

**EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD MEETING**  
**ECB Board Room**  
**3319 West Beltline Highway**  
**Madison, Wisconsin**  
**February 1, 2019**  
**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. In lieu of a roll call of Board Member attendance, Dr. Wegenke asked board members to introduce themselves for the benefit of new board members. The complete attendance list follows:

Board Members Present: Gary Bennett (representing Ray Cross)  
Representative Dave Considine  
Jose Delgado  
Ron Dunlop  
David Hutchison  
Kurt Kiefer (representing Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor)  
Rich Lepping  
Eileen Littig  
Senator Luther Olsen  
Chris Patton (representing Secretary Joel Brennan)  
Karen Schroeder  
Representative Pat Snyder  
Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D., Chair  
Jim Zylstra (representing Morna Foy), Vice-Chair

Absent: Bohdan Zachary  
Senator Fred Risser

## **Approval of Minutes from the October 12, 2018 ECB Board Meeting**

Eileen Littig moved, seconded by Karen Schroeder, to approve the October 12, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

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

Dr. Wegenke reported that the agency's transition to a new executive director has gone very smoothly. Dr. Wegenke congratulated Executive Director Marta Bechtol and noted that Ms. Bechtol is off to a great start and he is hopeful that the smooth transition and great start continue.

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

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

Dr. Wegenke introduced Marta Bechtol, ECB Executive Director. Dr. Wegenke reminded board members that a copy of the Executive Director's written report was included in the board packets distributed prior to the meeting and he welcomes any questions or comments from board members.

Ms. Bechtol announced that she has selected a Deputy Director, Peter Dally. Mr. Dally will start at the ECB next Monday. Mr. Dally is presently the Director of the Wisconsin School of the Blind and Visually Impaired and has over 18 years of experience as an educator and administrator in the Madison Metropolitan School District. Mr. Dally possesses a master's degree in educational administration. Ms. Bechtol noted there were many excellent candidates for the Deputy Director position and she was impressed by Mr. Dally's experience with mixed funding (local, state, federal, grants, etc.) sources at the School for the Blind which parallel funding streams at the ECB. Ms. Bechtol reported she was also impressed with Mr. Dally's previous experience in state service and familiarity with the STAR system.

Ms. Bechtol went on the report the appointment of a Southern Region Technical Manager in the Engineering Division. Ms. Bechtol announced that Marcus Kruse has been selected for the position and had previously been employed by the ECB as a Media Telecommunications Technician in the Engineering Division. Mr. Kruse came to the ECB after nine years in the United States Navy, possesses a bachelor degree in Electrical Engineering Technology and is currently pursuing a master's degree in Organizational Management. Ms. Bechtol went on to report that ECB is proud to be an organization that can offer opportunities to veterans as she believes the military offers exceptional training and preparation related to the skillsets required for ECB technical positions.

Ms. Bechtol continued her report by providing an update on the Federal Budget. Ms. Bechtol reported that Federal funding for PBS was included in the budget approved by the President last September. According to Ms. Bechtol, the recently ended government shutdown had minimal impact at ECB. Ms. Bechtol reported that as a result of the government shutdown, the ECB and other broadcasters were delayed in posting mandatory public files but those are now up to date. Ms. Bechtol also reported that ECB is waiting for payment related to the maintenance of NOAA

Weather Radio service but she is hopeful those payments will be received soon following the shutdown.

Ms. Bechtol reported that she will make it her practice at quarterly board meetings to review activities at the ECB as they are related to the agency's Strategic Plan. Ms. Bechtol indicated that details of these activities are included in the Divisional reports as well.

Ms. Bechtol reported that the 107.9 FM translator for WHA-AM was relocated in November, significantly increasing the broadcast range. Ms. Bechtol added that plans are underway to install a new FM translator in the Janesville area which will expand the coverage of the Ideas Network in southern Wisconsin. Ms. Bechtol noted that both of these activities are an example of the agency's Strategic Plan to "Strengthen the impact, reach and performance of the ECB to better serve all of the citizens of Wisconsin..."

Ms. Bechtol reported various examples of the agency's commitment to "Assure the responsible use of resources to carry out the work of the ECB" from the Strategic Plan. Ms. Bechtol reported that the annual audit of ECB finances has been completed and for the second consecutive year, ECB has achieved the highest ratings from the auditors. Ms. Bechtol thanked the Finance staff and all ECB employees for their efforts to be responsible and transparent which contributed to a good audit. Ms. Bechtol added the audit would be presented at the May Board of Directors meeting.

Ms. Bechtol noted that new transmitters in Green Bay and La Crosse have resulted in significant energy savings and will allow for power increases to strengthen the transmitter signals.

In the category of "Grow and engage public media audiences using the most effective forms of content delivery", Ms. Bechtol highlighted the work of WPT Education and the development of "Jo Wilder and the Capitol Case". Ms. Bechtol noted that "Jo Wilder..." would be demonstrated later in today's meeting and that the web-based educational game represents a new approach to educational media.

