all considered in creating our framework. Our commitment is to our listeners as the “community” of North Shore Community Radio.

This 3-year Framework sets the stage for a dynamic future, continuing and yet markedly accelerating an evolution toward a new era in Broadcast Media. While this may be a ‘big shift’ on some levels, WTIP’s commitment to radio will not shift. A “quirky North Shore vibe” will not shift. A diversity of programming will not shift.

This framework commits to three important shifts on behalf of the North Shore community:

MULTI-PLATFORM BROADCAST MEDIA

Expansion of the tools of communication to become radio that is both rooted in its traditional means, but is also relevant to next generations and communications habits, through expansion of digital access points.

DEEPENED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Embracing broader community engagement; cultivating more interactive connections, more partnership, and deepened engagement across generations, cultures, and community groups.

CAPACITY

The foundation anchoring this framework is a fundamental shift in the workplace culture of the organization toward one that prioritizes relationships, team development and learning. Broadcast radio is much different these days, with ever-changing technology, the addition of online content sharing and multi-media channels, but our on-air radio signal is still as important now as it was then. While technology has increased our range of listeners, being an integral part of our Cook County community continues to be our goal, much like our founders envisioned 26 years ago. The award-winning WTIP news team continues to share local news and stories from a community-based perspective. And we've now added video to the way our team delivers the news, bringing you along to the places and events taking shape all over the northland. I'm also excited to share that WTIP has partnered with MPR for ongoing trainings that are tailored for our staff and volunteer hosts.

Through the years, WTIP has partnered with the Association of Minnesota Public Educational Radio Stations (AMPERS) and the National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB), making us a part of the state and national network of community broadcasters. We most recently were a part of the 2023 NFCB Community Counts Initiative. Myself, along with Staci Drouillard, legacy projects coordinator and Mary Somnis, board president took part in initiatives designed to navigate growth and change as we move into the future of WTIP.

The overall goal of WTIP North Shore Community Radio is to be a station for community members to share their stories of living in or visiting the North Shore region of Lake Superior. WTIP accomplishes this by showcasing the work of local musicians and hosting musicians to play live on the air.

Our news department remains focused on reporting local news and speaking with public officials about issues that affect everyone in our listening area.

WTIP also provides a platform for storytelling, creating community events that center around radio and live music, and encouraging people to engage with us on the air, on social media and over the phone, to share what is happening in the community. We share information in a timely manner, both by broadcasting over the air and streaming programming around the world. Our multi-use web site, with archived shows, on-demand podcast segments and regular postings on social media allow us to reach a more diverse audience than those reached strictly across the airwaves. This is evidenced by analyzing web traffic data, the number of on-demand listens and social media posts/responses.

WTIP has always played a major part in notifying our listeners about emergency situations as they occur in our area. From school closings, power outages, broadband, telephone interruptions and more. We deliver the information on the air as well as posting it on our website and on social media.

WTIP provides a place to create community conversation and explore ideas that are essential to fulfilling our mission.

- WTIP produces three daily news and information programs Monday-Friday (Daybreak from 7 to 8 am, North Shore Morning from 8 to 10 am each day, and North Shore News Hour 12 to 1 pm and 5 pm, Monday thru Thursday) plus three hours on Saturday (North Shore Weekend from 7 to 10 am). All four of these programs feature local, community voices, fresh interviews and conversations with local leaders. Our reporters and producers speak regularly with local organizations, elected officials, and governmental agencies, interspersed with produced features on the history, arts and culture of our region, as well as information on local events, meetings and a weekly music calendar.
- WTIP is taking a deeper look at who we are as a community by producing "It Happens Here: The Roots of Racial Inequity on the North Shore". Part of our effort is our commitment to learn more about the history of where we live here on the North Shore—from a time long before the first towns were established and the first European settlers arrived. WTIP digs into land history, the background of our early school systems and talking to a number of people who can help us answer some of the many questions we have about how we fit into the “big” picture when it comes to the various forms of racism and the roots of racial inequity.
- WTIP produces Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak, hosted by Erik Redix, Ojibwe Language Coordinator for the Grand Portage Ojibwe, and features Ojibwe first speakers telling stories in English and Ojibwemowin—the Ojibwe Language.
- WTIP partners with the North Wood Food Project produces the monthly, hour long program Northern Gardening, which incorporates listeners’ ideas and examines the unique concerns that flower and vegetable growers have regarding the challenging climate and soil conditions found along Lake Superior and Minnesota’s North Shore.
- With a greater emphasis on books and renewed interest in reading, both nationally and locally, WTIP’s Superior Reads and Superior Reviews with Lin

