

WMBR 88.1 FM
QUARTERLY ISSUES & COMMUNITY ASCERTAINMENT
4th QUARTER / October 1 – December 31, 2020

The following is a list, of issues, the management, of WMBR Radio, has determined to be of significant importance, to the citizens of Cambridge and the Greater Boston Area of Massachusetts. Each issue was treated through the station's most significant issue-responsive programming and community activities, during the reporting period.

“Radio with a View” - Sunday, 10am – 11am (bi-weekly)

“WMBR Nightly News” – Monday – Friday, 5:30pm – 6:00pm

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Reimagining the Criminal Legal System
Aired: Friday, October 23rd
DURATION: 28 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts from an online panel discussion on reforming the criminal legal system. The program was hosted by the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center. This virtual conversation took place on October 20th, co-hosted by Marie-Frances Rivera, President of “MassBudget” and Rahsaan D. Hall, Director of the Racial Justice Program at “ACLU Massachusetts”. They discussed how our state budget can help build economic and racial justice by increasing funding for programs for people and groups most affected by structural racism and economic inequality.

ECONOMICS

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: “Invest in Our Recovery” Massachusetts Budget Proposal
Aired: Friday, October 16th
DURATION: 13 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired remarks, by James Wu and Enid Eckstein, of “Raise Up Massachusetts”, from a workshop held by Raise Up on Oct 7th, to discuss their budget proposals. This event happened after Massachusetts Governor, Charlie Baker, submitted a revised budget proposal for the upcoming fiscal year. “Raise Up Massachusetts”, a grassroots coalition, released a proposal to preserve public services and make additional investments to stimulate the economy, improve public health, and reduce racial inequities, by raising taxes on large corporations and wealthy individuals.

ELECTION / VOTING

PROGRAM: Radio with a View
HOST: Marc J. Stern and Dave Goodman
GUESTS: Cheryl Crawford and Alex Psilakis of “MassVOTE”
TOPIC: Voting in Massachusetts
AIRE: Sunday, October 25th
DURATION: 60 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

Ms. Crawford, “MassVote” Executive Director and Mr. Psilakis, Policy and Communications Manager, talked about voting and civil rights. They were worried that there are grave issues with our system but, it's not all bad. (This conversation was recorded on October 18, 2020). They note the success of early voting to date and the energy behind making voting more accessible throughout the Commonwealth. They also worried about the difficulties of getting vested interests, in the legislature, to support democratically oriented changes that enable more people to vote.

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Counting Every Vote in the Presidential Election
AIRE: Friday, November 6th
DURATION: 13 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts, from two rallies, in Boston, with comments calling on the government to count every vote in the presidential election. by Tanisha Sullivan, President of the “NAACP Boston”, United States Senator, for Massachusetts, Ed Markey, and Jean-Luc Pierite of the “North American Indian Center of Boston”. In addition to protesting against Trump declaring victory prematurely, their goal was to continue building a mass movement to empower marginalized communities.

PROGRAM: Radio with a View
HOST: Marc J. Stern and Dave Goodman
GUEST: Harvey Wasserman - advocate
TOPIC: Election and Reliance on Early Voting and Paper Ballots
AIRE: Sunday, December 6th
DURATION: 60 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

Mr. Wasserman, long-time election fairness advocate, appeared on the show. He is in favor for the use of paper ballot, voting by mail, reliance on verifiable systems. He argued that digital voting is rife with fraud and that we must push for paper ballots to return as the primary system of voting

HEALTH

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Action for Health Equity
Aired: Friday, November 20th
DURATION: 28 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts, from a Nov 17 post-election discussion, hosted by the “Center for Innovation in Social Work and Health” at Boston University’s School of Social Work. The speakers were Rebekah Gewirtz, Executive Director of the “National Association of Social Workers” – Massachusetts Chapter, and Carlene Pavlos, Executive Director of the “Massachusetts Public Health Association”. They discussed their organizations' priorities, policy agendas, strategies and how social workers and public health leaders can identify opportunities to work toward positive change.

