

KJAJ – How ego gets in the way of progress

He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it. – Martin Luther King

Scott Cooper wanted to add three board members to KJAJ, all of whom were connected to AYA. Given Travis Hayer now worked for AYA the KJAJ board was already comprised of 30% AYA representatives. This was a huge concern to me because boards are not supposed to discuss or predetermine decisions outside of board meetings. Additionally, the makeup of the board can impact our ability to raise funds through grants. Scott was suggesting 67% of the KJAJ board would consist of his friends and employees from AYA. Of course, I was adamantly opposed and further saw no benefit to the station or to anyone other than Scott and Travis for even considering such a proposal.

Now I won't bore everyone with the gory details but Darlene Elliott, a secretary at AYA and Octavia Shafer an AYA board member were added to the KJAJ board. One of the major concerns is that there would obviously be times when we may have difficulty maintaining a quorum if members are forced to recuse themselves owing to conflicts of interest. In violation of the

bylaws, Travis

was able to install himself as president at the November 2017 board meeting but

by raising a ruckus I was able to show this was invalid and force a new

election in December.

One of the first signs that I was right to be concerned about the AYA connection came when I nominated Geno Landrum to be the president and Knute Nemeth enthusiastically seconded the nomination. Darlene grabbed Knute's arm and warned him "to be careful" before realizing that she had revealed her bias and she glanced my way to see if I had noticed. Again, I think only because I had made so much noise about conflicts of interest both Darlene and Octavia recused themselves, (if I hadn't been present, I suspect they would have voted), Travis lost, and Geno was named president. Travis was clearly stunned.

Scott did not vote during this election because minutes earlier he had resigned, thankfully. Now this next bit reveals Scott's lack of

character, how little he actually cared about KJAJ and how one strong personality

can permeate the culture of a whole organization.

Upon arriving at the station for the board meeting I noted that several chairs had been setup in the "gallery" for guests. This was somewhat uncharacteristic and soon several young men whom I had never met before and Scott's girlfriend took seats. Scott had planned a show and to further bolster my concerns about AYA folks saturating the KJAJ board, all the AYA people and only the AYA people knew what was coming. The rest of us had been kept out of the loop.

Scott proceeded to read his "official resignation letter" and then proceeded to play to his assembled audience and try to eviscerate my character. He had actually prepared a power point presentation listing many of our disagreements most of which I have already mentioned and even included the quote from MLK's Birmingham Jail letter copied above. (Yes, he objected to me texting him that quote).

He was, he said, not used to being accused of things and when I pointed out that he stood by quietly while Travis accused Pattie and me he cut me off and said he was sick of me bringing up Pattie and that I was behaving just like a Republican... Go figure. His behavior did not become any more rational and any time I attempted to defend myself he shouted me down and said that he just couldn't be associated with me and that was why he was leaving the board. Then, further illustrating his low character quoted a twelve-year-old rumor started by a musician/metalworker that I consider to be a conman, (at least he conned me out of money), and made other baseless accusations.

Scott had determined that Pattie and mostly me were of no use to him and therefore it was perfectly acceptable to publicly humiliate anyone for daring to disagree with him. This says way more about him than it does about me. Now, I don't know who this audience was but I have wondered if he invited some of his students to observe so that he could show them how you deal with uppity board members but I have never seen a professional board behave like this and he gave no concern for how it upset the non AYA members of the board or how it reflected on the organization as a whole. After the meeting, Knute was so upset by the whole display he gave me a big hug.

As an aside, prior to this meeting I had finally decided to stop paying the KJAJ bills and when Travis texted me shut off notices, I suggested he turn to Scott who had promised to help with bills but had so far not done so. This may also have precipitated his desire to leave the board.

Despite being on the board for three plus years, Travis never raised any issues regarding finances until after all the money was spent and the station was broadcasting. It should also be noted that unlike other board members, Travis refused to contribute any funds to run the station even refusing to pay the required \$25 annual fee (\$2.08/month) that all board members pay. (Regrettably, Knute Nemeth agreed to pay Travis' fee for him). While all the board members volunteer their time, Travis was of the opinion that his volunteer time was worth more than everyone else's and therefore he shouldn't have to pay.

As I have demonstrated earlier it is arithmetically impossible for anyone to have stolen funds from the station because it spent 32% more money in verified capital purchases and expenses than it received in grants or donations but that didn't stop Travis from making accusations against both Pattie and me. What was more appalling to me was that the board did not reprimand his behavior and I was very vocal in an email reminding everyone that they were effectively complicit in this insult by timidly maintaining their silence.