Salisbury helps to connect listeners with new books and regional authors. These segments are both short features in form of book reviews, as part of North Shore

- WTIP produces The Boundary Waters Podcast capturing stories about the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW), the most visited wilderness area in the United States, which is often referred to as “Minnesota’s crown jewel.”

2. Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you collaborated, including other public media outlets, community nonprofits, government agencies, educational institutions, the business community, teachers and parents, etc. This will illustrate the many ways you’re connected across the community and engaged with other important organizations in the area.

Many non-profit organizations in Cook County provide monthly and supplemental updates when needed, to inform our listeners about the services they offer, special events and news on what they are doing in, and for, the community. Key Initiatives in 2023 include:

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- You can WTIP produces regular interviews and updates with a wide variety of partners including, our city and county government officials:

Cook County Emergency Management brings listeners updates regarding public safety, calls for volunteer to specific projects and their current affairs.

Cook County Chamber of Commerce and Visit Cook County visit each month to bring community events and updates regarding policies regarding county and state wide taxes and more.

North House Folk School has one staff member per month giving school updates and several instructors per month giving overviews of their particular class.

Sawtooth Mountain Clinic and North Shore Hospital executive directors give updates following each of their board of director meetings.

Grand Marais Art Colony, North Shore Music Association, Cook County Local Energy Project, Arrowhead Electric Cooperative, Grand Marais Playhouse, Lake Superior Coastal Program provide our listeners current information regarding their organizations monthly.

The National Weather Service is interviewed twice per week regarding weather issues.

Also appearing as needed are the local Economic Development Authority, Housing Redevelopment Authority, the US Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources, Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Anishinaabe, all of our volunteer fire departments, the Sheriff's department, our elementary and high-school principals and school superintendent, representatives from the School Board, five area historical societies and museums, Local Mental Health Advisory Council, Go Dog North Shore and Cook County Food Shelf.

- WTIP held broadcasts from the Grand Marais Arts Festival, the Gunflint Canoe Races and the Gun Flint Mail Run Sled Dog Race. These remote broadcast allowed people from around Cook County and the nation to experience parts of living in our beautiful area.

- WTIP has a strong participation with the Ampers network, a group of 18 different community radio stations throughout Minnesota. The programming serves and teaches others about underserved populations including communities of color, new immigrants, Native American and rural areas not served by traditional media. Whether it's sharing Ampers produced programming like Minnesota Native News, Native Lights or Veteran's Voices, or serving as a peer consultant for other area stations, WTIP makes a great effort to stay in touch with our fellow Ampers stations and the Ampers administrative staff. Staci Drouillard, WTIP's legacy coordinator, serves as Ampers Vice-President.

- Through the years, WTIP has partnered with National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB), making us a part of the state and national network of community broadcasters. We most recently were a part of the 2023 NFCB Community Counts Initiative. Matthew Brown, director, along with Staci

Drouillard, legacy projects coordinator and Mary Somnis, board president took part initiatives designed to navigate growth and change as we move into the future of WTIP.

- The Station Manager is a Board Member of the Sawtooth Mountain Clinic (SMC) and attends its monthly meetings.

3. What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community? Describe any known measurable impact, such as increased awareness, learning or understanding about particular issues. Describe indicators of success, such as connecting people to needed resources or strengthening conversational ties across diverse neighborhoods. Did a partner see an increase in requests for related resources? Please include direct feedback from a partner(s) or from a person(s) served.

