



**Broadcast Educational Media Commission Meeting Minutes
2470 North Star Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43221
November 3, 2016**

I. Opening:

10:00 a.m. -- Commission Chairman Mark Filippell opened the Broadcast Educational Media Commission (BEMC) meeting.

II. Roll Call:

10:00 a.m. -- Fiscal Administrator Sue Price conducted roll call.

Members Present: Chairman Mark Filippell; State Representative and non-voting Commissioner Ronald Amstutz; Commissioner Geoffrey Andrews; Commissioner Stephen Black; Commissioner Christine Merritt; Designee Kimberly Norris; Commissioner Jan Osborn; Designee Charles See; and Commissioner Curt Steiner. Commissioner George Sarantou arrived later, at 10:38 a.m.

Members Absent: Commissioner Stephen Freeze; State Senator and non-voting Commissioner Cliff Hite; Commissioner John McClelland; and State Senator and non-voting Commissioner Michael Skindell.

Also present: Executive Director Geoffrey Phillips; Assistant Attorney General Hannah Stoneburner; Chief of Engineering and Broadcast Operations Craig Stevenson; Chief of Operations Jarrod Weiss, Chief Information Officer Laura Bryson; Fiscal Administrator Sue Price; Modernization Project Vendor HA Design Group's President Willy Halla, Modernization Project Manager John Luff and interested citizens.

Mrs. Price declared a quorum present.

III. Oath of Office Ceremony

10:00 a.m. – Mr. Andrews, Ms. Norris, and Mr. Steiner were sworn-in by Mrs. Price.

IV. Resolution 17-6: Acceptance of September 8, 2016 Minutes:

10:04 a.m. – Mr. See moved approval of minutes (Mr. Black seconded). Minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

V. Executive Director's Report:

In public recognition for his efforts and support of BEMC's initiatives, on behalf of BEMC, Mr. Phillips expressed appreciation to Representative Amstutz, who retires from

the Ohio legislature at the end of 2016. As well, Mr. Phillips voiced the agency's appreciation of former Commissioner Bruce Hawkins' having long served the Commission as Vice Chairman until his tenure was finished at the last meeting. Mr. Hawkins retired from the BEMC Commission at that time.

Chairman Filippell recommended the appointment of Dr. Osborn as Vice Chairman, and Dr. Osborn expressed his agreement to accept such an appointment.

Resolution 17-7: Election of Vice Chairman:

10:08 a.m. – Mr. Steiner made a motion, “ Due to the expiration of service of former Vice Chairman, Bruce Hawkins, and in accordance with the adopted BEMC by-laws, move to nominate Dr. Jan Osborn as the next Vice Chairman of the BEMC for a term of 11/3/16 to the end of his appointment on 6/30/18.” The motion was seconded by Ms. Merritt and approved by unanimous voice vote.

- A. **New Staff Members:** Announcement of and brief background information was provided for two additions to the Master Control staff who will be starting soon: Tony Jefferson and Jackie Klemens.
- B. **Operating Financial Status:** Reviewed the financial spreadsheet handout, commenting \$381,755.06 in available spending for the balance of FY17; 75% of subsidy funds have been paid out to affiliates, Ohio Government Television and the Statehouse News Bureau; and the status of capital funds available.

Mr. Filippell reported BEMC's budget was submitted with requested 10% cut, explaining it is a normal exercise to identify areas to save money and operating efficiently, adding what was not shown was new hardware and software will implement savings across the state.

C. **JCARR Rules:**

Mr. Weiss reported, after consulting with JCARR (Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review) and LSC (Legislative Service Commission), Legal Counsel Stoneburner and he are progressing with an administrative rule review; some of which no longer apply to the agency and some of which require modification.

D. **Projects In Development:**

Hub and Spoke Project: Would enable eight stations to talk to each other and understand media at BEMC. Plans are for implementation in the early part of FY18.

IT Development Fund: In FY16, based upon BEMC's FY15 IT spending, the Office of Information Technology, under the Department of Administrative Services, assessed BEMC \$29,106.84 for contribution to the IT Development Funds. BEMC's FY17 assessment has increased to \$103,975.60, based upon \$3,162,430.49 in FY16 spending, including capital funds relating to the modernization project.

The purpose of the IT Development Fund is to improve all IT for all agencies. BEMC is of the opinion our Commission is exempt under our structure and have asked for the Attorney General's Office assistance in disputing the assessment.

Billing for Electrical Consumption at the State of Ohio Computer Center:

BEMC has been invoiced \$7,136.81 for 1st Qtr. FY17 electrical consumption at the SOCC, but we are now down to one rack of equipment at that location. BEMC is also challenging this charge.

VI. Multimedia Projects – Marketing Progress:

Referencing a document on screen listing stations and FY16 / FY17 Multi-Media Projects, Mr. Weiss and Ms. Norris reported BEMC is working with the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and Ohio Higher Education in marketing multi-media projects via website, public television and various social media communications tools (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) to get information out to parents, teachers, and superintendents. Topics and details of various videos available on BEMC's website were presented.

