



**Broadcast Educational Media Commission Meeting Minutes
Columbus Convention Center, Eisenman Room, Columbus Ohio
February 13, 2020**

I. **Call to Order:** At 10:05 a.m., Chairman Robert Smith opened the meeting of the Broadcast Educational Media Commission.

A. **Roll Call:** At 10:05 a.m., roll call was conducted by Mrs. Gage.

Members Present: Chairman Robert Smith; Commissioner Geoffrey Andrews; Commissioner Matt Dole; Commissioner Stephen Freeze, Esq.; Commissioner Christine Merritt; and Commissioner Dr. Jan Osborn.

Members Absent: Commissioner Stephen Black; Non-Voting State Senator Teresa Fedor; Non-Voting State Representative Dave Greenspan; Non-Voting State Senator Michael Rulli; Commissioner George Sarantou; and Commissioner Curt Steiner.

Members Arriving Later: Non-Voting State Representative Catherine Ingram arrived at 10:06 a.m.; Commissioner Designee Charles See arrived at 10:07 a.m.; and Commissioner Designee Shaun Yoder arrived at 10:09 a.m.

Also Present: Executive Director Geoffrey A. Phillips; Assistant Attorney General Ashley Barbone; Chief of Engineering and Broadcast Operations Craig Stevenson; Chief Information Officer Laura Bryson; Chief Financial Officer Alina Gage; and interested citizens David Carwile, Administrator of Ohio Educational Television Stations, Inc; Mandy Minick, Press Secretary of the Ohio Department of Education; David Stein, Chairman of the Ohio Distance Learning Association; Amy Palermo, Chief Content Director of Educational Technology of WOSU; and Lee Gambol, Distance Learning Coordinator of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History

A quorum was declared.

II. **Commission Action Items**

Resolution 20-08: Approval of September 12, 2019 Minutes: 10:06 a.m. – Ms. Merritt moved for approval of minutes. Mr. Dole seconded. Minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

A. **OETC Conference Logistics:**

Laura Bryson provided an overview of the conference and gave instructions for downloading the agenda, highlighting the student “Shark Tank” event.

III. Finance

A. Status of BEMC Capital Requests:

1. Executive Director Geoffrey Phillips stated the Governor and the legislature are working on the capital bill. The Chairman spoke to the director of OBM, Kim Murnieks, on behalf of the BEMC to express the interests of the commission. Speaker of the House, Larry Householder, is targeting bill completion by March 17, 2020.
 - i. Mr. Phillips informed the commission that in 2008, eTech – one of our former names -- was given \$10 million in tobacco settlement funds which was used to digitize public television. To refinance the bonds, BEMC was recently asked to validate capital purchased with those funds are still in use. In partnership with Dave Carwile, the BEMC was able to provide the necessary information to the Treasurer of State.

B. BEMC February 2020 Financial Statement:

1. Mr. Phillips addressed the BEMC financial statement. Total appropriation is \$9.9 million. BEMC operates on less than \$4 million, rest is allocated for subsidies. The largest expense for BEMC is payroll. At mid-year, the BEMC payroll was under budget and those remaining funds were freed for use on other projects. Available resources are \$375,000 and senior staff will begin discussions on where to spend those funds, depending on which capital projects in the request are approved. Public broadcasting funds have been released in total for Statehouse News Bureau and Ohio Government Telecommunications. All but approximately \$250,000 of the remaining subsidy funds due to public television, public radio, and radio reading services have been disbursed. Remaining funds will be released in May 2020 based upon successful completion of FY20 multi-media projects.

C. Subsidy Allocation Review Plan:

1. Dr. Osborn spoke about balancing the commission's work and prioritizing needs of stations. The finance committee is arranging dates to review the subsidy allocation formula. Mr. Phillips stated the goal is to make a recommendation at the May meeting. Separate meetings will occur with each alliance to walk leaders through the existing formula. 2007 was last time the formula was reviewed by the Commission.

D. Tower Site Land Conveyance – HB 481

1. Mr. Phillips said HB 481 was introduced two weeks ago. Commission gave direction to Mr. Phillips (in February 2017) on remaining two tower sites: four acres in Marion County and fifteen acres in Montgomery County. HB 481 proposes that the Marion County farm site will be sold at auction, proceeds of which will be put into fund that BEMC can access. 15-acre site in Montgomery County is proposed to be transferred to Greater Dayton Public Television, which has a Tower on the site.

