

# EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS BOARD QUARTERLY MEETING

ECB Board Room

3319 West Beltline Highway

Madison, WI

Remote attendance by Microsoft Teams or phone

July 18, 2025

9:30 a.m.

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## MINUTES

Board Chair Alyssa Kenney called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. Roll call was taken.

Board members present:

- Alyssa Kenney
- Anne Hanson
- Lucas Munz
- Chris Patton
- Paul Hammer
- Eric Fulcomer
- Sen. Chris Larson
- Rep. Patrick Snyder
- Rep. Ryan Clancy
- Roy Christianson
- Janet Botz

Board members absent:

- Leah Lechleiter-Luke
- Sen. Romaine Quinn
- Amy Traynor
- Deborah Hamlett

**MINUTES APPROVAL:** Roy Christianson made a motion to approve the April 11, 2025 minutes. Rep. Ryan Clancy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **AGENDA ITEM 1.** Report of the Board Chair – *Alyssa Kenney*

Alyssa Kenney reminded members of the board that Adverse Adjudication reports would be due at the end of July, should there be anything to report. Alyssa Kenney then mentioned it was a sad day for public media following the federal rescission. Alyssa Kenney highlighted the importance emergency communication infrastructure plays when broadcasting emergencies, amber alerts, and weather alerts. Alyssa Kenney continued by acknowledging and recognizing how federal rescission creates uncertainties and hardship but knows ECB and WPM leadership are great stewards of funds and well prepared by anticipating cuts in funding

### **AGENDA ITEM 2.** Report of the Executive Director – *Marta Bechtol*

Marta Bechtol introduced Lenin Quintana as the new ECB Office Administrator/Executive Staff Assistant and Erik Ernst, Public Relations Director. Marta Bechtol then discussed key points of her Strategic Directions presentation. She highlighted the importance of sustaining ECB's role as the backbone for broadcast relay, engaging with state and federal legislatures to demonstrate value of ECB's infrastructure, responsibly managing assets/resources and continuing to serve the Wisconsin audience through all public safety services and messaging. Marta Bechtol mentioned the ECB is prepared to manage the lack of federal funding through other means such as using operating funds to help bridge the gap while continuing to utilize the rest of FY 26 to analyze how re-tooling the budget should function to make appropriate adjustments. Eric Fulcomer asked how CPB funds compare against the ECB reserve and commented on the importance of utilizing rainy day funds to bridge that gap. Roy Christianson also agreed. Janet Botz mentioned using future communications projects to show stability and gain future public support. Sen. Larson thanked Marta Bechtol for speaking on federal fund cuts and reinforced the importance and role of communication via public media.

**AGENDA ITEM 3.** Action: Compensation consideration. *Pursuant to Wis. Stats. s. 19.85(1)(c), the Educational Communications Board will convene in closed session for the purpose of considering the compensation and salary of specific employees.*

Closed session convened at 10:01 a.m. and ended at 10:15 a.m. Janet Botz motioned to adjourn the session. Anne Hanson seconded the motion.

**AGENDA ITEM 4.** Information: Wisconsin Public Radio Updates – *Sarah Ashworth, WPR Director; Kealey Bultena, Associate Director; Kyla Calvert, Executive Editor and Jenny Peek, News Editor*

Open session reconvened at 10:17 a.m. Sarah Ashworth spoke on the layoffs conducted within WPR and the analytical process that enabled strategic decisions within the organization. The strategic decisions resulted in 15 staff reductions. Alyssa Kenney stated her appreciation for WPR leadership during forced adjustments. Sarah Ashworth introduced both Kyla Calvert and Jenny Peek. Kyla Calvert presented her new Executive Editor role and the WPR Statewide Service map. Kyla Calvert focused on WPR content that allows for a focus on solutions to community problems. Jenny Peek covered the Poynter Institute digital transformation program and the Wisconsin Today newsletter. Jenny Peek informed that newsletters are a great focus because they are owned by the public, and they serve the people of Wisconsin. Janet Botz commented that the numbers for Wisconsin Today were great for only being a month old.

**AGENDA ITEM 5.** Information: PBS Wisconsin Updates – *Jon Miskowski, PBSW Director; Tim Schneider, Associate Director of Digital Strategy & Engagement and Grant Fenster, Pledge Specials Senior Producer*

Jon Miskowski introduced Tim Schneider and Grant Fenster. Tim Schneider presented TimSt@ts, which covers and visualizes what content resonates with viewers. Tim Schneider informed that data from TimSt@ts is important for future content, meeting Wisconsin viewers where they are, and the impact of on demand viewing. Grant Fenster presented a trailer and separate clip showcasing a Bucky documentary tentatively scheduled to be completed in November/December 2025.

**AGENDA ITEM 6.** Information: Q4 financial report – *Aimee Wright, Director of Finance*

Aimee Wright presented highlights within the Q4 financial report. Alyssa Kenney asked if there were delays in delivery due to operating factors. Marta Bechtol replied that delays in equipment exist more due to supply obstacles rather than operating factors.

**AGENDA ITEM 7.** Adjournment:

Roy Christianson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Eric Fulcomer seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:19 a.m.