

MISSISSIPPI AUTHORITY FOR EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

Teleconference Meeting of the Board of Directors

Tuesday, January 11, 2022
10:00 a.m.
Zoom videoconference

Directors present on call:

- Chairman David Allen, Whitney Lipscomb, Jeanne Luckey, Ric Sawyer, Shawn Mackey

Directors absent:

- Vice Chair Pete Smith, Russ Latino

Staff present on call:

- Teresa Collier, John Gibson, Alicia Harris, Jason Klein, Sophie Wolf, Anna Neel
Nathan Tate, Beth Ann Wann, Tara Wren

Others present on call:

- Angela Ferraez, Avery Lee

OPENING OF MEETING

Chairman Allen opened the meeting, and it was determined that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Director Mackey and seconded by Director Sawyer that the Board approve the agenda for the meeting, and upon a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Director Mackey and seconded by Director Sawyer that the Board approve the minutes of the November 16, 2021 and the December 30, 2021 videoconference meetings of the MPB Board of Directors, and upon a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Alicia Harris presented the financial report for MPB through December 31, 2021 and noted several items.

Alicia Harris stated that we are at 44% revenue. We should be at 50%. Current with EEF. We don't have the first draw of CPB funds, but annual report has been filed with Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). Expenditures are at 39% for the year.

Chairman David Allen asked about if the 25% decrease in FY23 would occur. Alicia Harris said with the amount of money still coming in due to COVID there will probably not be a funding decrease. She is expecting level funding.

Angela Ferraez stated that the foundation has submitted the \$125,000 from the foundation but Alicia Harris has not received it yet.

The financial report is included in these minutes as **Exhibit A**

EXPENDITURES OVER \$50,000

Alicia Harris presented to the board three items needing approval as they are over the \$50,000 amount that the executive director has authority to approve:

- \$13,210 to Kessler & Gehman for engineering fees
- \$217,590 to Electronics Research Inc. for antennas
- \$492,410.68 to Technical Services Group for general construction

All this is for \$2 million FY22 Capitol expense funds that we received to improve work at our antenna sites.

A motion was made by Director Mackey and seconded by Director Sawyer that the Board approve all three purchases, and upon a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Beth Ann Wann presented the Human Resource report for MPB through December 31, 2021. There have been 5 appointments, and there are 16 vacant pins at the moment.

MAGIC HR has gone online. She is working on getting everyone into their new titles, filling the vacant positions with their new titles and salary ranges.

MPB has been hit hard with Covid. Several employees are out. Another notice has gone out regarding mask wearing, social distancing, and virtual meetings if possible.

INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S/ NEWS DEPARTMENT REPORT

Teresa Collier thanked the board for entrusting her with the interim position.

Big focus right now is the legislative session.

- Requesting level funding
- \$500,000 for the Medger Evers documentary
- \$1 million to digitize our tape vault as our tapes are deteriorating
- \$2 million in Capitol expense funds for continued tower updates

Teresa Collier stated that they are working on renewing our EdNet license.

Teresa Collier stated that the contract has been signed to produce the Bobby Rush documentary.

Teresa informed the board that CPB is putting together a compilation reel of Public spots for Covid. We have received some money from CPB to produce some of these spots. They want to spot light MPB's "It's Worth a Shot" campaign.

Gulf state newsroom has finished their first year. Some of the news stories have gone national, and it is going well. Desare Frazier has replaced long time news reporter Karen Brown as the new voice for Morning Edition and MS Edition.

Teresa Collier introduced Sophie Wolf as the new Digital Communications Director.

MPB FOUNDATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Angela Ferraez stated that the TV pledge drive was from November 25, 2021 to December 16, 2021. Raised \$68,000. Plans to offer incentives for the next pledge drive on February 28, 2021.

Angela Ferraez stated that her staff is busy entering all end of the year gifts so contribution letters can go out by the end of January.