WTIP-FM (Grand Marais/Gunflint Trail/Grand Portage) broadcasts at 90.7 FM in Grand Marais with translators at 89.1 FM on the Gunflint Trail and 90.1 FM in Grand Portage. Operated by Cook County Community Radio, WTIP is the first community radio station broadcasting on the North Shore of Lake Superior. The station engages visitors and residents throughout a 1,500 square mile area of woods and waters, including the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Serving all of the communities along the North Shore, from Two Harbors to Grand Portage, on the Gunflint Trail and across Lake Superior on the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, WTIP provides an arena for information-gathering, discussion, and expression.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

ANISHINAABE BIZINDAMOO MAKAK

Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak, which translates to Anishinaabe Listening Box (radio), was the result of a partnership between WTIP and the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe. The show was hosted by Ojibwe Language Coordinator and teacher Erik Redix, whose bilingual approach to storytelling featured telling

stories in English and Ojibwemowin - the Ojibwe language. The monthly half-hour program welcomed guests Maajigwaneyaash (Dr. Gordon Jourdain); Karen Drift; Obizaan and Chato Gonzales; Nancy Jones; and Anton Treuer. Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak was a year-long project, resulting in 12 episodes.

WTIP estimates that about 13,000 people heard the on-air elements of the project. The shows were also made available via Soundcloud, receiving more than 500 listens. Providing on-demand access via Soundcloud increased awareness about the cultural and environmental issues and topics relevant to the Lake Superior Region, including tribal lands. Full episodes of Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak were also available on the station's website, providing Minnesotans of all ages, ethnicities, abilities, and incomes with better access to cultural and history programming created by public broadcasting.

IT HAPPENS HERE: THE ROOTS OF RACIAL INEQUITY ON THE NORTH SHORE

- WTIP takes a deeper look at who we are as a community by producing "It Happens Here: The Roots of Racial Inequity on the North Shore". Part of our effort is our commitment to learn more about the history of where we live here on the North Shore—from a time long before the first towns were established and the first European settlers arrived. WTIP digs into land history, the background of our early school systems and talking to a number of people who can help us answer some of the many questions we have about how we fit into the “big” picture when it comes to the various forms of racism and the roots of racial inequity. It Happens Here: The Roots of Racial Inequity on the North Shore won first place for “Best Series” from the Midwest Broadcast Journalists Association for It Happens Here: The Roots of Racial Inequity on the North Shore, produced and written by Staci Drouillard and co-hosted by Leah Lemm. (2022).

The series also received a Regional Edward R. Murrow Award for “Excellence in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.” (2022) Awards were issued in 2023 for work completed in 2022. Working closely with community members Tim Cochrane, John Morrin, Marisa Anywaush, Amira Anderson, Tyler Howell (who all served as project advisors and content contributors), and Mille Lacs band member Leah Lemm (co-host), WTIP produced six, eight- to 19-minute segments. Guests included University of Minnesota professor Brenda Child and former Grand Portage Chairman Norman Deschampe, among others.

BOUNDARY WATERS PODCAST

The Boundary Waters Podcast captured stories about the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW), the most visited wilderness area in the United States, which is often referred to as “Minnesota’s crown jewel.” WTIP provided its audience with an audio format they could take with them into the BWCAW, beyond the reach of the radio station’s signal. The podcast consisted of lively 25- to 40-minute conversations. The Boundary Waters Podcast partnered with Borderland Lodge, Bucks Hardware, NorthStar Canoes, Piragis, Tuscarora Lodge, Sawbill Outfitters, Bent Paddle Brewing, and Ely Outfitting Company.

WTIP produced 27 episodes, garnering almost 60,000 listens on Soundcloud in 2023. Links to the bi-monthly episodes of the Boundary Waters Podcast were showcased as Hero images on WTIP’s website, adding up to 60 minutes of wilderness-related content and information to the catalog of content published monthly on WTIP. The station estimates that about 13,000 people heard the on-air elements of the yearlong project.

