



## Educational Communications Board

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### EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD MEETING

ECB Board Room

3319 West Beltline Highway

Madison, Wisconsin

January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016

9:30 a.m.

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### MINUTES

#### Roll Call and Introductions

Board Chair Dr. Rolf Wegenke called the meeting of the Educational Communications Board to order at 9:40 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
- David Hutchison
- Erin Kastberg (representing Ray Cross)
- Kurt Kiefer (representing Superintendent Tony Evers)
- Rich Lepping
- Eileen Littig
- Senator Luther Olsen
- Senator Fred Risser
- Karen Schroeder
- Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D., Chair
- Bohdan Zachary
- Jim Zylstra (representing Morna Foy)
- Cate Zeuske (representing Scott Neitzel)

Absent:

- Eve Hall, Ph.D.



Approval of Minutes from the October 16th and 22nd, 2015 ECB Board Meeting.

Senator Olsen noted that he was in attendance for the October 16th, 2015 meeting and asked that the official minutes be updated to reflect his attendance. Eileen Littig moved, seconded by Jim Zylstra to approve the corrected October 16th and 22nd, 2015 meeting minutes. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**AGENDA ITEM 1.** Report of the Board Chair

Dr. Wegenke welcomed new board members. Dr. Wegenke reported that the ECB has undergone many budgetary and technological changes during the last year, and the expectations of this board remain high. Dr. Wegenke reminded board members that their service is very important to the mission of the ECB and in the support of educational communications.

**AGENDA ITEM 2.** Report of the Executive Director

Dr. Wegenke introduced Executive Director Gene Purcell. Mr. Purcell briefly reviewed his career in public broadcasting for the sake of new board members. Mr. Purcell reminded board members that a copy of his written report was included in the board packets distributed prior to the meeting.

Mr. Purcell reported that the annual financial audit of ECB is underway and he believes it's going smoothly. ECB is in the third year of a contract with the Milwaukee firm of Reilly, Penner and Benton to provide this service. The annual audit results are due to CPB by January 31<sup>st</sup> and will be formally presented at the April meeting of the Board. Mr. Purcell indicated that he will forward the results to board members when they are available.

Mr. Purcell updated the board on the ongoing transition and future of the Wisconsin Media Lab (WML). Mr. Purcell reminded the board that funding for the WML was eliminated in the last state budget. Mr. Purcell reported that planning sessions have been taking place within ECB, and meetings will be occurring during the next couple of months with other agencies including the Department of Public Instruction, UW Extension, Badger Link (DPI), and Milwaukee Public Television. Mr. Purcell discussed the history of WML related to licensing educational media on behalf of the state, as well as the production of original content which is "Wisconsin-centric" in nature. Mr. Purcell anticipates that collaboration and partnerships will be essential in order to continue making these services available.

Mr. Purcell provided an update on the upcoming FCC Spectrum Auction. Mr. Purcell reminded the board that ECB voted to not participate in the spectrum auction, but will likely be affected by the repacking process following the auction. In some instances following the auction,



broadcasters may be forced to move their signal to a different part of the television spectrum. As part of today's meeting, Mr. Purcell asked Terry Baun and James Klas from the ECB Engineering Division to discuss how the agency is preparing for the repacking process.

Following Mr. Purcell's report, there were a few questions.

Eileen Littig inquired about the new Education Specialist position at WPT. Mr. Purcell confirmed that Rebecca Marburger had been selected for a new Education Specialist position at WPT. Ms. Marburger had previously worked at WML. Mr. Purcell reported that one WML position remains at ECB.

Kurt Kiefer reiterated that DPI sees ECB and WML as critical partners. Mr. Kiefer believes DPI remains committed to that partnership as the future of WiML is determined.

Cate Zeuske complimented Mr. Purcell for reaching out to other state agencies as potential partnerships for continuing WML services. Ms. Zeuske asked Mr. Purcell if he has considered collaboration with the Wisconsin State Historical Society. Mr. Purcell replied that the State Historical Society has been identified as a potential partner for WML services. Mr. Purcell added that ECB and the Historical Society have a long history of collaboration in development of original productions related to Wisconsin history and Wisconsin Native American history. Ms. Zeuske encouraged Mr. Purcell to reach out to other agencies, even those which may not seem like a natural partner such as the Department of Tourism.

