



Educational Communications Board

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EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD MEETING

ECB Board Room

3319 West Beltline Highway

Madison, Wisconsin

October 16th, 2015

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 9:40 a.m. A roll call of Board Member attendance was recorded and a quorum was present. The complete attendance list follows:

Board Members Present:

- Ellis Bromberg
- Dean Dietrich
- Eve Hall, Ph.D.
- David Hutchison
- Erin Kastberg (representing Ray Cross)
- Kurt Kiefer (representing Superintendent Tony Evers)
- Eileen Littig
- Senator Luther Olsen
- Karen Schroeder
- Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D., Chair
- Jim Zylstra (representing Morna Foy)
- Cate Zeuske (representing Scott Neitzel)

Absent:

- Richard Lepping
- Senator Fred Risser



Approval of Minutes from the July 17th, 2015 Meeting

Eileen Littig moved, seconded by Jim Zylstra to approve the July 17th, 2015 meeting minutes. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

AGENDA ITEM 1. Report of the Board Chair

Dr. Wegenke recognized outgoing board members Diane Everson and Ellis Bromberg for their many years of service to the Board and State of Wisconsin. Dr. Wegenke displayed plaques which will be presented to Ms. Everson and Mr. Bromberg. Dr. Wegenke expressed a heartfelt thanks to both members for their willingness to serve and for their valuable contributions to the Board.

Dr. Wegenke went on to congratulate Eileen Littig and the Northeastern Wisconsin In-School Telecommunications (NEWIST) organization for being nominated for an Emmy Award for producing the “If a Bully Watches This” video. Ms. Littig added that “If a Bully Watches This” is now streaming through Wisconsin Public Television (WPT) and Wisconsin Media Lab (WiML) websites.

AGENDA ITEM 2. Report of the Executive Director

Dr. Wegenke introduced Executive Director Gene Purcell. 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 ECB has received final numbers from the Department of Administration regarding the ECB biennial budget. Layoffs and other budget adjustments have been completed at ECB. As a result of layoffs and consolidation of services, the ECB has remodeled a portion of the office space at the beltline building and relocated staff from the east wing of the 4th floor into the west wing. Mr. Purcell indicated that staff from the Department of Health Services will be moving into the east wing of 4th floor on November 1st.

Mr. Purcell provided an update on the agency’s transition to STAR. The ECB began using the STAR procurement and financial business IT systems on October 1st. Mr. Purcell described the transition as challenging. Mr. Purcell acknowledged the hard work of Marta Bechtol and Aimee Wierzba who oversaw the implementation of STAR at ECB. Mr. Purcell added that time reporting, payroll and other human resources functions in STAR will be activated January 1st, 2016.

Mr. Purcell went on to report that next year’s financial audit will provide additional challenges since the STAR financial systems were implemented during the middle of the fiscal year. Mr.



Purcell asked board members to be aware of this for next year's audit, and added that future audit reporting will likely be improved as a result of the implementation of STAR.

Cate Zeuske provided a brief follow up and reported that the implementation of STAR appears to be successful throughout every state agency. Ms. Zeuske shared that STAR will replace nearly 140 legacy systems in state government. Ms. Zeuske also shared that payroll and time reporting functions will be implemented December 13th rather than January 1st.

Mr. Purcell reported that he intends to begin updating the strategic plan in January 2016 but considers the ongoing implementation of STAR and the annual audit higher priorities.

Following Mr. Purcell's report, Eileen Littig inquired about the budget cuts to the Wisconsin Media Lab. Ms. Littig asked if there is a plan to seek restoration of the cuts or to continue to provide the services affected by the cuts. Mr. Purcell responded that details have yet to worked out but three areas of focus will be to seek restoration of the cuts during the next budget deliberation process, as well as investigating the possibility of collecting user fees or outside funding to for the Media Lab.

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

AGENDA ITEM 3. Wisconsin Media Lab Informational Presentation – Becky Marburger

Gene Purcell introduced Becky Marburger, Educational Producer, to present the Wisconsin Media Lab's latest project "Into the Map".

"Into the Map" is a Wisconsin geography and English language arts resource for students in grades three through six. The web based program's five online activities provide students with the opportunity to apply geography skills while analyzing and creating maps. Wisconsin teachers as well as geography experts from the Wisconsin Geographic Alliance and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction served on the project's advisory committee, assisting with creating this resource. "Into the Map" was released in October 2015 and can be found by visiting IntotheMap.org.

Following Ms. Marburger's presentation, there were several questions and comments from board members.

David Hutchison asked if there was any consideration for colorblindness when developing the maps and visual aids related to "Into the Map". Ms. Marburger responded that, by coincidence, one of the project's co-producers is colorblind and was helpful in identifying graphics which should not preclude colorblind students from utilizing the resource.

