



**EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD MEETING**

**April 29, 2022**

**9:30 A.M.**

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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

**Marta Bechtol, Executive Director**

**Federal Budget Update**

The Federal FY22 budget was finally approved in a \$1.5 trillion omnibus funding bill which ultimately tied the record for the largest single year increase (10.1%) in the history of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

- \$525M for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in FY24 (\$50M over FY21>FY23)
- \$20M for Interconnection funding (continuing appropriation from FY21)
- \$30.5M for Ready to Learn (an increase of \$.5M over FY21 appropriation)
- \$40M for the Next Generation Resilient Alert and Warning System - a new request for a competitive grant program within the Department of Homeland Security/FEMA (\$20M over what was asked)

In light of the FY 2022 final funding levels, CPB has revised the FY 2023 requests as follows:

- \$565 million for CPB in FY 2023
- \$60 million for Interconnection
- \$30.5 million for Ready to Learn
- \$40 million for the Next Generation Resilient Alert and Warning System

The federal FY 2023 budget year begins in October 2022. This funding comprises only 10% of the agency's operating budget, but it provides critical leverage for our fundraising efforts and makes it possible for us to equitably serve the most rural parts of the state.

**Advocacy**

Federal Advocacy was primarily conducted at the end of the February in conjunction with the APTS Public Media Summit, though we continue to conduct visits because the FY23 budget has yet to be negotiated.

State advocacy took place in March and were a combination of virtual and in-person contacts. We presented a "thank you" message in the form of a short video, print update, and constituent comment sheets. The meetings were well received. Additionally, we extended invitations for tower site visits which we will be scheduling around the state throughout the summer.



### **Milwaukee PBS Update**

The contract for providing master control services for MPBS was finalized last week for presentation to the MATC Board at their meeting on April 26. Pending approval by MATC, we will have a very busy summer of procurement, renovations, staff onboarding and training.

### **Wisconsin Public Media Director Search Update**

The application window has closed for the new director of Wisconsin Public Media to replace Gene Purcell. Niles Berman is chairing the search committee. ECB leadership will have the opportunity to meet with the finalists before a final decision is made, which is expected by late June.

### **Broadband Access**

The FCC ended the Emergency Broadband Benefit and transitioned it to the new, longer-term Affordable Connectivity Program that provides discounts for monthly broadband service and a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a device single device. ECB again coordinated with PBS Wisconsin, WPR and the Public Service Commission to update air-ready and digital public service announcements with the new messaging. The new announcements will be ready by May 1 and will be made available to all broadcasters in the state through the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association.

### **Equity & Inclusion**

Following our last board meeting, Eileen Littig reached out to learn more about the “Breaking the Bias Habit” class that our agency took. She thought that the whole board might be interested in learning more about it as well. It was taught by Dr. William Cox from the UW-Madison and you can read more about his work in this article from The Atlantic. Additionally, on April 20 we hosted the first of what will be a quarterly Equity & Inclusion conversation around the [TED Talk: The Danger of a Single Story](#). This session was voluntary and was well attended by staff.

On June 1 and 2, the State of Wisconsin Bureau of Equity and Inclusion will conduct a monitoring audit of ECB to observe and review the agency progress with our Equity and Inclusion Plan. We look forward to their feedback and guidance.