Angela Ferraez informed the board that a few events have been cancelled due to COVID. A planning meeting with staff is in a few weeks to schedule events for the 2022 year.

Angela Ferraez stated that the foundation will be promoting Free will in Fine Tuning for January.

Angela Ferraez informed the board that Capitol Day will be February 15, 2022. This will be a scaled down event due to Covid.

Angela reminded the board that by laws require one joint board meeting a year. She would like to hold off doing that until the new executive director has been hired.

Angela informed the board that the foundation had a record-breaking month in December with \$290,000 in donations.

APPROVAL OF PUBLIC RECORD REQUEST POLICY

A motion was made by Director Mackey and seconded by Director Lipscomb that the Board approve the Public record request policy, and upon a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

The public record request policy is included in these minutes as **Exhibit B**

STAFF UPDATES

John Gibson informed the board that Mississippi Roads slowed down it's production during Covid but the new season will premier February 3, 2022. It is being promoted heavily.

John Gibson informed the board that he was hoping to get back in the studio for a new season of Fit To Eat, which is currently being aired on the Create channel. They are getting a lot of response from people around the country.

John Gibson informed the board that the Governor's State of the State address will be Wednesday January 19, 2022 @ 4 p.m. There will be video and audio to tv and radio stations along with streaming for this.

John Gibson stated that MPB classroom resumes January 26, 2022.

John Gibson stated that they are moving forward with the Medger Evers documentary. Taiwo will be flying to California with a team to interview Myrlie Evers.

John Gibson mentioned that the TV Department is working with the Education department as MPB's character Ed Said expands his message nationally in physical health and safety. This would open up more underwriting opportunities. A few clips have been sent to the Fred Rogers Co. and got an immediate response.

Nathan Tate spoke briefly about the Boonville and McHenry tower work. The supply chain issues are holding them up slightly, but they are working to keep on track. They are about to do tower inspections to make sure they are up to par.

Jason Klein informed the board that because of the engagement that they received from the Spring '21 Felder Rushing events, he would like to get a few of the other shows out.

Jason Klein noted that the big project going on was the construction of new radio studios, thanks to CPB money. This was given to help increase our digital capabilities. Construction is going great so far.

Jason also informed the board We had Wifi put in 10 years ago. It is time we bid that out again and get some better options.

Director Sawyer asked about the ratings and how they were determined. Jason Klein replied letting him know his numbers came from Neilson Ratings. They are good at showing him trends.

Tara Wren informed the board their focus at the moment was with the upgrade of the digital education network. Their goal is to have installation complete in all the schools by August. With the certified teacher shortage this can have a big impact on the schools as it is a free service.

Tara Wren noted that PATT, (Parents Are Teachers Too), is moving along into its third year. She explained that this program allows parents to utilize PBS Kids as a learning device to teach their children at home.

Tara Wren stated that their partnership with the MS Library Commission that started last September has allowed them to visit 3 community libraries virtually and in person. This is a Library literacy program that promote PBS kids programming.

Tara reiterated what John said about the teachers coming back at the end of January to continue recording for MPB Classroom TV.

[Reed Branson joined the call]

Reed Branson informed the board that the big picture in this legislative session will be in spending the excess money the state has. This will give MPB the opportunity to ask for excess funds to repair towers and support the digitation of the film library. His recommendation is to talk about the educational classroom recordings that have been done during the pandemic as well as the work that the local programming does to reinforce the strengths of MS.

Reed Branson reiterated that him, Clair, and his staff appreciated being able to work with MPB, and if it ever comes up he is paid through the foundation.

Anna Neel gave a presentation, MPB By the Numbers, to update the board on data gathered in different areas of MPB to show the progress that has occurred.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman David Allen determined there was no need for executive session, and there being no further business, the Board adjourned.

SIGNED, this the 11th day of January, 2022

David Allen, Chairman
Board of Directors

Teresa Collier
Interim Executive Director