

MISSISSIPPI AUTHORITY FOR EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

Regular Meeting/Teleconference of the Board of Directors

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

12:30 p.m.

MAET Administration Building

3825 Ridgewood Rd.

Jackson, MS 39211

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Microsoft meet videoconference

Board Members present:

- Whitney Lipscomb, Shawn Mackey, Russ Latino, Ric Sawyer

Board Members absent:

- David Allen, Jeanne Luckey

Staff present:

- Royal Aills, Anna Neel, Alicia Harris, Jason Klein, Cedric Grizzell, Lisa Lancaster

Others present:

- Angela Ferraez, Sarah Mann

OPENING OF MEETING

Chairman Mackey opened the meeting at 12:30 p.m., and it was determined that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Member Sawyer and seconded by Member Lipscomb that the Board approve the agenda for the meeting. Upon a unanimous vote, (excluding Director Latino who recused himself from voting this meeting), the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by W. Lipscomb and seconded by R. Sawyer that the Board approve the minutes of the November 8, 2022, of the Board of Directors, and upon a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF 2023 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE (Exhibit A)

Meeting times/dates were proposed and discussed with a request for consideration for conflicting obligations.

Proposed Dates: March 7, 2023
 May 9, 2023
 July 11, 2023
 September 12, 2023
 November 14, 2023

Angela Ferraez reminded the board that a joint meeting of both the agency board and the foundation board was required once a year.

A motion was made by W. Lipscomb and seconded by R. Sawyer to approve the meeting dates listed. Upon a unanimous vote, the motion carried. No decision was made regarding the joint meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORTS (Exhibit A)

Alicia Harris presented the financial report for MPB through December 31, 2022. She defined Contractual Expenditures and explained the graph showing contractual trends for the year. She also reviewed Equipment Vehicles, Commodities, and Equipment line items explaining the reasons for limited utilization at this time.

EXPENDITURES OVER \$50,000

Anna Neel presented to the board three items for Board consideration:

- The DEN RUS Grant, Carousel is the vender. They will be providing video-conferencing equipment to 28 school districts across the state. Their total contract is \$554,705.22.
- Kessler & Gehman Associates-FM Upgrades, Phase 3- assisting in the procurement, installation, completion, and testing processes of upgrading the FAA tower lighting systems for WMAW-Rose Hill, WMAV-Oxford, and WMPN-Raymond. Their total contract is \$118,818.00.
- Kessler & Gehman Associates – Master Control Restoration Fees \$55,769.

The three expenditures were discussed, and Chairman Mackey asked that in the future any contracts for these expenditures be shared with the board prior to requesting approval.

A motion was made by W. Lipscomb and seconded by R. Sawyer to approve DEN RUS Grant, FM Upgrades Phase 3, and Master Control Restoration fees in a single motion. Upon a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

PERSONNEL REPORT

Bobby Wicker summarized current staffing and hiring, including introduction of four new appointments, four vacant positions being advertised, and nine vacant positions. Discussion reflected the Members' concerns for filling the IT positions due to salary.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MPB FOUNDATION REPORT

Angela Ferraez provided an update for the MPB Foundation.

Completed Activities:

- The December television drive raised over \$80,000. The drive included local pitches, local programming, and the give away of a Smart TV each night.
- In October, the foundation partnered with The Moth Hour and did a screening of the Walter Anderson documentary.
- The David Sedaris concert in Hattiesburg and Jackson.
- The foundation hosted the very first MS Roadshow which had 200 guests, 55 volunteers within the agency, and interviews with the guests by Bill Ellison. Enough material was collected to produce a miniseries; a 90-minute pledge show will be created from this event. The next MS Roadshow will be in north Mississippi in April.

Ms. Ferraez explained Gravid, which are video emails, and the ability to use it to send “thank you” messages to our major donors.

Future Activities:

- A pop-up Valentine radio drive will be scheduled for one day, and promotions will begin on February 10. Anyone who donates during the drive on Valentine’s Day will be able to send a special message to a loved one.
- Anticipated partnership with the radio department again this year for the Home Show.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT (Exhibit B)

Royal Aills and several of his staff presented portions of the report:

- Mr. Aills explained that annually, the FCC requires all Broadcasting companies to file an adverse adjudication report. He asked all the board members to send him an email and address any bullets listed on the handout.
- Ms. Neel discussed moving Master Control back in-house. The Master Control is antiquated and needs to be updated. The foundation is requesting quotes from 3 prospective vendors.
- Ms. Neel discussed the current fiber upgrade project that is in progress. This project is almost complete with the assistance of CSpire.
- Mr. Aills reported that the DEN project is progressing, and he will continue to keep the board members abreast of the advancement.

- Ms. Neel discussed the need to go to the legislature and request an increase of \$750,000 in the salary budget.
- Mr. Aills reported that MPB has hired Sharpshooter to assist with Grant writing. Currently, there are three grants being pursued.
- Jason Klein reported on several topics:
 - Current audience measures and analytics on our public media app.
 - “Fix It 101” received national recognition in the *Family Handyman* magazine in their list of *Best Home Improvement Podcasts*.
 - The Gestalt Gardener podcast hit 300,000 downloads.
 - The MPB Radio Department is creating a third radio station featuring blues music.
- Cedric Grizzell reported underwriting data. He is rebuilding relationships that declined during the pandemic.

RECOGNITION

Mr. Aills recognized Scott Secrest for winning a Sports Emmy for Technical Achievement.

Mr. Aills lauded the news department for continually being requested by NPR on coverage for Mississippi.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by R. Sawyer and seconded by W. Lipscomb to adjourn the meeting. Upon a unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned.

SIGNED, this the 10th day of January, 2023.



Dr. Shawn Mackey, Chairman
Board of Directors



Royal Aills
Executive Director