There were no additional 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: Dr. Rolf Wegenke as chair, Jim Zystra as Vice-Chair, and Eileen Littig as Secretary. The nomination was seconded by Dean Dietrich. Dr. Wegenke called three times for additional nominations. There were no other nominations. Senator Luther Olsen moved to vote by unanimous ballot, seconded by Dean Dietrich. 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 ECB Executive Director Evaluation Materials

Dr. Wegenke asked Mr. Purcell to provide background information to the Board regarding the Executive Director evaluation. Mr. Purcell described the evaluation process, and also how a new evaluation process was adopted about five years ago. 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. There will then 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 5.** WisContext Presentation

Gene Purcell introduced Kristian Knutsen, Managing Editor of WisContext. Mr. Knutson described WisContext as an online public media news service partnership of Wisconsin Public Radio, Wisconsin Public Television and the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension. The project will include a separate website and curate online information in order to provide additional support for WPR and WPT. Mr. Knutson described WisContext's mission as delivering news and information about urgent and emerging issues related to Wisconsin. WisContext is funded through a UW Extension Chancellor's Innovation grant and currently includes 2.5 staff persons, representing each partner of the service. Mr. Knutson displayed examples of WisContext reporting and graphics. Mr. Knutson reported that WisContext's website is scheduled to officially launch in the spring of 2016.

**AGENDA ITEM 6.** The FCC Repack – Terry Baun/James Klas

Gene Purcell introduced Terry Baun, ECB Administrator, Division of Delivery and Operations and James Klas, ECB Director of Media Technology to provide an update on the agency's preparations for the repacking process following the FCC Spectrum Auction.

Terry Baun reviewed the FCC Spectrum Auction process and reminded board members that they voted to not participate in the auction. Mr. Baun went on to discuss the mandatory "repacking" process following the auction. Mr. Baun reported that all public and commercial broadcasters could be subject to the repacking process. As a result of the auction, portions of the television frequency spectrum will be re-allocated to wireless providers. Television stations that remain on the air may be forced to move to another frequency. Mr. Baun asked James Klas to describe the process the ECB will go through to change frequencies including the costs, equipment and agency resources necessary to make the change.

The presentation by James Klas provided board members with details regarding the process ECB will undergo in order to repack one to five full power television stations. Mr. Klas shared industry forecasts which estimate that 600 out of 1600 stations will participate in the auction. Of the 1000 stations who do not participate in the auction, Mr. Klas reported an estimated 800 will be repacked to different frequencies. As part of the auction process, the FCC will take \$1.75 billion from the proceeds to reimburse stations that are forced to repack. Mr. Klas reported that the FCC will release channel allocation tables in the fall of 2016. Within three months of the channel allocations, stations are required to submit a budget to the FCC for the replacement of transmission equipment. Mr. Klas indicated that the FCC reimbursement plan



permits for the purchase and use of temporary transmission equipment which may help stations remain on the air while new transmission equipment is installed. Mr. Klas continued by describing each stage of the transmission process and corresponding equipment necessary to transmit television signals. Mr. Klas reported that transmitters and antennas are built for specific frequencies and can't be re-tooled to work on a different frequency. Stations that are required to repack will be forced to install new antennas, transmitters and transmission lines. Mr. Klas also discussed the role of private contractors who build towers, antennas, and transmission equipment. Mr. Klas reported that a major concern in the broadcast industry is the limited number of companies and personnel required to perform the work in what is scheduled to be three years. Mr. Klas reminded board members that ECB's experiences with the conversion to digital transmission were helpful in preparing us for the repacking process.

**AGENDA ITEM 7.** Financial reports

Quarterly financial reports were distributed. Gene Purcell noted that the report does not include numbers from the December pledge drive but projections are on schedule to be met for both television and radio contributions.

Senator Luther Olsen inquired about WPT's door to door canvassing. Mr. Purcell acknowledged that WPT has begun canvassing door to door in hopes of meeting potential donors. Mr. Purcell added that canvassing has proven to be successful in other large markets and Madison is actually the smallest market to undertake door to door canvassing. Mr. Purcell will keep the board updated on the campaign's progress.

There were no questions or comments from board members.

**AGENDA ITEM 8.** Questions regarding reports or other comments from Board members.

There were no further questions or comments.

**AGENDA ITEM 9.** 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 11:10 a.m.