HOUSING

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Massachusetts Eviction Moratorium
Aired: Friday, October 9th
DURATION: 15 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts, a discussion, hosted by “Homes for All Massachusetts”, a state-wide coalition of housing justice advocates. This group organized a “Week of Action” to raise awareness about the looming prospect of mass evictions and advocate for the Housing Stability Act, a bill to guarantee Housing Stability during the COVID-19 emergency and recovery. This event occurred because Massachusetts’ statewide eviction and foreclosure moratorium is scheduled to expire on October 17. Speakers, invited, included Andres Del Castillo of the Boston-based housing justice group City Life/Vida Urbana, Gladys Vega, executive director of the “Chelsea Collaborative”, Merrie Najimy of the “Massachusetts Teachers Association”, and State Representative Mike Connolly of Cambridge.

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: COVID-19 and Unsheltered Homelessness
Aired: Friday, October 16th
DURATION: 15 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts, from a panel discussion, about the increasing numbers of people sleeping outdoors in recent months. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an economic crisis for many, as well as a significant loss of shelter capacity due to the need for social distancing. Presented by the “Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance” (MHSA), the panel of experts, who reported on the increase in unsheltered people and the need for coordinated statewide solutions, included Joyce Tavon, Senior Director of Policy and Programs at MHSA, Michael Andrick with the Pine Street Inn and State Representative Natalie Higgins.

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Housing and Homelessness During the Pandemic
Aired: Friday, December 18th
DURATION: 11 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired comments from Boston City Council President Andre’a Campbell, regarding housing and homelessness during the Covid-19 pandemic in Massachusetts. Campbell was part of a panel, of housing and homelessness experts, convened by the “Center for Innovation in Social Work and Health”, at the Boston University School of Social Work. Speakers addressed the end of the statewide eviction and foreclosure moratorium, the intersection of housing, racial justice, and health, and ways to address this crisis.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Massachusetts Prison Reform
Aired: Friday, November 13th
DURATION: 16 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts, from a speech, by attorney Elizabeth Matos, director of “Prisoners' Legal Services”, an organization focused on prison reform and justice reform in Massachusetts. She discussed protecting those incarcerated from the ongoing threat of COVID-19, ending the use of solitary confinement, addressing officer brutality behind the walls, and breaking down the barriers to rehabilitation and reentry.

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Policing Reform Bill
Aired: Friday, December 11th
DURATION: 28 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts from an online conversation about the Policing Reform Bill. The conversation, which took place on Dec. 9, was organized by the Massachusetts Communities Action Network (MCAN), a statewide network of faith-based and community organizations working for economic and racial justice. The speakers were: Massachusetts State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz of Boston, Rahsaan Hall, Director of “Racial Justice Program” at the ACLU of Massachusetts, Money Gaston, a youth leader with “UTEC/Breaking Barriers To Youth Success”, and Janine Carreiro-Young, co-director of MCAN.

NATIVE AMERICANS / INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Native American National Day of Mourning
Aired: Friday, November 27th
DURATION: 28 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired, the A report on the 50th anniversary National Day of Mourning in Plymouth. Native Americans, from Greater Boston and beyond, joined by their allies, held their annual rally and march in Plymouth on Thanksgiving Day. Indigenous people spoke about their history, current struggles and called for justice for Native American political prisoners.

PANDEMIC

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Children's Mental Health during Pandemic
Aired: Friday, November 6th
DURATION: 10 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The "WMBR Nightly News" aired excerpts, from a speech by Cambridge State Representative, Marjorie Decker, the House Chair of the "Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Recovery", who spoke at a October 23rd committee hearing, about mental health challenges facing children during the COVID-19 pandemic, and how the "Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education" is addressing, or failing to address, these challenges for school children. The state has launched a new campaign to help families protect their children's mental health. The website, handholdMA.org, provides online screening and information about how to get help for a child's behavioral health crisis.

POLITICS

PROGRAM: Radio with a View
HOST: Marc J. Stern and Dave Goodman
GUEST: Thom Hartmann - political analyst
TOPIC: Thom Hartmann on likely President-Elect Biden Policies
Aired: Sunday, November 22nd
DURATION: 60 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

We discussed, with Mr. Hartmann, the likely behavior of the Biden administration. He argued that while he comes from a very moderate background, the needs of the country will drive him and Vice President-Elect Harris to a vastly more progressive position than they might otherwise. He compares it to the policies of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the early part of his administration.