E. Transition to Ohio Shared Services

1. Mr. Phillips explained that Central Services Agency at DAS has provided fiscal and HR services to BEMC. OBM Ohio Shared Services (OSS) provides an alternative. It appears that BEMC can save thousands of dollars by moving fiscal and HR services to OSS. Target dates are April 1, 2020 or July 1, 2020.

IV. Ohio Public TV and ODE Multimedia Projects

A. Multi-Media

1. Ms. Bryson spoke about two items for multi-media.
 - i. A six-month promotion schedule summary was put together by Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to promote multi-media projects from FY16-FY20. Age of material will determine how it is promoted. Older projects will be promoted by social media. Newer material will be promoted by social media and ODE's EdConnection e-letter.
 - ii. A list of multi-media topics for FY20 was provided to the commission. These are topics that stations are working on now and WOSU debuted some content at the conference.
2. Mr. Yoder discussed EdConnection and the subscriber base. EdConnection has 54,000 subscribers and a 33% open rate. Across all industries, open rate is 17%, 20% in non-profit. Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn are main channels for social media and links for career readiness and career tech education were posted on each. Total for all three channels were 23,000 views, 310 individuals engaged, and 76 people have clicked on the link. Metrics are used to refine how to go forward.
3. Mr. Yoder continued by outlining the link between ODE and the Governor's office. Lt. Husted is a proponent of STEM learning and conversations are ongoing to determine what that looks like. May be an opportunity to use multi-media to promote STEM and art education. ODE is looking long term at new content to promote, including IWIP (Innovative Workforce Incentive Program) and a grant program for schools that want to launch workforce credential program. Meetings between ODE and JobsOhio are occurring to bridge workforce gap. Mr. Phillips spoke about meetings that will occur between the BEMC and ODE to determine FY21 topics. Results will be discussed with stations funded by BEMC to use their skillset to produce the best possible product.
4. Mr. Dole asked about analytics on videos that are shown to students. Mr. Phillips stated that BEMC tracks via YouTube. Mr. Dole suggested a voluntary survey for teachers.
5. Mr. Freeze questioned the goal behind April promotion "Empowering English Language Learners". Ms. Bryson responded by describing a video about how Toledo incorporates people who recently migrated to the city, who are not native English speakers, and how they are supported in their transition. Mr. Phillips spoke about a school in Mason, OH where 56 different native languages are spoken. Mr. Freeze asked about the goal of the videos. Ms. Bryson responded by stating the

videos show what is used in the classroom to support students and adults for which English is not the native language. Mr. Yoder expanded on the goals for the English Language Learner videos, explaining the video series is directly aligned to Ohio's Strategic Plan for Education, "Each Child, Our Future". Strategy three is to improve targeted supports and professional learning so teachers can deliver excellent instruction. Disseminating instructional best practices among teachers is part of that strategic goal.

B. Ohio Public Television

1. Kevin Martin, Chairman of Ohio Educational Television Stations (OETS) joined the meeting via phone and spoke about some takeaways from the capital request and ATSC 3.0 processes. More time is needed to compile and review the requests. Requests should be prioritized among BEMC, OGT, and stations. Mr. Martin recommended thinking about capital early: there is no reason to wait on OBM to start the process. This could be accomplished with an agenda item at the BEMC commission meeting. He suggested making the process more transparent by organizing the requests in accordance with BEMC staff specifications, then present the list to the commission. Next, Mr. Martin talked about the FCC approving the new ATSC 3.0 standards. Each market will have to decide for itself how fast it wants to adopt new standard. The Consumer Electronics Show showcased over twenty models of ATSC 3.0 ready televisions, despite the expectation of two or three. This shows that manufacturers are ready for broad consumer adoption. New technology is not backwards compatible so broadcasters will have to decide when to "flip the switch" for transition. Bandwidth does not exist to transmit both signals simultaneously.
2. Mr. Freeze read a letter from David Fogarty, President of Public Media Connect. Mr. Fogarty thanked the BEMC and Mr. Phillips for work in November 2019 on the collaboration between WHIO and WPTD after a tower failure. The BEMC and Mr. Phillips were able to secure transmission of WHIO's commercial programming through WPTD's digital channels, which the FCC approved. Additional fiber capacity was arranged at OARNet and an agreement was developed between the stations and state entities. Mr. Phillips and the BEMC were also recognized for efforts to propose the transfer of state-owned land used for the WPTD tower from the BEMC to WPTD.
3. Ms. Bryson introduced Amy Palermo Chief Content Director of Educational Technology at WOSU. Ms. Palermo spoke of how WOSU used multi-media grant funds to address social/emotional learning. A video series called Drawing with Mr. J shows elementary school student how to identify and process their emotions. The video "Fruit Dance Party" was played for the commission. After, Ms. Palermo spoke about other videos available and teacher resources. WOSU debuted the video at the convention and engaged the attendees with the video using activities and prizes. Dr. Osborn asked why WOSU chose Mr. J. Mr. J was the Ohio teacher of the year for 2018. During coverage of his recognition event, his student drawing challenges were noticed and were integrated into social/emotional learning videos.