NORTHERN GARDENING

WTIP partners with the North Wood Food Project and Sarah Waddle, Community Center Director and Extension Educator, produces the monthly, hour long program Northern Gardening, which incorporates listeners’ ideas and examines the unique concerns that flower and vegetable growers have regarding the challenging climate and soil conditions found along Lake Superior and Minnesota’s North Shore.

RADIO WAVES MUSIC FESTIVAL (RWMF)

The Radio Waves Music Festival (RWMF) is a celebration of local music and community on the North Shore of Lake Superior. This annual festival organized by WTIP Community Radio brings together:

- Diverse musical acts, spanning many genres;
- A balance of new artists and local favorites;
- An audience of area residents and seasonal visitors;
- Community service partners and local food makers;
- A welcoming and family-friendly atmosphere;

- A uniquely beautiful location found only on the North Shore of Lake Superior.

This festival is not a fundraiser for WTIP but a give back to our community for their support over the years. As WTIP can keep the ticket prices affordable for all, including families, this event is an annual, community outreach event and has become a tradition for visitors, area residents, and performing musicians.

COMMUNITY VOICES ON NORTH SHORE MORNING AND NORTH SHORE WEEKEND

In 2023, WTIP produced 100 new segments that were featured on Community Voices on North Shore Morning and North Shore Weekend. These regular features came from WTIP projects Trail Time (22 segments), focusing on the Gunflint Trail; Notes from Reservation River (ten segments), essays from Grand Portage band member and writer Jess Koski; Superior Reads (14 segments). In all, Community Voices on North Shore Morning and North Shore Weekend contributed 676 hours of content showcasing Minnesota musicians, artists, historians, writers, scientists, storytellers, and other locally focused, Minnesota created content. Features were uploaded to Soundcloud and shared via WTIP's website. Regular features produced in 2023 received over 10,000 Soundcloud listens. The Community Voices on North Shore Morning and North Shore Weekend project earned a prestigious award from the Midwest Broadcast Journalists. A segment from Notes from Reservation River, written by Jess Koski and produced by Staci Drouillard, received first place in the Broadcast Writing division in 2023.

THE LAKE SUPERIOR PROJECT

The Lake Superior Project explored the culture, environment, and history of Lake Superior and how the Lake affects people's lives and culture along Minnesota's North Shore. The station utilized new and existing partnerships, interviews with organizations and individuals, relationships with members of tribal governments and Band members, and uncovered new resources to highlight and enhance the rich cultural legacy of our region. WTIP produced five segments over six months. Produced by different storytellers, The Lake Superior Project is a cornerstone arts and cultural heritage feature on WTIP. The station partnered with Superior National Forest, Tettegouche State Park, and the Grand Portage Band of Ojibwe.

4. Please describe any efforts (e.g. programming, production, engagement activities) you have made to investigate and/or meet the needs of minority and other diverse audiences (including, but not limited to, new immigrants, people for whom English is a second language and illiterate adults) during Fiscal Year 2023, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2024. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

At 8.7 % of the population, Native Americans are the predominant minority population in NE Minnesota. The tribal lands of the Grand Portage Anishinaabe are included in our listening area and in cooperation with the Band, WTIP installed a transmitter to serve the Grand Portage Reservation in 2008. This essential piece of broadcasting equipment connects the reservation to WTIP's on-air broadcasts and helps to ensure the safety and well-being of the people, homes and businesses in Grand Portage, by increasing WTIP's capacity to relay emergency information in a timely way. The Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (Anishinaabe) was an early government, organizational and business partner with WTIP. We are in constant contact with the band to bring information on relevant issues.

WTIP LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

WTIP North Shore Community Radio is located on the ancestral homelands of Ojibwe/Anishinaabe people. We honor the vital contributions of the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe, and gratefully acknowledge the history of the people, the legacy of this land, and recognize that Ojibwe people are still here, and are the original stewards of this land.

