



Educational Communications Board

3319 West Beltline Highway • Madison, WI 53713-4296 • 608.264.9600 • ECB.org

EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD MEETING

ECB Board Room
3319 West Beltline Highway
Madison, Wisconsin
February 1, 2019
9:30 A.M.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Marta Bechtol, Executive Director

New Deputy Director

Peter D. Dally has been appointed the new deputy director of the Educational Communications Board. Pete has served as the Director of the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, which is supported by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, for the last 6 years. Prior to that, he spent 18 years in Madison Metropolitan School District as a special education teacher, instructional technology teacher and library media administrator. In addition to his professional educator and library media certifications, Pete holds a master's degree in educational administration. He comes recommended to us by (among others) Dr. Carolyn Stanford Taylor, who was recently appointed as the new Superintendent at DPI.

The WCBVI was created in 1850 as the first State-supported educational institution in Wisconsin. The Center manages multiple budgets and receives grant funding (state, federal and other), conducts statewide outreach activities, and supports lifetime learning. Given the scope of his experience, Pete comes well-prepared to hit the ground running. And as a lifelong supporter of the fundamental importance of public radio and television, Pete is extremely excited to be joining the ECB team. He will begin work here on Monday, February 4.

Audit

The ECB is required to undergo an annual financial audit in order to remain qualified for Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) funding. Baker Tilly began on-site work on the ECB audit in November. I'm pleased to report that the ECB has received an unqualified opinion on its FY18 audit. On top of that, this is the second year in a row that there were no recommendations or changes to our numbers by the auditors.

This notable achievement is a credit to the work of our Finance Director, Aimee Wright, and our accountant, Natalia Sutyagina. Baker Tilley will formally present the audit to the Board of Directors at the May 3rd meeting. Board members will receive a copy of the complete audit in advance of that meeting.

State Budget Updates

Following the election of Governor Evers, I commenced visits to members of the Joint Finance committee and others, informing them of the work of the ECB and the agency budget request



Educational Communications Board

3319 West Beltline Highway • Madison, WI 53713-4296 • 608.264.9600 • ECB.org

that was submitted in September. This work is active and ongoing, with the anticipation that Governor Evers could unveil his initial budget in late February.

The State Building Commission will meet in late February to review the possible capital funding opportunity that was presented to ECB earlier in the fall.

Federal Budget Updates

You may recall that the part of the federal budget that includes public broadcasting (Labor-HHS-Education) was signed into law on September 28, 2018. Therefore, ECB's direct federal support has not been affected by the government shutdown. The agency submitted its annual financial reports, grant agreements and certificate of eligibility to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in early January. We received our initial payments on January 16th.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), for which ECB provides contract services, is closed. We invoice them around \$47,000 quarterly for transmitter maintenance services. We have been notified that NOAA is unable to process our invoices until the government reopens.

The agency has experienced other minor impacts of the federal standoff: NOAA transmitter maintenance training for our technicians has been cancelled; the Federal Communications Commission website operations have been frozen, preventing broadcasters from being able to upload and view reports; and ECB applications for additional power increases at four of our TV sites are also stalled.