



Educational Communications Board

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EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD MEETING

ECB Board Room

3319 West Beltline Highway

Madison, Wisconsin

October 12, 2018

9:30 A.M.

MINUTES

Roll Call and Introductions

Board Chair Dr. Rolf Wegenke called the meeting of the Educational Communications Board to order at 9:30 A.M. A roll call of Board Members was conducted to record attendance. The complete attendance list follows:

Board Members Present:

- Representative Dave Considine
- Gary Bennett (representing Ray Cross)
- Ron Dunlop
- Kurt Kiefer (representing Superintendent Tony Evers)
- Jim Zylstra (representing Morna Foy), Vice-Chair
- David Hutchison
- Eileen Littig
- Representative Amy Loudenberg
- Senator Luther Olsen
- Karen Schroeder
- Bryan Steil
- Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D., Chair
- Bohdan Zachary

Absent:

- Steve Michels (representing Ellen Nowak)
- Rich Lepping
- Senator Fred Risser



Approval of Minutes from the July 13, 2018 ECB Board Meeting

Eileen Littig moved, seconded by Karen Schroeder, to approve the July 13, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

AGENDA ITEM 1. Report of the Board Chair

Board Chair Dr. Wegenke reported that the appointment of the Educational Communications Board Executive Director is one of the most important responsibilities of the Board of Directors, along with strategic planning. Dr. Wegenke noted that the Board will be moving into closed session for this process but it was important to acknowledge the importance of this task in open session and thank all board members for their role in today's meeting.

There were no questions or comments regarding the Board Chair report.

AGENDA ITEM 2. Report of the Interim Executive Director

Dr. Wegenke introduced Marta Bechtol, Interim ECB Executive Director.

Ms. Bechtol welcomed Gene Purcell, who was recently appointed to the position of Director of Wisconsin Public Media at UW Madison, and had previously served as the Executive Director of the Educational Communications Board (ECB).

Ms. Bechtol announced that new audio visual equipment has been installed in the ECB board room and promised the Board of Directors that new chairs would be considered a priority.

Ms. Bechtol reminded board members that her written report was included in the board packets distributed for today's meeting and she wanted to highlight the Biennial Budget request the agency submitted in September.

Ms. Bechtol reported that ECB requested \$21,199,500 for FY20 and \$21,212,000 for FY21 which include standard adjustments for payroll, operating expenses, and utilities as well as the transfer of \$500,000 annually from agency program revenue to GPR to support educational collaboration the ECB and Wisconsin Public Television (WPT). Ms. Bechtol added that ECB also requested increased program revenue spending authority.

Ms. Bechtol reported that ECB submitted a FY19 – 21 Capital Budget request in September which totaled \$6.2 million. Ms. Bechtol explained that this total includes \$2.5 million to increase transmission power at WPNE Green Bay and WHLA La Crosse, and the remainder is for normal maintenance.



Ms. Bechtol provided an update on the Federal Budget and the ECB's federal funding which accounts for about 10% of ECB's total budget. Ms. Bechtol reported that the House and Human Services portion of the budget was signed into law last Friday. This portion of the Federal budget forward funds the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) through FY21.

Ms. Bechtol reviewed how the ECB has implemented certain aspects of the ECB Strategic Plan. As a result of the transmission power increases at WHLA La Crosse and WPNE Green Bay, the ECB will strengthen its reach and impact by reaching a larger audience. Ms. Bechtol reported that ECB staff also fielded audience service calls in response to the station repacks at these sites.

Ms. Bechtol went on to describe how the ECB Engineering Division demonstrated the responsible use of resources by applying for and receiving FCC reimbursements for work and equipment related to the station repacks at WHLA La Crosse and WPNE Green Bay. Ms. Bechtol reported that ECB has been reimbursed 100% for the repack at WPNE and nearly 100% at WHLA. Ms. Bechtol noted that through ECB's diligence in completing FCC reimbursement requests, both station repacks have been completed at no cost to the State of Wisconsin, and additional program revenue was realized as result of energy rebates by utilizing energy efficient transmitters.

Ms. Bechtol reported that ECB now has two drones and three certified drone pilots. Ms. Bechtol reports that ECB has found this to be an efficient and effective way to examine ECB tower sites. Ms. Bechtol indicated that physical inspections by humans are still necessary, but drones offer a low risk, cost-efficient means to inspect towers. Additionally, Ms. Bechtol reports that ECB is part of a multiple-agency drone program and ECB staff are poised to provide assistance to other state agencies with our drones.

Ms. Bechtol announced that Wisconsin Public Television Education has completed work on an interactive educational media game titled "Jo Wilder and the Capitol Case" which brings Wisconsin history and the State Capitol to elementary students through the WPT Education website. The project was a collaboration between the UW School of Education, Department of Public Instruction, WPT Education and outside stakeholders. Ms. Bechtol noted that a demonstration of "Jo Wilder and the Capitol Case" will be featured at a future ECB Board of Directors meeting.

Ms. Bechtol reported that the ECB Operations Center has completed the digital conversion of about 4600 media files from ".mov" to ".mxf" format. Ms. Bechtol explained how this project demonstrates the agency's commitment to remain relevant in the world of advancing technology by ensuring media will be accessible on future platforms.

Following Ms. Bechtol's comments, there were a few questions from board members. Eileen Littig asked about the capital opportunity mentioned in Ms. Bechtol's written report. Ms. Bechtol responded that ECB was informed that funds for capital projects were available as a



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result of a surplus at the State of Wisconsin Building Commission. The ECB has provided a proposal for the funding of small projects which could be undertaken during the current fiscal year.

Gary Bennett asked Ms. Bechtol if she could share talking points about the ECB budget request and federal funding.

Kurt Kiefer complimented the “Jo Wilder and the Capitol Case” educational game which he described as top notch educational media for the 4th grade curriculum.

Eileen Littig complemented the Engineering Division report and was pleased to learn that LED tower lights could lead to significant energy savings.

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

AGENDA ITEM 3. Financial Reports

Quarterly financial reports were distributed with the board packet in advance of today’s meeting. Dr. Wegenke asked if there were any questions regarding the reports. Marta Bechtol reported that both TV and Radio were on track to reach donor goals.

There were no questions or comments from board members.

AGENDA ITEM 4. Closed Session to Discuss Appointment of the Executive Director

Dr. Wegenke moved, seconded by Karen Schroeder to convene in closed session. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Pursuant to s. 19.85(1)(c), Wis. Stats., the Board convened in a closed session to consider the appointment of the Executive Director.

Following the closed session, the Board reconvened in open session. Dr. Wegenke noted that in order to comply with Open Meeting laws, it will be necessary to provide public notice that the ECB Board of Directors will be appointing an Executive Director. Dr. Wegenke has requested that Board officers convene at 1:00 pm on Monday, October 15th by phone to announce the appointment. Dr. Wegenke requested that ECB provide public notice of the meeting on the ECB.org website.



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AGENDA ITEM 5. Proposed Meeting Dates for 2019:

Dr. Wegenke informed Board members that 2019 meeting dates which had been proposed at the July meeting will need to be adjusted after the appointment of a new Executive Director. Dr. Wegenke announced that David Cobb will be sending out a poll to identify possible meeting dates for 2019 and asked board members to watch for that message and respond accordingly.

AGENDA ITEM 6. Questions/Comments from board members

There were no additional questions or comments from board members.

AGENDA ITEM 7. Adjournment

Karen Schroeder moved, seconded by Jim Zylstra to adjourn. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Dr. Wegenke announced the meeting adjourned at 11:15 A.M.