WTIP takes a deeper look at who we are as a community by producing *It Happens Here: The Roots of Racial Inequity on the North Shore*. Part of the effort is our commitment to learn more about the history of where we live here on the North Shore—from a time long before the first towns were established and the first European settlers arrived. Episodes are monthly and hosted by Leah Lemm, member of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and host of the *Native Lights* podcast, and Staci Drouillard a Grand Portage Band of Ojibwe tribal descendant and WTIP producer. WTIP also produces *Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak* features Ojibwe first speakers telling stories in English and Ojibwemowin—the Ojibwe Language. These episodes air monthly and are hosted by Erik Redix, Ojibwe Language

Coordinator for the Grand Portage Ojibwe. Produced by Staci Drouillard, Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak is a partnership between the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe and WTIP Community Radio.

WTIP has produced many programs and revisits features that reflect the culture of Indigenous people including a weekly Native American music program, First Nations Time, hosted by John Morrin, a Grand Portage tribal member.

WTIP also airs Anishinaabe Way, a feature produced by Grand Portage descendant Staci Drouillard in 2012-2016, featuring conversations with Ojibwe people to learn more about the work they do, the art that they produce, and the impact that their culture has on their modern lives.

WTIP airs the weekly one-hour show, Indigefi, with Alexis Sallee from Koahnic Broadcast Corporation, with new and trending Indigenous artists. In addition, WTIP purchases and airs, Native Lights Podcast, daily National Native News Health Updates, National Native News, Soul Deluxe from Native Voice One We also carry several features produced by Ampers including Minnesota Native News, Northern Lights Podcast and Counter Stories.

5. Please assess the impact that your CPB funding had on your ability to serve your community. What were you able to do with your grant that you wouldn't be able to do if you didn't receive it?

For many years, WTIP's association with CPB is a shining light for our station, members and our community. Cook County, located in Northeastern Minnesota, is one of Minnesota's largest counties by area, but due to federal and state lands, we have just 18% private land with 5000+ residents. With no over-the-air television signals, limited cell phone coverage and a once a week published newspaper, WTIP's three stations/transmitters keep our residents educated and informed with current vital information.

Yearly CPB funds are essential to us maintaining a strong signal. Broadcast radio is much different these days, with ever-changing technology, the addition of online content sharing and multi-media channels, but our on-air radio signal is still as important now as it was then. While technology has increased our range of

listeners, being an integral part of our Cook County community continues to be our goal, much like our founders envisioned 26 years ago. CPB funding allows WTIP to pay for essential services that range from electricity and rent to keep our transmitters running at peak capacity as well as the constant barrage of ever-changing technology allowing us to implement new strategies and further innovate how we deliver radio service, while engaging new listeners and providing good service to our business and organizational partners.

BECAUSE OF CPB FUNDING WE ARE ABLE TO:

- Select and purchase quality national programming that resonates with our listener-members.
- Continue the efforts of our award winning news department.
- Train our staff and volunteers to create high quality, professionally produced news, arts, culture and historical features specifically about our region.
- Sustain our locally created, interactive and issue driven Community Conversations program, which was originally created as a direct result of CPB's Community Engagement Initiative.

- During the decisive divides in our country, WTIP continues to offer public health information, locally focused news and features that reflect this unique and interesting community.

OUR MISSION

WTIP exists as a dynamic, local media resource that connects, reflects, and builds community on the North Shore of Lake Superior.

VALUES

- Local voices
- Ethical journalism
- Inclusiveness, belonging
- Our natural environment
- Entertainment

- Diverse programming
- Unique, North Shore culture
- Community well-being

VISION

Our vision is to inspire dynamic community media for the future of the North Shore, by providing a forum for local perspectives that supports an informed public, is built on journalistic integrity, empowers storytelling, strengthens our democracy, and invests in the well-being of our community.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

WTIP North Shore Community Radio is located on the ancestral homelands of Ojibwe/Anishinaabe people. We honor the vital contributions of the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe, and gratefully acknowledge the history of the people, the legacy of this land, and recognize that Ojibwe people are still here,

With the of CPB funds, WTIP is able to meet our mission on all counts and in a variety of ways. Our station staff, board of directors and listeners are very grateful to CPB for supporting rural community radio!