



**Broadcast Educational Media Commission Meeting Minutes  
2470 North Star Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43221  
November 13, 2014**

**I. Opening**

10:07 a.m.; Commission Chair Mark Filippell opened the Broadcast Educational Media Commission (BEMC) meeting.

**II. Swearing In New Members**

At 10:08 a.m., Notary Sue Price conducted a swearing-in ceremony, appointing Christine Merritt and reappointing John McClelland and Dr. Jan Osborn as Members of the Broadcast Educational Media Commission.

**III. Roll Call**

10:10 a.m.; Coordinator Sue Price conducted roll call.

Members Present: Chairman Mark Filippell; Commissioner Bruce Hawkins; Commissioner John McClelland; Commissioner Christine Merritt; Commissioner Jan Osborn, Designee Charles See; Commissioner Michael Stinziano and Commissioner Curt Steiner. (Commissioner George Sarantou arrived at 10:40 a.m.)

Members Absent: Commissioner Ronald Amstutz; Commissioner Stephen Black; Commissioner Cliff Hite; Superintendent Richard Ross, ~~Commissioner George Sarantou~~, and Commissioner Michael Skindell.

Also present: Executive Director Richard E. May; Assistant Attorney General Jennifer Bondurant, Chief Engineer Craig Stephenson, Broadcast Manager Dave Johnson; Coordinator Sue Price; and interested citizens.

Mrs. Price declared a quorum present.

**IV. Progress Report on Request for Proposal for the North Star NOC Modernization Project**

10:11 a.m.; Mr. Filippell explained the meeting would proceed on an out-of-agenda-order to accommodate Mr. Steiner's need to leave the meeting early. Mr. Luff joined the meeting via an audio call.

Mr. Filippell reported staff has cleaned up areas at BEMC in preparation for installation of new equipment.

Mr. Luff reported:

1. Four proposals were received on Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup>;
2. The four bidders are pretty sound companies; he has worked with two of the companies on previous projects;
3. He is not concerned that only four bids were received;
4. He has scanned through three of the proposals, so far;
5. There are (17) days before BEMC's review meeting on 12/1/14;
6. There will be an official voting committee of eight people, consisting of four BEMC staff members, four individuals from the stations, and subject matter experts from stations, BEMC and OARnet staff;
7. Detailed scoring should take two-to-three weeks, so scoring should be complete towards the end of the first week of December; and
8. He anticipates a presentation to the Commission will be ready before the end of calendar year 2014.

A discussion of the modernization project followed, with Commissioners directing inquiries to both Mr. Filippell and Mr. Luff:

Mr. Luff's responses regarding the project timeline were:

1. Initiation of the request for proposal process through DAS took four months longer than anticipated to conduct a full-blown bidding process, but the delay may work in our favor because vendors may be able to do a better job, with newer technology; and
2. The project was originally scheduled for completion in June, 2015, but has been extended to December 2015 or January 2016.

Mr. Filippell added that the project will need to be presented to the State Controlling Board for approval.

In response to being asked if the Commission should have any concerns, Mr. May responded that much of our existing equipment has reached end-of-useful-life with some related technical problems and challenges, but, so far, nothing has taken us completely down and BEMC doesn't foresee any immediate danger.

Asked if the project would be deployed in stages, Mr. Luff responded that stations will be turned on one-at-a-time, with the first equipment deployment probably being WOSU because of their close proximity to BEMC. It will probably take a week-to-ten days to test and troubleshoot before we would proceed to a second station, but then equipment deployments would escalate and the new system will be turned on for all stations, one at a time.

V. **Progress Report on Installing Video Conference Upgrade**

10:28 a.m., BEMC's Paul Abbott reported:

1. The early August installation date was missed and BEMC is continuing to work with vendor SKC and manufacturer Polycom to resolve issues;
2. One of the issues, a licensing issue, was resolved on November 12<sup>th</sup>;

3. BEMC is working with OIT to resolve networking issues; and
4. Hopefully, the video conferencing upgrade will be fully operational after Thanksgiving Day. The next window for deployment will be during the December holiday break.

