

# SAVE JAZZ.FM91

November 12, 2018

Last week, David McGown, Chair of JAZZ.FM91 sent an **email** to members and listeners setting out “seven lessons” he has learned during his tenure on the Board. Sadly, from our perspective, self-congratulation, lack of transparency, and no accountability don’t get high marks.

Mr. McGown makes a universal claim that “you” are happy with the station’s “new original shows.” And he goes on to say that “you continue to show up and applaud” at live shows. These are at odds with what many are telling us, and with what we ourselves have witnessed. Listeners are not happy with the absence of on-air hosts and the connection they make with their audience. As for live shows, we have no doubt the artists are doing a great job because they are professionals, but the mood, from what we are told and have seen, is subdued, and the venues not sold out.

But he reserves his most misleading comments for his account of recent Board changes and the objectives of Save JAZZ.FM91.

Mr. McGown knows, because he has been told in person and because it is stated clearly on our website, that our aim is stated in our name – **SAVE** the station.

This much is clear – many donors and listeners are NOT happy with the station’s programming or management. Failure to have meaningful dialogue (and to keep it in confidence as agreed); puerile remarks about the law firm providing us needed counsel; and hiding behind alleged privacy concerns for not providing email addresses of Donor Members are the most telling indicators that entrenchment and face-saving, not finding workable solutions, is the primary motivation of the current leadership.

Mr. McGown and his Board colleagues should answer the following questions to Members if they are to regain any of the credibility they have lost over the past eight months:

1. **Why are they afraid of a level playing field with Save JAZZ.FM91?** We believe that access to and use of Members’ email addresses is permitted by law for purposes of the JAZZ.FM91 corporation. In our case this would be so the Members who support Save JAZZ.FM91 and who disagree with the current Board and want to reconstitute the Board, can communicate effectively with all Donor Members. *The Board’s position means that we could only present our case to Members for our proposed Board and solicit proxies by letter!* The current Board could send as many emails to Members as they wish to defend their existing Board. Save JAZZ.FM91 has just incurred almost \$3,500 in costs to mail a letter to all Members, which through a mass mailing service provider took approximately two weeks from receiving our direction, printing and mailing until receipt by Members. This does not include all the time it took to organize the mailing. To think that Members could be properly informed to make a decision as to whether they should support our slate for a new Board by a once-only mailing, while the JAZZFM.91 Board is contacting Members by multiple emails that is accomplished at virtually no cost, is a mockery of the fairness that every Member has a right to expect when a matter as important as a Board election approaches. All Members have a right to be informed of issues affecting the JAZZ.FM91 corporation! Does the Board’s position make sense? Interestingly, in Saturday’s *Globe and Mail* the irrelevance of ordinary mail was noted:
  - “And a dwindling number of [Canadians] rely on letters.”
  - “The dramatic shift away from traditional mail shows no signs of letting up.”
  - “For letters, Canadians have been shifting to alternatives, which explains the steady erosion of Canada Post’s traditional mail business.”

2. **Why will they not agree to a new or re-constituted Board?** Save JAZZ.FM91 is willing to work with the current Board to achieve a satisfactory mix of new Board Members. But this overture has been rebuffed! The current regime has lost the confidence of donors, listeners, and advertisers, as evident from those who attended the last AGM. If the Board feels they have majority support, they should have an election for the entirety of the Board at the next AGM, agree to a level playing field in allowing Members to be contacted by email by both the existing Board and by Save JAZZ.FM91, agree to a fair meeting with an independent chair, and let the chips fall where they will.
3. Recent discussions with Mr. McGown to seek a compromise outcome were agreed to be in confidence. **Why did Mr. McGown ignore this confidence?** We want **meaningful discussions** that can be held in confidence without fear of breach, so that we can work together to meet the needs of ALL stakeholders.

We encourage you to write to Mr. McGown at [boardchair@jazz.fm](mailto:boardchair@jazz.fm) and let him know your views. You can copy us at [savejazzfm@gmail.com](mailto:savejazzfm@gmail.com). Mr. McGown has committed to *reading* your feedback. He has not committed to responding or taking meaningful steps in response.

Thank you for your support as we continue to work towards our sole objective –

**To bring about positive change at JAZZ.FM91 that will ensure the financial and artistic survival of the station as an independent member-supported station.**