After resigning Scott sat down in the audience and Travis began to grill me on matters that had already been settled multiple times. Scott's girlfriend kept staring at me as if in disbelief that I was still in the room and hadn't run out in shame. In my mind I was thinking that if my significant other had behaved like Scott, I would have left the vicinity long ago and terminated the relationship.

Scott's departure was meaningless really because 1) he didn't deliver on his promises and 2) he had already installed his friends on the board.

Despite this amazing performance I tried to stick with the board and build the station. Travis persisted with his relentless bullying, harassment and accusations. Darlene Elliott claimed to have a background in human resources but she never stepped in to stop his behavior and along with Octavia sat quietly during Scott's theatrical display. This [email exchange](#) is just an example of what I was subjected to by Travis and the behavior the rest of the board tolerated. To summarize, Travis infected my server with a virus and rather than apologizing accused me of being destructive when I chose a solution of changing the theme. This is particularly ironic given he has now allowed the KJAJ domain to lapse.

Throughout I made numerous suggestions about raising funds, automating the station so that we could provide 168 hours a week of fresh programming and getting out into the community like a community radio station is supposed to but the board was frozen and incapable of acting.

Travis refused any help upgrading the station and locked everyone out of the computer. He claimed he couldn't automate the station because our computer was too old yet when I offered to buy the station a new computer to solve this problem all I heard were "crickets".

Finally, I gave up and resigned from the board because unless the board will act no one person can do anything. The AYA side of the board pretty much stopped any forward progress deferring to the limitations and whims of Travis.

Anyone who has ever served on a non-profit board knows that unless otherwise specified in the bylaws, no one board member has any greater authority than any other. Being named president or treasurer brings additional responsibility but does not imbue you with super powers or crown you a monarch. The reason I bring this up is because I am pretty sure Travis doesn't understand this.

Going against board wishes an anonymous complaint was submitted to the Oregon Department of Justice requesting that I be investigated for malfeasance. (We can guess who that was). Anonymous submitted bank statements which included reimbursements to me as well as deposits from me. Anonymous did not, however, include the breakdown available in Act 1 that I provided to the board on multiple occasions. Frank Najar, the investigator, unlike some of the board does understand simple arithmetic and quickly ascertained after seeing the breakdown no malfeasance had occurred. He did not argue when I pointed out that I was not only a board member but also a benefactor.

Naturally, because we are not dealing with quality people, I

received no apology from Travis, Darlene or the board for all the false allegations leveled against both Pattie and me.

Not long after I resigned they ran Geno off as well and installed Travis as president. He finally got what he wanted and now KJAJ is all but dead.

IF you think they couldn't possibly go any lower you'd be wrong. While there was a time when I may have considered donating the funds I advanced to keep the station afloat I was no longer of that mind. The board in keeping with their general lack of professionalism ignored my requests for repayment until I finally had my lawyer contact them. The response was totally in keeping with their poor character as you will see.

From: Travis Hayer

Sent: Monday, April 22, 2019 7:23 PM

To: Nancy Shelton

Cc: Julia Manela

Subject: Re: Funds Owed to Mary Geddry

Ms. Manela,

Thank you for your correspondence.

We are unaware of any loan arrangement between Coos Community Radio and its former treasurer, Mary Geddry. Further, her insufficient accounting practices during her term as treasurer prevent us from determining the source of the funds in question. As a result, we regret that we are unable to honor the demand for payment.

In addition, we have been reluctant to contact Ms. Geddry because of the abusive and harassing nature of her past contributions to our dialogue. It is for that reason that we request no further contact in any form directly from Ms. Geddry. We very much appreciate your efforts, and we would

agree to remain in contact with you regarding this matter, should the need arise.

Travis Hayer, President

Coos Community Radio

This decision to refuse to repay me was not a board sanctioned decision, this was a unilateral decision to cut off one's nose to spite their own face. After even the Department of Justice has told the board there is no evidence of any malfeasance and after all the crap they have put me through Travis and no doubt Darlene want to stick it to me one more time by tossing in an insult and then trying to steal my money even if it bankrupts the station. This is who is leading this organization now and the rest of the board if they really give a damn about KJAJ better stand up and pay attention.



Cut off nose to spite face

This is the end of Act 3. As my lawyer explained all I have to do is show my bank and credit card records to the court and petition for legal fees to be added. Stay tuned... (pun intended)