Asked what were the licensing issues? Mr. Abbott explained the manufacturer of *RealPresence One* platform software, Polycom, recently changed their licensing mechanism.

Mr. May expanded, stating there had been problems with the vendor. It was necessary to reschedule some video conferencing sessions because the vendor reconfigured our production bridges incorrectly. It has been frustrating. We have some mending to do with our customers.

Mr. Filippell inquired if the increased capacity has been working throughout the upgrade process, and would the new services be up for January classes? Mr. Abbott responded, yes, the increased capacity has been available and assured the Commission that the new services will be up for January classes.

Mr. Filippell commended BEMC for making progress on both the video conferencing upgrade and broadcast modernization project, referring to them as, “two highly technical infrastructure projects”.

**VI. Resolution 15-35: Acceptance of September 4, 2014 Minutes**

10:25 a.m.; Mr. Hawkins moved and Ms. Merritt seconded to accept the minutes of the September 4, 2014 Commission Meeting.

AYES: Mr. Filippell, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. McClelland, Ms. Merritt, Dr. Osborn, Mr. See, and Mr. Steiner.

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

**VII. Executive Director’s Report**

**A. Possible Date Change for January/March Meeting:**

10:26 a.m.; Referring to the OETC handout, Mr. May requested the Commission re-schedule BEMC’s March Commission Meeting to enable the meeting to be held at the Columbus Convention Center during the *Ohio Educational Technology Conference* on February 11, 2015 at 10:45 a.m. Mr. May said about 5,000 teachers and school administrators attend annually, and discussed the conference, concluding that our meeting on site will be an opportunity for Commission Members to attend the conference and participate in sessions, should they wish.

(10:40 a.m.; Mr. Sarantou arrived.)

**Resolution 15-36: Re-Schedule March 2015 Meeting to February 11, 2015 at the Columbus Convention Center**

10:40 a.m.; Dr. Osborn moved and Mr. Steiner seconded to re-schedule BEMC's March Commission to February 11, 2015 to be held at the Columbus Convention Center during the OETC Conference.

AYES: Mr. Filippell, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. McClelland, Ms. Merritt, Dr. Osborn, Mr. See, and Mr. Steiner.

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

(10:43 a.m.; Mr. Steiner left.)

**B. BEMC Sponsorship of Federal Grant Workshop for Video Conferencing Technology – in Newark on November 19, 2014**

Referring to a Polycom *Government Funding for Collaborative Education* handout, Mr. May informed the Commission that, in response to inquiries about available funding for expanding video conferencing technology, BEMC and The Licking Area Computer Association (LACA) are partnering to host a grant writing workshop to be held at LACA's facility in Newark Ohio on November 19, 2014. Lunch will be provided. The workshop is designed to help educational institutions learn how to successfully prepare and apply for grant funding. Mr. May thanked Mr. Hawkins for his help in getting the word out.

**C. Reminder on 2014 Ethics Training Requirement**

Referring to an email from the Governor's Office regarding ethics training included in the meeting handouts, Mr. May reminded the Commission that ethics training is required annually.

**D. Update on BEMC's FYs 2016-2017 Budget Request**

Mr. May reported BEMC submitted its budget to meet OBM's directive that agencies identify how to cut 10% from their FYs 2014-2015 funding levels. Referring to a copy of his October 10, 2014 letter to the Director of OBM, Mr. May explained that it is a quick summary that explains BEMC's budget recommendation to retain funding at a flat level, without the 10% cut. The budget recommendation includes an additional employee for the master control unit after completion of the modernization project and a part-time Video NOC person to help ensure adequate help desk coverage. To accommodate the additional staff without increasing our budget, BEMC will need to absorb the expense through modification of scheduled lifecycle equipment procurement.

**E. Discussion of 2015 BEMC Workforce Plan**

Questioned if the proposed staff changes are part of BEMC's hiring process, Mr. May responded that BEMC's 23-page *Workforce Planning* document was submitted the day before, and the plan identifies both current and future staffing needs. Mr. May's response was "yes", when asked if the proposed staff changes are to cover critical services.

