



Educational Communications Board

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EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD MEETING

ECB Board Room

3319 West Beltline Highway

Madison, Wisconsin

January 12, 2018

9:30 a.m.

MINUTES

Roll Call and Introductions

Chair Rolf Wegenke called the meeting of the Educational Communications Board to order at 9:35 a.m. A roll call of board member attendance was recorded and a quorum was present. The complete attendance list follows:

Board Members Present:

- Dean Dietrich
- Erin Kastberg (representing Ray Cross)
- David Hutchison
- Rich Lepping
- Eileen Littig
- Representative Amy Loudenbeck
- Senator Luther Olsen
- Senator Fred Risser
- Bryan Steil
- Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D., Chair
- Bohdan Zachary
- Cate Zeuske (representing Scott Neitzel)
- Jim Zylstra (representing Morna Foy), Vice-Chair

Absent:

- Representative Dave Considine
- Kurt Kiefer (representing Superintendent Tony Evers)
- Karen Schroeder

Approval of Minutes from the October 13, 2017 ECB Board Meeting OK

Eileen Littig moved, seconded by Jim Zylstra, to approve the October 13, 2017 meeting minutes. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.



AGENDA ITEM 1. Report of the Board Chair

Board Chair Dr. Wegenke welcomed everyone and announced that today's meeting will focus on strategic planning. Dr. Wegenke noted this is one of the most important roles for the board in support of the mission and staff of the ECB.

AGENDA ITEM 2. Report of the Executive Director

Dr. Wegenke introduced Executive Director Gene Purcell. Mr. Purcell reminded board members that a copy of his written report was included in the board packets distributed prior to the meeting and he welcomes any questions or comments from board members.

Mr. Purcell provided an update on the FCC repack which will affect ECB stations in Green Bay and La Crosse. Mr. Purcell reported that the ECB has finalized an agreement with wireless provider T-Mobile to have repack work complete at WPNE Green Bay by July 1, 2018, one year prior to the deadline established by the FCC. Mr. Purcell reports that ECB work is 95% complete at WPNE. Mr. Purcell reported that T-Mobile will pay the ECB \$345,000 to have the repack completed by July 1, 2018. Mr. Purcell indicated this money will be used for cash contingencies during the remaining repack reimbursement process and to support ECB television operations. Mr. Purcell commended the work of the ECB Engineering Division in the planning and implementation of the repack project at WPNE.

Mr. Purcell asked Steve Bauder to provide additional updates related to the replacement of WPNE's transmitter and answer questions from board members. Mr. Bauder reported that the transmitter has been delivered to the site and discussed the installation schedule. Mr. Bauder also provided an update on the FCC repack reimbursements and energy cost savings which will be realized with the new equipment.

Dr. Wegenke congratulated the ECB staff and Engineering Division for a wonderful job with all the work that's been completed and underway related to the repack.

Mr. Purcell continued his report. Mr. Purcell announced that ECB's annual financial audit has been completed and the agency received a clean, unqualified opinion. Mr. Purcell reported the audit was conducted by Baker Tilly and they offered no recommendations for changes related to the ECB financial processes. Mr. Purcell congratulated the ECB finance team, Aimee Wright, and Marta Bechtol for all their work throughout the year and during the audit.

Mr. Purcell introduced Jeff Ohnstad to the Board of Directors. Mr. Ohnstad is the new Engineering Division Deputy Administrator. Mr. Ohnstad had previously managed radio and telecommunications systems at the Wisconsin State Patrol (Department of Transportation).

Mr. Purcell went on to discuss ECB priorities for the coming year which include the agency's biannual operating budget submission, and capital budget request. Mr. Purcell reminded the



Board that last year's capital budget request was larger than usual due to costs related to the FCC repack process and broadcast interconnect replacement. Mr. Purcell anticipates the board will have an opportunity to review these requests at the July ECB Board of Director's meeting.

Mr. Purcell reminded board members to complete the FCC Ownership Report which had been distributed last fall. Mr. Purcell noted that board members who need an FCC reference number (FRN) may contact himself or David Cobb in order for the agency to request an FRN on their behalf. Mr. Purcell added that by having the agency request an FRN on their behalf, board members will avoid entering sensitive or personal identifying data on the FCC website.

Mr. Purcell asked Malcolm Brett to provide an update regarding the University of Wisconsin Colleges and Extension proposed reorganization. Mr. Brett shared that President Ray Cross has proposed that certain units, including Broadcast and Media Innovations (BAMI) would be moved to the UW System Administration. Mr. Brett added that this topic will be discussed at the February Board of Regents meeting.

Mr. Brett added a personal thank you to Steve Bauder and the ECB Engineering Division for their help in providing technical advice and expertise related to the procurement and replacement of the transmitter for WHA-TV.

There were no questions or comments regarding the Executive Director report.

AGENDA ITEM 3. Election of Board Officers

Dr. Wegenke announced the floor was open for nominations of Board Officers. Jim Zylstra nominated the current slate of officers for re-election by unanimous ballot: Dr. Rolf Wegenke as chair, Jim Zystra as Vice-Chair, and Eileen Littig as Secretary. The nomination was seconded by Senator Luther Olsen. Dr. Wegenke called three times for additional nominations. There were no other nominations. The Board elected Dr. Rolf Wegenke as chair, Jim Zystra as Vice-Chair, and Eileen Littig as Secretary by unanimous voice vote.