Dean Dietrich asked if there are examples from other states of public agencies producing educational media similar to Wisconsin Media Lab. Gene Purcell affirmed there are several



similar arrangements in other states and Wisconsin is considered one of the leaders. Mr. Purcell added that what distinguishes Wisconsin Media Lab is the focus on Wisconsin specific educational media that is not available from commercially produced media developers.

Eileen Littig inquired about Wisconsin Public Television's (WPT) role in developing educational media. Gene Purcell replied that there is a longstanding partnership with ECB and WPT and cited numerous examples of collaboration and shared resources.

Dean Dietrich asked how long "Into the Map" and similar educational media remain relevant and useful. Ms. Marburger replied that the content and skills learned from the media will remain relevant indefinitely but the platform by which they are delivered changes in conjunction with technological and software advances. Marta Bechtol added that the "shelf life" of electronic media is typically around 7 years but web based media can be maintained and updated much more efficiently than printed media.

Senator Luther Olsen asked how much it cost to produce "Into the Map" and whether there are ongoing costs associated with the project. Ms. Murkley responded that the cost to produce the "Into the Map" was \$90,000 and ongoing costs are limited to maintaining server space. Senator Olsen followed up by noting this represents a very low cost per student and he is heartbroken about the lack of this type of investment for Wisconsin's educational system.

Kurt Kiefer reminded the board that electronic educational media is utilized not only by public school children but also those at private schools and home schooled children. Mr. Kiefer added that these are incredibly valuable resources when considering the very low cost to produce and disseminate to large numbers of students.

Cate Zeuske discussed the importance of educating the public and school districts about the cost to produce digital media resources so they better understand the potential need to implement a fee structure in order to continue producing such media.

Jim Zylstra encouraged Gene Purcell to consider incorporating a demonstration of "Into the Map" and other WiML produced media as part of his ongoing advocacy efforts with legislators.

Senator Luther Olsen asked if schools would be willing to pay for digital content. Kurt Kiefer responded emphatically yes, they already are and in the case of WiML produced media, there is no other source for digital media content that is specific to Wisconsin history, Native American history, and other "Wisconsin-centric" educational media.

Dr. Wegenke asked Gene Purcell to investigate whether the ECB is authorized to charge a fee for access to digital media and report back to the board at a future meeting.

David Hutchison asked the Board to consider that many rural school districts may not be able to afford such a fee and any plan to charge fees to school districts should include contingencies for school districts who can't afford it.



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Ellis Bromberg reminded that a portion of the State's budget cut \$211,000 that was used to promote the WiML in Milwaukee and there remains a great interest for these types of resources in Milwaukee area schools.

Senator Luther Olsen stated that he believes the ECB needs to stay in the business of producing educational media that is specifically for Wisconsin students because there is no other source for this type of media. Senator Olsen continued by asking if there is any possibility that the Public Broadcasting Foundation could help offset the costs to produce digital media until a fee structure is in place to recover those costs. Gene Purcell responded that while it would require extensive analysis, he believes that if it were possible, it would have already happened.

Dr. Wegenke complimented the Board for their passion and robust conversation regarding the future of the Wisconsin Media Lab and asked board members to consider this a topic to be continued at future board meetings.

There were no further questions or comments.

AGENDA ITEM 4. Wisconsin Public Broadcasting Foundation Investments Performance Associated Bank Staff Members

Gene Purcell introduced John Duffy, Molly McCarragher and Dan Julie of Associated Bank to review the status of investments held by the Wisconsin Public Broadcasting Foundation (WPBF). Mr. Julie reviewed the investment strategy guidelines employed by Associated Bank to manage WPBF investments. Mr. Duffy summarized that overall, WPBF accounts increased by 3.5% during the last fiscal year, mostly driven by stocks. Mr. Duffy then summarized individual accounts within the WPBF portfolio. Ms. McCarragher distributed a written report to each board member. Board members who would like to request an additional copy (or copies) of the complete report should contact David Cobb.

Following Mr. Julie's summary of the written report, there were no questions from board members.

AGENDA ITEM 5. Financial Report – Gene Purcell

Dr. Wegenke reminded board members that Financial Reports were included in the board packet distributed prior to today's meeting and opened the floor for any questions for Gene Purcell regarding the reports. There were no questions or comments.



AGENDA ITEM 6. Closed Session, FCC Spectrum Auction Update – Gene Purcell

Pursuant to s. 19.85(1)(e) Wis. Stats. Deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session.

The Board's deliberations regarding the proposed FCC Spectrum Auction shall be in closed session.

Following the closed session, the Board will reconvene in open session.

Board members took no action regarding the proposed FCC Spectrum Auction.

AGENDA ITEM 7. Questions regarding reports or other comments from Board members.

There were no further questions or comments.

AGENDA ITEM 8. Adjournment

Dean Dietrich moved to adjourn, seconded by Senator Luther Olsen. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Dr. Wegenke announced the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.