PROGRAM: Radio with a View
HOST: Marc J. Stern and Dave Goodman
GUEST: Jimmy Tingle – comedian / political activist
TOPIC: United States Election and Crisis
Aired: Sunday, December 20th
DURATION: 60 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

Mr. Tingle discussed the recent election and the post-election crisis. He argued that the Trump campaign showed the success of his political style but, he argued, the Biden administration must find a unifying tactic to win opponents over. To do this, Tingle suggested heavy investment in programs to fight addiction.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: MBTA Service Cuts
AIRED: Friday, December 18th
DURATION: 16 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts from a press conference, held by the Public Transit Public Good Coalition, before the MBTA announced upcoming reductions in service on buses, trains and ferries. We heard from four speakers at the event: United States Representatives Ayanna Pressley and Stephen Lynch, Jim Cantwell, an assistant to United States Senator Edward Markey, and bus driver Ed Cora, a shop steward with the Boston Carmen’s Union. They decried the service cuts and explained how they would adversely affect workers and riders. Each speaker suggested ways to make access to the MBTA more equitable.

RELIGION

PROGRAM: Radio with a View
HOST: Marc J. Stern and Dave Goodman
GUEST: Khyati Joshi – Fairleigh Dickinson Sociology Professor
TOPIC: White Christian Privilege
AIRED: Sunday, October 11th
DURATION: 60 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

Professor Joshi, who also authored a book called, "White Christian Privilege: The Illusion of Religious Equality in America", argues that the nation really lacks a separation of religion from the state. She argues that Christianity as embodied in white Christian practices dominates the cultural norms and practices of the nation. Conservatives argue that these are the norms embedded at the beginning of the nation's history and, therefore, must be maintained.

COMMUNITY ISSUES

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Policing Black Cambridge
Aired: Friday, October 2nd
DURATION: 30 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts, from Black Cambridge and Covid-19, a bi-weekly program presented by Cambridge City Councilor Denise Simmons and Cambridge School Committee Vice Chair Manikka Bowman, produced by Cambridge Community Television. This episode featured two guests: Brian Corr, Cambridge Peace Commission Executive Director and Executive Secretary of the Police Review & Advisory Board for the City of Cambridge and Marion Darlington-Hope, a longtime community advocate and retired professor who taught at the University of Massachusetts Boston and Lesley College, now Lesley University, in Cambridge. They discussed how the Cambridge Police Dept has changed in response to racial justice critiques.

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Cambridge Affordable Housing Zoning Overlay
Aired: Friday, October 9th
DURATION: 10 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

This week, the City of Cambridge approved a new policy to promote affordable housing. The 100% Affordable Housing Zoning Overlay is intended to help developers build new affordable housing. “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts from the Cambridge City Council discussion about the proposal before it was approved at the October 12th City Council meeting.

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Black Cambridge and Voting
Aired: Friday, October 30th
DURATION: 28 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts, from the October 25th episode of Black Cambridge and Covid-19, a bi-weekly program presented by Cambridge City Councilor Denise Simmons and Cambridge School Committee Vice Chair Manikka Bowman, produced by Cambridge Community Television. This episode, on “The Subject of Voting”, featured three guests: Larry Ward of the Cambridge Election Commission, Elizabeth Baldwin of the Cambridge Democratic Committee and Anthony Collins of the Mass Democratic Party. They discussed how to improve voter turnout among Black people in Cambridge and elsewhere.

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: COVID-19 in Cambridge
Aired: Friday, November 13th
DURATION: 11 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts, from a report from Claude Jacob, MPH, Chief Public Health Officer for the City of Cambridge. He is also Chief Public Health Officer of the Cambridge Health Alliance. He gave a report on Covid-19 in Cambridge, at Cambridge’s City Council meeting, on November 2nd. He discussed possible causes of the recent increase in cases in Cambridge, including the incidences at Harvard, MIT, and the Cambridge Public Schools.

PROGRAM: WMBR Nightly News
HOST: Linda Pinkow
TOPIC: Cambridge Food Heroes
Aired: Friday, December 4th
DURATION: 28 minutes
AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: N/A

The “WMBR Nightly News” aired excerpts from the annual “Cambridge Food Heroes Awards”, a ceremony that took place on Wednesday, Dec 2, which was broadcast by Cambridge Community TV. The Food Heroes Awards highlight businesses, organizations and individuals who worked to reduce hunger in Cambridge throughout this difficult year. Speakers, invited to this event, discussed how the pandemic has added to food insecurity and made the work of food justice workers more difficult.