VII. FY18-19 Optimal Operation Budget Proposal:

Referencing two budget-related handouts, Mr. Weiss explained BEMC submitted its FY18-19 budget proposals to OBM, at both the existing 100% funding level and at the requested 90% funding level. Allocations for the three operating lines, General Operations, Technical Operations and Information Technology, were modified to accurately expense all building-related expenses to General Operations and to adequately fund additional Master Control staff out of Technical Operations required to support implementation of the modernization project.

As well, in response to the Commission's request at the September 2016 Commission Meeting, Mr. Weiss reviewed the "*Proposed 'Optimal FY18-19 Budget'*" handout, explaining it is what is really needed to upkeep and maintain the facility, adequately provision broadcast and VNOC operations and bring subsidy funding back up to the 2008 funding level.

Mr. Phillips added, generally speaking, one-half of the requested additional nearly \$1.5 Million in funding would be needed by BEMC and the balance would pass to affiliates.

Resolution 17-8: Acceptance of "Optimal" Budget Proposal:

10:35 a.m. – Dr. Osborn made a motion, "Move to wholeheartedly accept the Optimal FY18-19 budget as proposed by BEMC staff in accordance with the Commission's motion of September 8, 2016 which demonstrates the agency's realistic financial needs moving forward to be presented to OBM, the Governor's office, and the legislature." The motion was seconded by Mr. Steiner and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Phillips subsequently thanked the Commission for their support of the proposal.

Leadership Reports:

- A. **Engineering and Broadcast Operations:** Mr. Stevenson reported, since the last meeting, the modernization timeline has been adversely affected by failure of BEMC's existing Harmonic media grid.

(Mr. Sarantou arrived at 10:38 a.m.)

BEMC's solution was to purchase a Spectra Logic archive system to supplement the current Harmonic media grid, and the solution is working well. The Spectra Logic archive system provides 180 TB of storage at a cost of less than \$50,000.00. BEMC plans to build upon the Spectra Logic system and will retire the Harmonic system after all stations have moved over and the legacy system is no longer in use.

Unfortunately, the equipment failure occurred during shadowing periods, necessitating shadowing to cease for a period of time while focusing upon support of systems already moved over.

It has been busy at BEMC. As the Broadcast Manager, Mr. Stevenson reported, he has been spending most of his time, and will continue to do so for a while, working directly with Operations staff, primarily on third shift.

BEMC's new electrical room is ready. Manufacturing of our electrical switchboard is near completion and the transfer switch is ready to ship.

Mr. Phillips reported electrical bids are due November 15th, but BEMC speculates the project could run as high as \$650,000.00-to-\$700,000.00, including everything spent to date and remaining expenses, with project completion in four-to-five months. The balance will be paid from allowances in BEMC's current budget, some of which has been set-aside for this project. BEMC intends to submit our \$250,000.00 request for release of remaining capital funds for use on the electrical project to the Controlling Board at its second meeting in December.

Mr. Phillips recognized and thanked Mr. Stevenson for his extreme commitment to the modernization project.

(At 10:45 a.m., Mr. Filippell informed the Commission Representative Amstutz needed to leave the meeting; thanking Mr. Amstutz for his commitment to education and technology and for his budgetary support on behalf of BEMC and the modernization project as it progresses on-time and under budget. Mr. Amstutz left at 10:46 a.m.)

Summarizing, Mr. Phillips stated it is a difficult balance to maintain the legacy system for stations not yet cut over while using the new Cinegy system for those that have. The two systems don't talk with one another, and it will be necessary to move content from the media grid to the Spectra Logic archive when it is time to retire the media grid.

- B. **VNOC / Distance Learning:** Laura Bryson reported last month's four grant workshops were well received. Surveys suggest, however, dropping to three days while hosting longer sessions.

BEMC's new promotional brochure is available in our lobby, along with various other materials, and BEMC's website has been updated.

Mr. Phillips stated K thru 20 are utilizing BEMC's VNOC in provisioning video conferenced sessions simultaneously at three or more locations. In managing the agency's need for additional staff in Master Control, however, two full-time positions have transferred from the VNOC to Master Control, and the VNOC is challenged to operate with only one full-time staff member splitting his time with another department, two intermittent positions and Ms. Bryson's full-time position.

Mr. Phillips added BEMC's charge is to provision more pro-active assistance with equipment connectivity, stating a lot of options exist today that didn't exist years ago. Discussion followed.

In response to inquiries:

The Ohio Distance Learning Association (ODLA) will be a primary feature at the Ohio Department of Higher Education's Technology Conference (OETC) to be held at the Columbus Convention Center in February. ODLA's David Stein was in the audience and informed the Commission of a partnership between ODLA, Licking Area Computer Association (LACA) and Ohio's Educational Technology Centers (ETCs), delivering 60 class periods a day. LACA purchased its own bridge, taking over some of the capacity previously serviced by BEMC's VNOC, working collaboratively with BEMC in strengthening alliances.

Laura Bryson reported BEMC's capacity, per classroom hour, is currently close to 50% utilized, rolling all day long.