AGENDA ITEM 4. Presentation of Draft Strategic Plan to Board – Marta Bechtol

Gene Purcell reviewed the strategic plan process including the planning session which was part of the October 2017 ECB Board of Directors meeting and then introduced Marta Bechtol, ECB Deputy Director.

Ms. Bechtol shared that a strategic plan committee (Gene Purcell, Marta Bechtol, Steve Bauder, Mike Crane, Jon Miskowski, and Aimee Wright) has met to clarify the ECB business model as described by the strategic plan. Ms. Bechtol reported that the strategic plan committee has solicited feedback from staff and stakeholders. The committee provided ECB employees with an online survey which included multiple choice questions as well as fields to collect written



narrative from staff. Ms. Bechtol indicated that she and the committee were pleased with the both the volume and quality of feedback provided by staff. Ms. Bechtol also reported that stakeholders at BAMI, Wisconsin Public Television (WPT), Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR), and outside stakeholders were surveyed and this resulted in additional feedback which was valuable to the committee.

Ms. Bechtol reported that feedback from staff and stakeholders, as well as the board member's input from the October planning session has been incorporated into action steps and draft strategic plan distributed for today's meeting. Ms. Bechtol asked board members to review the plan before the April 13, 2018 Board of Directors meeting where the final version will be voted on.

Eileen Littig complimented Ms. Bechtol and planning committee for their work.

Rich Lepping asked if raising the ECB profile is reflected in the plan. Gene Purcell responded that the draft strategic plan identifies goals to "Strengthen...the reach and performance of the ECB to better serve all the citizens of Wisconsin...".

There were no further questions or comments.

AGENDA ITEM 5. Presentation of ECB Executive Director Materials to Board – Gene Purcell

Dr. Wegenke asked Mr. Purcell to provide background information to the Board regarding the Executive Director evaluation. Mr. Purcell reviewed the evaluation process. In advance of the April board meeting, Mr. Purcell will provide board members with a self-evaluation which includes an outline of goals presented to the Board last April, as well as Mr. Purcell's and the agency's progress in achieving those goals. Mr. Purcell briefly highlighted the agency's work with the FCC repack, expansion of WPR's coverage, continued integration of educational media at WPT, the reorganization of the ECB Engineering Division, the development of a new Broadcast Media IT job classification, and the annual financial audit. There will be an opportunity for the Board to go into closed session at the April board meeting for discussions related to the Executive Director's performance.

AGENDA ITEM 6. Financial Reports

Dr. Wegenke reported that quarterly financial reports were distributed with the board packets in advance of today's meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments. Gene Purcell reviewed contributions and underwriting for radio and television. Mr. Purcell reported that both membership and underwriting are on track to meet annual goals.



Senator Olsen asked if new federal tax codes have affected donations or brought to light any questions from potential donors regarding increased standard deductions. Mr. Purcell responded that this issue has been discussed with development staff but there has been no indication that new tax codes have substantially influenced donations.

Eileen Littig asked Mr. Purcell if pledge donations have decreased as membership (sustaining donations) have increased. Mr. Purcell responded that while one-time pledges are challenging, overall membership has steadily increased. Mr. Purcell asked Jon Miskowski for additional comments. Mr. Miskowski reported that sustaining pledges now account for about 20% of overall donations but pledge drives remain as an important way to find new sustaining members. Mr. Miskowski noted that public media membership is at an all-time high in Wisconsin.

Senator Olsen asked if WPT/WPR have considered new methods for fundraising that could supplant or replace on-air pledge drives. Mr. Miskowski responded that he monitors fundraising models in use throughout the country and those ideas are occasionally used or considered for Wisconsin. Mr. Miskowski added that WPT actually has less days designated for pledge than most other public broadcasters.

Senator Risser inquired about WPT and WPR's use of social media. Mr. Purcell and Mr. Miskowski discussed outreach efforts related to fundraising and programming that utilize a wide range of social media.

AGENDA ITEM 7. Questions/Comments from Board Members

Cate Zeuske congratulated Mr. Miskowski and WPT for a wonderful program related to the Wisconsin State Capitol Centennial. Mr. Miskowski added that work continues with the School of Education and Department of Public Instruction to develop educational materials related to the Capitol Centennial.

Senator Olsen asked if Sewing with Nancy will continue since the passing of Nancy Ziesman. Jon Miskowski responded that WPT will continue to air previously recorded shows and is exploring the idea of producing a new show. Mr. Miskowski added that Quilt Expo will continue as well.

Eileen Littig asked Mr. Miskowski to share more information regarding the Youth Media Network which was mentioned in his written report. Mr. Miskowski elaborated on the project which is a collaboration between the UW School of Education and PBS Newshour to develop resources for educators who incorporating video production into the classroom and teaching about journalism.



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There were no additional questions or comments from board members.

AGENDA ITEM 8. Adjournment

Senator Luther Olsen moved to adjourn, seconded by Jim Zylstra. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Dr. Wegenke announced the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.