In the area of "Remain relevant in world of advancing technology", Ms. Bechtol highlighted the replacement of automation software in the ECB Operations Center. Ms. Bechtol reported that the old software would no longer be supported by the manufacturer and the replacement required a great deal of planning, preparation and training of the Operations Center staff. Ms. Bechtol thanked all the staff involved and reported that the year's long planning and conversion will be complete in the coming weeks.

Also in the area of "Remain relevant in world of advancing technology", Ms. Bechtol reported that the PBS Interconnect System is transitioning from a satellite to fiber optic system. Routers have been installed at ECB to facilitate the new system, and PBS will be shutting down the C-Band satellite system in the near future.

Ms. Bechtol reported that she and Gene Purcell continue to meet with legislators, particularly members of the Joint Committee on Finance, to answer questions and provide information related to the ECB budget request.

Following Ms. Bechtol's report, Kurt Kiefer conveyed that he has worked with Peter Dally for many years at DPI and in educational settings and he complimented Ms. Bechtol and the ECB for the selection of Mr. Dally as Deputy Director.

Mr. Kiefer also complimented Ms. Bechtol and the ECB for the completion of various operational projects that he observed were completed on time and on budget.

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 Senator Luther Olsen. Dr. Wegenke called three times for additional nominations. There were no other nominations. Dr. Wegenke called for a voice vote. The Board elected by majority voice vote Dr. Rolf Wegenke as chair, Jim Zystra as Vice-Chair, and Eileen Littig as Secretary. Rich Lepping recorded his vote as opposed.

There were no questions or comments from board members.

### **AGENDA ITEM 4.** Jo Wilder and the Capitol Case – Alyssa Tsagong, WPT Education

Dr. Wegenke called on Jon Miskowski, Wisconsin Public Television Director, to introduce the presentation of "Jo Wilder and the Capitol Case". Mr. Miskowski thanked the Board for their continued support for education at Wisconsin Public Television. Mr. Miskowski also thanked Mike Crane and the staff at Wisconsin Public Radio for their work and collaboration to create educational media for radio. Mr. Miskowski noted that Wisconsin has been a leader in delivering quality educational broadcasts which started on radio in the 1930's, and continues today on multiple platforms. Mr. Miskowski went on to discuss how the centennial celebration of the Wisconsin State Capitol presented an opportunity to develop educational media for Wisconsin, and how those efforts led to the development of "Jo Wilder and the Capitol Case".

Mr. Miskowski introduced Alyssa Tsagong, Education Unit Director at Wisconsin Public Television (WPT). Ms. Tsagong discussed the history of the Education Unit at WPT and previous projects including the Wisconsin Hometown Stories and Wisconsin Biographies projects. Ms. Tsagong went on to discuss what led to the "Jo Wilder" project to create educational media related to the Wisconsin State Capitol.

Ms. Tsagong described the project as a collaboration between WPT Education and Field Day Lab from the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at UW-Madison, along with teacher fellows and students from all over Wisconsin. According to Ms. Tsagong, teacher fellows were selected to represent a broad spectrum of geographic and cultural diversity representative of Wisconsin. Ms. Tsagong noted the game addresses Wisconsin academic standards for grades three through five in social studies, English language, and information and technology literacy while players solve mysteries about artifacts from Wisconsin's history.

Ms. Tsagong noted the game was “play tested” in classrooms by over 600 students from 17 schools across Wisconsin and launched in October 2018. Ms. Tsagong displayed the game for the ECB Board of Directors. Ms. Tsagong reviewed handouts related to the presentation that included numerous examples of positive feedback from teachers, parents and students.

Following Ms. Tsagong’s presentation and video display, there were questions and comments from board members.

Gary Bennett inquired about the inclusion of minorities and diverse populations in the development of “Jo Wilder”. Ms. Tsagong responded that schoolteacher fellows were selected from public, private and charter schools to represent diverse populations, as well as teachers who work in school districts with higher minority populations. Ms. Tsagong also detailed how the characters in the game are designed to represent diverse populations.

Karen Schroeder complimented how “Jo Wilder” utilized interactive media and videogame technology as a useful aide to help teachers to make Wisconsin history more interesting for schoolchildren. Ms. Schroeder suggested that teachers would appreciate more tools like “Jo Wilder” for other subjects such as the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Kurt Kiefer commended Ms. Tsagong and the WPT Education unit for collaborating with Field Day Lab. Mr. Kiefer noted that Field Day Lab has made significant contributions in the creation of interactive media for educational purposes, as well as provide an opportunity for UW students to develop the skills needed to create educational media as a vocation.

Senator Luther Olsen asked how “Jo Wilder and the Capitol Case” is distributed to teachers. Ms. Tsagong responded that “Jo Wilder” is available for free at [wpteducation.org](http://wpteducation.org) and WISELearn, as well as BrainPOP which is a national learning platform that many Wisconsin schools use.