- C. **Operations:**

In collaboration with Counsel Hannah Stoneburner, Mr. Weiss reported has been tasked with updating BEMC's policies and procedures. The current manual is outdated, so their strategy is for replacement. To that end, BEMC is reaching out to the Commission for guidance and/or overview on the project.

Resolution 17-9: Creation of Policy and Procedure Review Sub-Committee:

11:10 a.m. – Dr. Osborn made a motion, “Move to create the “Policy and Procedure Review” sub-committee that will work with BEMC staff to draft a new set of policies and procedures to guide the everyday operations of the agency. The sub-committee will report updates to the commission and will present a final report for acceptance before the

end of FY17.” The motion was seconded by Mr. Sarantou and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Filippell appointed Mr. Andrews Chair of the new sub-committee, and Mr. Steiner and Ms. Merritt as members.

(Mr. Black left at 11:11 a.m.)

Referring to the Ethics Commission handout, Mr. Weiss reminded Commissioners ethics training is an annual requirement, available on-line. BEMC will work with Commissioners directly to ensure BEMC’s records reflect current training dates.

VIII. Progress Report on BEMC Modernization Project:

11:13 a.m. – Mr. Phillips reported the modernization project is a work in progress; 42 channels are being brought into the central casting model. Mr. Phillips went into detail on each of the 8 Ohio Public television stations. In general, the Harmonic media grid issue threw off cut-over timelines; station staffs are challenged to meet BEMC’s needs. Realistically, the third quarter of FY17 is prime for the complete cut-over of all stations.

Mr. Halla elaborated about the issue with the Harmonic media grid, explaining it necessitated focusing on supporting WBGU, who had already cut-over, and postponing scheduled cut-over of other stations. At this point, the new equipment is loading programs and is working well.

WOSU is in shadow. WOSU is working well, but there is an issue monitoring audio on the other end with some of the desktop tools we’re working through now. We worked through workflow changes with on-air lists, requiring Cinergy software adaptations; added some modules to Air Pro, but need to add more.

WVIZ is not in shadow just yet. Sent corrections list and hope to be on shadow very soon.

WNEO in Kent started getting lists. They’ve provided media and lists. It is getting better; we’ve identified some holes in workflow. Gone through macro issues; now micro workflow issues and final details.

Mr. Luff added HA Design Group has 25 years of experience in which Mr. Halla has provisioned the highest level of support, stating, “Had the project been contracted through a less engaged vendor, there would have been gigantic problems.”

When the project began, there were budget and technical challenges. There were end-of-life equipment concerns, and it happened. Unfortunately, syncing up with end-of-life equipment. Fortunately, equipment replacement costs are a tiny fraction of original cost. On a personal level, we’ve reached a point when both station and BEMC staff are doing things not in the normal range of their work, and it is stressful. Some station folks view changes as a danger of they may lose their jobs; personnel issued for which BEMC has no control. Management understands and are trying to keep up with demands, integrated

every 90 days with pledge drives. These challenges interrupt assistance from the stations. It is a logistical nightmare. At times, they disengage for pledge drives and then need to re-engage afterward.

The software vendor is in Germany and probably didn't understand the U.S. market as well as they should have when proposing. Mr. Halla is the reason we have been able to make progress. If we were to review goals established five years ago and tick off which have been reached, would we get to all of them? Probably 70% there in meeting those goals.

Mr. Phillips added, a few unique things with stations; for example, disc with their logo on their locked, legacy system. When feeding media there were transcoding format issues -- had to spend \$50,000.00 to buy transcoding software. Challenge: finding a common platform. BEMC and the project leadership are meeting today over lunch by asking Mr. Halla and Mr. Luff, "What needs to be done?"

Project is moving forward. Is everything going to be finished this calendar year? No.

Mr. Halla summarized: WVIZ will move over this month. WOSU was another challenge on monitoring. End of the month? Yes.

Mr. Luff added, "Every station except WVIZ in Cleveland has small staffs. It is a burden on their staffs. Torn between what is needed and keeping their station on the air. Level of cooperation we're getting is vastly better than other projects I've worked on." We know what we need: partners as we work through problems. There were logistic issues we knew would happen. WOSU, hopefully, on in a month. WVIZ very quickly.

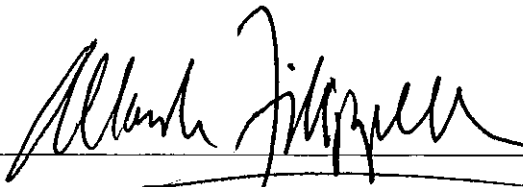
IX. New Business

None.

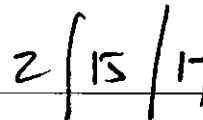
Mr. Phillips reminded the Commission BEMC's February 14, 2017 meeting will be held during the OETC Conference at the Columbus Convention Center. BEMC will coordinate.

X. Resolution FY17-10: Adjournment

11:48 a.m. -- Mr. Filippell requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Merritt so moved (Mr. Steiner seconded). The adjournment motion passed via unanimous voice vote.



Mark Filippell, Chair,
Broadcast Educational Media Commission



Date