

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Zoya Johnson**

Date: Tue, Oct 27, 2015 at 3:32 PM

Subject: Open Letter to the KUCB Board of Directors

October 26, 2015

Unalaska Community Broadcasting
Board of Directors

Dear members of the Board,

I feel compelled to write to you after several failed attempts to address, through the Executive Director of KUCB, the issue of misrepresenting some very significant facts in a news report on the local radio and in an article on the KUCB website. These facts are related to events surrounding the Museum of the Aleutians ("MOTA") and the current situation we are collectively facing as a community. I have taken the time to write this letter because I am certain it is important to the Board that the community is presented with accurate information based on facts. I know that it is very important to me.

As an initial matter, I would like to point out that KUCB's reporter, Greta Mart, interviewed me for 12 minutes, yet KUCB aired *only ten seconds* of the interview; during my interview, I provided Ms. Mart with many additional facts bearing on the situation, but she chose not to include most of these facts. Moreover, I allowed Ms. Mart to interview me in my home, where she could have checked some of the material included in the on-line article. She did not, however, take the opportunity to do so. Overall, it is difficult for me to understand why the reporter would not present all facts relevant to a story, or why she would not check facts when given the chance to do so. At any rate, I do not believe that it is KUCB's policy to report in this manner, and it definitely is not in the best interests of our community.

Meanwhile, many members of the community have raised important comments and questions relating to this situation. I have discussed some of these below.

1. Community members have noticed that Ingrid Martis changed her story about the documentation of the inter-museum loan several times when talking with KUCB and the public. KUCB's reporter did not seem to recognize or acknowledge these inconsistencies. Nor did the reporter take the simple step of asking the MOTA Board Chair whether the documentation was in the correct location. If the reporter had asked, she would have learned that, in fact, the documentation was right where it was supposed to be – in the MOTA files – where the Chair personally located them even before I came back from my vacation.
2. With respect to Ms. Martis, community members have noted that she changed how she referred to the items from "precious manuscripts" to mass-produced "books." Ms. Martis is a professional museum collections manager, with an archival background: why would she change how she referred to the items? The reporter did not comment on the changing reference, but people in the community noticed it.
3. Community members have been confused about the value of the items. It would have been helpful for the reporter to explain how and why the items were valued in the first place. Specifically, when a museum lends a book to our museum, we do request the appraised value of the object so that our insurance will cover the object in case of damage. The Loan Agreement with the Russian Orthodox Museum indicated a value of \$1,000.
4. Community members have also noticed the differences in how Ms. Martis described finding the items. At one point, Ms. Martis told the reporter that the door to the room where the items were found had been locked during past housesitting stays and that is why she had

never noticed the objects before, or words to that effect. But that door was NEVER locked for the simple reason that there NEVER was a lock on that door. When the reporter came to my house, she did not check this aspect of Ms. Martis's story. Oddly, Ms. Martis also said that it was "simple curiosity" that prompted her to give her boyfriend a tour. These seem to be two different versions of a story ("the door was always locked so I never looked in," versus "I wanted to give my boyfriend a tour") yet the reporter did not comment about the different explanations offered by Ms. Martis.

5. The community has talked about the resignations of MOTA staff members, as reported by KUCB. I do understand that the headline "Key Staff Resigns in Protest" is very catchy. But the report failed to acknowledge that Ms. Martis had, for months prior to this incident, stated her intent to leave Unalaska and to return to France. As for the Collections Manager, the reporter should have inquired as to the actual reasons she gave to MOTA when she resigned.

I hope the above is helpful to the Board in recognizing that its reporting, in this particular instance, could be viewed as less than thorough and fair. That said, I do believe in the integrity of KUCB, and I hope that the Board believes, as I do, that KUCB owes it to the community to present all relevant facts and to correct misstatements when they are brought to KUCB's attention.

Thank you very much,

Zoya Johnson