

# SAVE JAZZ.FM91

November 27 2018

Recently, David McGown, Chair of JAZZ.FM91 has sent two emails to Members and listeners – on November 6 and November 21. Our response on November 12 to his questionable claims of broad listener support, and criticism of Save JAZZ.FM91 in his first email can be seen on our website. In our message, we suggested you may wish to write to Mr. McGown with your own views and copy us if you wanted to. Many of you did, and we thank you for that.

Following that, our letter to Members' postal addresses began arriving in mailboxes. This prompted the second email from Mr. McGown. It did not reflect any of the concerns we know he heard from Members and listeners, and in fact he "doubled down" by failing to acknowledge any shortcomings and, instead, accused Save JAZZ.FM91 of being the cause of the station's problems.

*Mr. McGown knows this: the financial health of the station and its reputation were the very reasons Save JAZZ.FM91 was formed. The Board's poor judgement, bad governance and lack of transparency -- well documented before our group was formed -- were the root causes of the defection of donors and listeners. The only decisive action the Board has taken was to dismiss on-air hosts and other key staff who were the backbone of the station. And now Mr. McGown attempts to lay blame at the feet of a group of donors who demand accountability. That's disturbing and misleading. It is also a symptom of how out of touch this Board is with stakeholders. The Board could learn much about transparency by heeding the words of the late US jurist Justice Louis Brandeis – "sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants" – and put some light on the real issues facing the station.*

Unlike Mr. McGown, we will not break the confidences of what was discussed at meetings with him, but he has known since the end of August that our intent was to try to have meaningful discussions, but that we would not abandon our efforts to obtain information to which we believe we are legally entitled. Our invitations, both public and private, to engage in conversations to pursue a common objective have largely been ignored.

We urge Mr. McGown to be a little more transparent. To help that along, we have permission from many Members and others who care about the station to publish their comments – comments that were sent to Mr. McGown and copied to us, and comments from Members who are quite prepared to share their email addresses with us. Members have a right to hear both sides of the discussion. With access to email addresses of Members, everyone will be better served by a full and frank discussion.

## Comments Sent Directly to Mr. McGown

I am still furious since June 21, 2018, that selfish board of directors even with a couple new members is NOT part of the solution BUT are still very much part of the problem. I demand a complete replacement of the board.....I am still appalled at what they did to those On-Air hosts right after the Spring campaign, especially Mark Wigmore and Jaymz Bee who had devoted their time to the station. First Dani Elwell in the Fall of 2017, first sign of trouble; then Garvia Bailey last February..... The station is doomed in the new year if a new board is not in place soon.

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David, smarten up! Your childish actions are lessening and lessening any meaningful support the Jazz.FM91 Board once had. Save JAZZ.FM91 seeks to help a much-needed radio station recapture the stature it once enjoyed. By fighting this initiative, you are betraying the listening public and denying donors, advertisers and listeners the quality experience to which they have a right, a quality experience that a professional radio station ought to be delivering.....

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Since the "Ryerson College" days I have been an enthusiastic supporter of your radio station.....

.....The little Ryerson jazz station grew into Jazz FM91. My wife and I, now retired, have been enthusiastic supporters and contributors of Jazz FM91, and got to know some of the people associated with that fine station. Like everything else, things change. So did Jazz FM91. The changes this year have not been for the better. The information we are receiving is quite troublesome. Since Jazz FM91 is reliant upon listener support, it threatens to become a serious financial and artistic problem.

Please listen to your listeners and supporters. Many have been there for many years and deserve better and more transparent management than has been available recently.

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.... As a long-term donor, I am disappointed in what has happened, and my first thought was that certainly new donors are going to be hard to come by. Losing corporate sponsors could well be the 'death-knell' for the station..... I just realized the other day that Jaymz Bee is no longer on air..... Although the full truth always seems hard to come by in most conflicts, I would be in favour of a Board change based on what I know.

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I was a perpetual donor for years, a top-up donor during campaigns, a student at Jazz 101 and 201, an attendee at Jazz Lives and 2 jazz safaris, and a volunteer at the station. I came all the way from Niagara Falls many times to volunteer at reception or answer phones during campaigns because I was such a fan.....

I loved listening to the station but now with recent events, the change in format, and the knowledge I have from people who worked at the station I am completely disillusioned.

.....I rarely listen to the station, which breaks my heart. Living in Niagara was so enhanced by being able to listen to a 24/7 jazz station. I was one of your biggest advocates..... I look forward to the return of more live-on-air hosts, although we really want the old ones back and that is not likely. As a student of jazz, it is frustrating to me not to have a host identifying who is playing and maybe giving some background as well.....I think you underestimated the connection your listeners felt with the hosts.....We expect and deserve better treatment and inclusiveness. The board needs to get past the defensiveness, listen to what ALL listeners want.....

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Mr. McGown, Were you at the same AGM that I was at?? Obviously, you and your board did not listen to any of the comments that were expressed during that meeting.....

What awful Muzak is JAZZ FM playing every morning?? It sounds like you are looping the same playlist again and again. You are losing listeners.

Your new programs are not nearly as good as before. I also do not like new programs that promote themselves and constantly play their own music!!!

Please listen to your donors. Get the hosts back in the morning. Please get back your excellent admin team that have unfortunately jumped ship or were asked to walk the plank.

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My wife and I only listen to one radio station: Jazz FM

Since things fell apart back in June, most of the segments we dearly loved are now gone, and the new programming is not a good replacement.....

With a hope that the station will be able to return to a state of stability and community in the future, we'll continue to support, but will reduce our contribution to only the bare minimum required to vote, as an indication of our unhappiness with all the decisions taken since June that have made us all but give up on this station.

Please listen to those who have the interest of the station at heart and take steps to get JAZZ.FM back to where it was before this disastrous set of changes came about.

## Comments from Members Sent to Save JAZZ.FM91

Hope you can get Jaymz Bee back. He is a great person and very knowledgeable about Toronto jazz. I miss him on his jazz safaris.

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I was at the 2018 AGM and, like so many, was dismayed by the behaviour of this board. Even the manner of communicating about this AGM seemed designed to limit attendance to well below the number of proxies that the board had vigorously solicited in the weeks prior to the meeting.

I've maintained my regular donations in large part to make sure I qualify as a member for the next AGM, but am holding off on other donations and finding other ways to support live jazz in our city. As much as I hope the station can be saved, it's not like we don't have other opportunities. This board's arrogance has already caused substantial damage, in my view.

Thank you so much for initiating this effort and working to coordinate our membership in an effective response!

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Oh my. I'm a long time donor and safari veteran....your letter was right in line with my thinking..... Still listen to Brad's show but Do Not Donate.

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I agree with you. The current way is nowhere near where Jazz.FM was. The programming stinks and the best people were let go. Hope you succeed in straightening those that are responsible for the demise of a world known Institution.

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Thanks so much for getting a group together to try and explore what has happened and restore the old vibrancy.

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Where are all my favourite people: Jaymz B; Garvia; Dani?  
Really miss the former programming and personalities!