BEMC has utilized GRF funds to enter into a second contract with Mr. Luff for his expertise and assistance in development and documentation of daily operational

Master Control procedures for implementation after BEMC's broadcast modernization project is launched. The work will entail working with project vendors in the development of a service manual, as well. BEMC's Video NOC is currently using a contractor now to fill in the gaps.

**F. Capital Funding Updates**

1. In addition to utilizing capital funds for the modernization project, BEMC is progressing on a \$200,000.00 capital funds request for electrical upgrades to the building. The request will need to be presented to the Controlling Board for approval;
2. Ohio Government Television has submitted their request to utilize \$100,000.00 in capital funds for upgrades to their electrical and lighting systems at the State House. This request will also need to be presented to the Controlling Board;
3. There are some capital funds available for Radio Reading Services' purposes, and BEMC is in the process of meeting with them to assist in presenting their capital requests, hopefully, in January 2015; and
4. In response to a question relating to BEMC's satellite dishes, Mr. May reported that BEMC staff have taken down two of the inoperable, smaller satellite dishes; BEMC plans to upgrade or purchase a new dish; and it will cost an estimated \$30,000.00 to tear down and remove the large dish. The work will require bringing in a crane. BEMC is working to identify a vendor for this project.

**VIII. Discussion of DRAFT BEMC Strategic Goals**

Mr. May introduced Contractor Katy Coy, explaining that Mrs. Coy is leading this project and has been hosting preliminary work group meetings with BEMC's affiliates. Referencing a drafted mission statement and goals included in the meeting handouts, Mr. May informed the Commission that BEMC is hoping to secure input from the General Managers of our affiliate stations, but has not yet met with them. The draft is being shared with the Commission today, not because BEMC is suggesting any action on the project at this time, but to initiate discussions to begin the process of educating members of the Commission and to solicit participation. Rooted in legislative language, strategic goals are a driving set of language and set of phrases that are inter-related. We think they are important. We want to work together, staff and Commissioners, in developing meaningful strategic goals in a charge that will challenge all of us.

(A short discussion followed.)

**IX. Presentation from Ohio Distance Learning Association**

Jon Bowers, Executive Director of the Licking Area Computer Association, talked about the Ohio Learning Association. Established in 2013 with charter members primarily comprised of the original TeleCommunity and IVDL Grant recipients from the late 1990's and early 2000:

1. Grantees organized regular meetings since grants began;
2. Participants included ESCs, ITCs, Educational Technology Agencies, large urban schools and content providers; and
3. Membership has now grown to all these participants as well as consultants and individuals.

Originally, meetings focused on collaboration on classes and staying abreast of technology developments impacting video distance learning.

Formal organization came about in early 2013 with founding members pledging money to found the formal Ohio Distance Learning Association. With the support of the MCOECN offering to act as fiscal agent, the association was created and a membership drives undertaken. There were seven founding members. Membership has now grown to 20 members, including the BEMC.

There are three levels of membership: consortium, educational entity and individual. Consortium level membership is for groups of schools who work together through a single service agency like an ESC or ITC. Educational entity level is for a single organization participating for its own benefit and the individual membership is for the person who wants to participate, such as a consultant.

The original goals of the formal creation of the ODLA were to inform Ohio's decision makers of the importance of the video help desk and ensure that it was not de-funded or outsourced. As a result of this effort, we have a close relationship with the BEMC. The ODLA does recognize the broadening definition of "distance learning", which includes blended learning, on-line learning, digital education and a host of similar terminology. We are making efforts to engage additional entities to join and help broaden the scope of our efforts.

The most recognized effort of the ODLA is the organizing of the distance learning segment of the Ohio Educational Technology Conference. In addition, the ODLA:

1. Works with USDLA to share distance learning opportunities;
2. Assists schools interested in learning about DL, how to integrate DL delivery into curriculum and how to use DL content in traditional curriculum;
3. Lobbying legislative decision makers on the importance of distance learning; and
4. Collecting data to document the extent of use of DL:
  - a. Creating the interface to track this data; have reporting capabilities

One of the biggest benefits of DL is to keep student funding within the school. When a student leaves the school building to attend a university for a class, the school loses funding for that student. Keeping the student in the building keeps funding in the building. This can be significant.