Before concluding, Ms. Tsagong announced the next Wisconsin Biography will feature lessons and activities about Joe Bee Xiong from Eau Claire who was a well-known advocate for Hmong culture.

**AGENDA ITEM 5.** Presentation of ECB Executive Director Evaluation Materials to Board –  
Marta Bechtol

Dr. Wegenke announced that Marta Bechtol, ECB Executive Director, has submitted a self-assessment tool for the Board’s review. Dr. Wegenke noted that Ms. Bechtol’s self-assessment will be preliminary to her evaluation by the Board at the spring meeting. Dr. Wegenke shared that he has reviewed the self-assessment tool with Ms. Bechtol and thinks it’s a good starting point for the Board to react to.

Ms. Bechtol identified Core Accountabilities which are common in the evaluation of Executive Directors of similar organizations, along with measurable objectives specific to the ECB. Ms. Bechtol noted that she is most interested in developing an evaluation platform with concrete goals that also gives the Board an opportunity to provide feedback that she can use to improve her performance.

Senator Olsen noted that he’s not entirely familiar with some of the activities Ms. Bechtol had identified in the proposed self-assessment and feels it might be difficult for him to evaluate her

performance relative to those activities. Senator Olsen went on to suggest that members of the ECB Board of Directors are more familiar with setting policy and identifying the “big picture” goals of the agency, while leaving direction of the day to day operations and activities to the Executive Director.

Karen Schroeder noted that members of the Board of Directors are more focused on outcomes rather than the steps taken to achieve those outcomes. Ms. Schroeder complimented Ms. Bechtol’s proposed assessment and thinks she will be successful if she completes all of the objectives, but noted that the Board of Directors focuses more on broad goals and outcomes.

Senator Olsen commented that Ms. Bechtol’s goals are the goals of the entire Board.

Eileen Littig noted that the Board’s goals are reflected in the ECB Strategic Plan.

Dr. Wegenke noted that today’s discussion has focused on the distinction between means and ends. Dr. Wegenke commented that the Board of Directors can appropriately evaluate the ends or outcomes of the agency’s goals but rely on the Executive Director to identify the means to achieve those goals.

Ms. Bechtol asked for guidance from the Board in terms of the format of the goals to be presented to the Board in May. Ms. Bechtol asked if the Board preferred that she present elements of the ECB Strategic Plan with examples of how the agency achieved those goals. Multiple Board members responded “yes.”

Karen Schroeder discussed the Board’s past practice with the former Executive Director and noted that goals were identified at the beginning of the process and the Executive Director reported on whether those goals were achieved or why they were not.

Eileen Littig encouraged Ms. Bechtol to reach out to the Board if she needs help in identifying goals or the steps necessary to achieve those goals.

Dr. Wegenke noted this is an evolving process and encouraged everyone to continue to work together. Dr. Wegenke also encouraged Ms. Bechtol to share a draft of her evaluation goals with the Board prior to the next meeting.

There were no further questions or comments.

## **AGENDA ITEM 6. Financial Reports**

Quarterly financial reports were included in board packets distributed in advance of today’s meeting. Dr. Wegenke asked if there were any questions from board members regarding the reports.

Jose Delgado asked for an explanation of reductions found on the “ECB Expenses Budget to Actual” document. He asked if there’s been a reduction of services or more economical methods to deliver those services. Marta Bechtol asked Aimee Wright to respond. Ms. Wright explained

there's been no reduction in services but changes to the flow of revenue between public broadcasting partners. In some cases, non-ECB partners have assumed greater expenses which reflect positive fundraising and development.

Senator Luther Olsen noted that for some expenses such as technology, software and utilities; a reduction in the budget may represent more efficient technology or improved processes and this should be complimented.

Jose Delgado inquired about the ECB Budget request and asked about the timeline for the budget to be finalized. Marta Bechtol explained that the 2019 – 2021 biennial budget was submitted to the Governor's office in September 2018. Ms. Bechtol mentioned that following the Governor's January release of the budget proposal, legislators will negotiate changes and the Joint Committee on Finance will hold public meetings but she doesn't expect a final budget until late 2019. Until then, Ms. Bechtol indicated that ECB will continue working with the current fiscal year budget.

There were no additional questions or comments from board members regarding the Finance Reports.

**AGENDA ITEM 7.** Questions/Comments from board members

Dr. Wegenke asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Eileen Littig complimented the new WPT Biography "Joe Bee Xiong: War to Peace". Ms. Littig also suggested that WPT consider biographies related to Latinos, Somali, and Russian populations in Wisconsin.

Dave Hutchison echoed Ms. Littig's comment, and thought it would be important to highlight the contribution of Latinos in rural Wisconsin, particularly to the agricultural industry.

There were no additional questions or comments from board members.

**AGENDA ITEM 8.** Adjournment

Karen Schroeder moved, seconded by Senator Olsen to adjourn. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Dr. Wegenke announced the meeting adjourned at 11:05 A.M.