

Keillor says station was wrong to dismiss him without investigation

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Garrison Keillor says Minnesota Public Radio was wrong to fire him last week without fully investigating what a senior executive has described as “multiple allegations” spanning an extended period against the former “A Prairie Home Companion” host.

Jon McTaggart, CEO of MPR’s parent company American Public Media Group, addressed the issue at an employee meeting Wednesday. McTaggart didn’t provide details of the allegations against the 75-year-old veteran broadcaster, saying only that he has shared them with lawyers and board members.

MPR News reporters refused to attend the meeting because its contents had been declared off the record, but they compiled a report based on interviews with colleagues who did.

In a statement Thursday morning, MPR insisted it conducted a proper review.

The statement said two people formerly associated with the show alleged “multiple incidents of inappropriate behavior” by Keillor, though only one claimed the behavior was directed at her. The station said it hasn’t made additional details public because the two want privacy.

“The allegations were carefully investigated before MPR made the decision to terminate contracts with Mr. Keillor,” the statement said.

Keillor announced Nov. 30 that MPR had terminated his contracts after four decades of entertaining public radio listeners with tales of small-town characters. He said he was fired over “a story that I think is more interesting and more complicated than the version MPR heard.” Keillor didn’t provide details to the Associated Press but later told the Minneapolis Star Tribune that he had put his hand on a woman’s bare back as he tried to console her.