Mr. Bowers praised the work BEMC's video conferencing staff provide in staffing our centralized VNOC help desk, stating that distance learning in Ohio is heavily dependent upon our services and BEMC is highly regarded. Mr. Bowers stated that when he is approached by a school district inquiring about creating their own video conferencing

help desk, he encourages them to stay with BEMC's VNOC help desk because, though funds may be available to create the help desk, the funding is not there to support it; it is more cost effective to have one help desk and BEMC's VNOC is a great State resource.

A discussion between various Commissioners and Mr. Bowers followed Mr. Bowers' presentation. In conclusion, Mr. Filippell added, "This is good for the State of Ohio. BEMC is the freeway, saving the state money, rather than everybody building their own road."

#### **X. Presentation from INFOhio**

Ms. Theresa Frederica, Executive Director of INFOhio, talked about INFOhio's Pre-K12 Digital Library that offers a variety of content and services – most at no charge – Ohio's 1.8 million Pre-K12 students, their parents, and their teachers. Ms. Frederica reviewed information contained in four handouts she disseminated with the Commissioners.

Pulling up INFOhio's website, Ms. Frederica demonstrated how to log in and search the digital library (URL is [www.isearch.infohio.org](http://www.isearch.infohio.org) / Username is "INFOhio" / Password is "Power"), and introduced Mr. Roger Minier, Executive Director of The Northwest Ohio Educational Technology Foundation (NWOET). Mr. Minier explained that, rather than put Ohio-funded videos on iTunes, INFOhio has worked with NWOET to put a search tool in place for students, parents and teachers to easily search for relevant videos that align with curriculum on INFOhio's website.

Their hope is to secure videos produced by public television stations to house in their database. By sharing and utilizing videos already produced, the goal is to more effectively utilize available funds to purchase new content, rather than reproduce something that may already be available.

Mr. May relayed that BEMC will be meeting with Multi-Media grant recipients the next day (November 14<sup>th</sup>); each station has picked one of their new videos produced with grant funds to critique the quality of their videos, and invited Ms. Frederica and Mr. Minier to attend.

#### **XI. New Business**

No new business.

#### **XII. North Star Facility Lease Negotiation Update & Large Purchase Decisions**

Referring to BEMC's financial spreadsheet included in the meeting handouts, Mr. May reviewed large-purchase decisions:

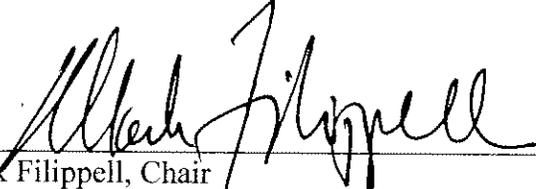
- A. BEMC is still in negotiations with OSU's Real Estate Division for renewal of the North Star facility lease.
- B. BEMC is in the process of upgrading Juniper Switches through OARnet at a cost of \$27,000.00;

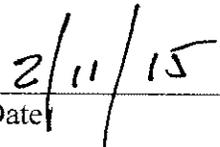
- C. BEMC purchased a third video recorder for stations' play-back for \$43,000.00;
- D. BEMC's legislatively-charged, long-standing MOU agreement with OARnet for provision of internet/bandwidth has been renewed for FY15 at a cost of \$302,048.00;
- E. BEMC entered into an additional contract with John Luff, as had been mentioned earlier; and
- F. BEMC replaced a 30-year-old roof-top air conditioning unit (considered part of our infrastructure that cools the area where OARnet's servers are housed) at a cost of \$15,000.00. (BEMC had already replaced three other units.)

**XIII. Resolution FY15-37: Adjournment:**

12:00 Noon; Mr. Hawkins moved and Mr. See seconded to close the meeting.

AYES: Mr. Filippell, Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Merritt, Dr. Osborn, Mr. Sarantou and Mr. See.  
NAYS: None  
ABSTAIN: None

  
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Mark Filippell, Chair  
Broadcast Educational Media Commission

  
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Date