V. Distance Learning

A. **Cleveland Museum of Natural History**

1. Ms. Bryson introduced Lee Gambol, Distance Learning Coordinator at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Ms. Gambol highlighted the museum's stress management programs and the 88-county quest to show programming in all counties in Ohio. A video was shown that promoted distance learning produced by the museum. A short testimonial from a user in New Jersey was also shown. Both have been playing during the conference to promote distance learning.

B. **Zoom and Rural Education**

1. Mr. Andrews continued the distance learning update with Zoom statistics. Over 1000 licenses have been activated (teachers and administrators). Thursday is the third meeting of a group to address rural education challenges: get more broadband in homes, address lack of high-quality curriculum, and the teacher shortage. The group is looking to utilize distance learning and Zoom to address the second and third issues. A federal funding source may be available to assist districts pursuing distance learning in rural areas. ODE, New York Department of Education, and Harvard were awarded a grant to address rural education. Currently, they are working on truancy. The next phase is for career and college readiness. Because Ohio is already collaborating in rural districts and the grant source is looking to fund video in those areas, there may be an opportunity to bring in up to \$20 million for distance learning. Mr. Freeze asked how we are marketing distance learning: can it be mandated? Mr. Andrews stated that there are sensitivities with bargaining-unit employees and the approach needs to be promotional, not punitive. Chairman Smith followed with a question about data and utilization and suggested that the commission can gather data to be persuasive. Mr. Dole asked about the technical abilities of the classrooms. Mr. Andrews stated all classrooms are equipped for video distance learning (expanding interactivity), with only a few exceptions for philosophical objections. Representative Ingram stated teachers need to be shown why distance learning is beneficial and the challenge for the commission is to cut through all the clutter they are receiving to get the message out. Dr. Osborn voiced views from Putnam County. They were early adopters and experienced many issues that prevented teachers from implementing distance learning: abandonment of technology if it glitches, decreased staff-development time, and competition for teacher time. Teachers need to be shown the value of tools that are available. Ms. Gambol provided results from an informal survey taken at last years' conference which asked how teachers found out about video conferencing. The largest response was word-of-mouth from other teachers.

VI. **Staff Reports**

- A. Mr. Phillips spoke about the fiscal year priorities for the BEMC. Of the five major priorities, three are still in development.
- B. Mr. Stevenson talked about migrating WVIZ and WOUB to the Selenio product. Several coders at the BEMC have also been migrated to Selenio. The server room upgrade saw a big push in January. The Air-Pro upgrade was not successful and was rolled back to a previous version. BEMC is prepared to roll it out again but it will be thoroughly tested at

BEMC, not a third party. Michael Zelasko has joined the BEMC to replace Jasmine Higgins, who left in October 2019 to join The Ohio Channel.

- C. Ms. Bryson reminded the commission of the financial disclosure and ethics training deadlines.
- D. Mrs. Gage spoke about the fiscal process going paperless.

VII. **Adjournment:**

Resolution (20-09) Motion for Adjournment: 11:51 a.m. – Mr. Dole moved to adjourn. Ms. Merritt seconded. The adjournment motion passed via unanimous voice vote.



November 5, 2020

Robert C. Smith, Chairman
Broadcast Educational Media Commission

Date