



Broadcast Educational Media Commission Meeting Minutes
2470 North Star Road, Columbus, Ohio 43221
September 12, 2019

- I. **Call to Order:** At 10:01 a.m., Chairman Robert Smith opened the meeting of the Broadcast Educational Media Commission and introduced himself to the commission as a partner of Cerity Partners Financial Services; as past CEO of ideastream; and as a 30-year, long-time fan of public media, radio and radio reading services.

Mr. Smith spoke of the importance of the commission members to know what their role is and isn't, with collaboration being a good part of what the organization is. His own philosophy is: 1) Meet regularly; 2) Laughter when you meet; and 3) Eat when you meet. If things are not going well, one or two of these things are typically missing.

- A. **Swearing in Members:** At 10:05 a.m., Mr. Freeze swore in Shaun Yoder, Designee for Superintendent Paolo DeMario.

(Mr. Sarantou arrived at 10:05 a.m.)

- B. **Approval of May 9, 2019 Minutes:**

(Representative Ingram arrived at 10:06 a.m.; Mr. Andrews arrived at 10:07 a.m.; and Mr. See arrived at 10:07 a.m.)

Resolution (20-01): Approval of May 9, 2019 Minutes: 10:07 a.m. – Mr. Dole moved for approval of minutes. Dr. Osborn seconded. Minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

- II. **Chairman's Welcome - Team Building:** Mr. Smith invited each member of the Commission to take of a couple of minutes to introduce himself/herself and share what drives his/her interest in Ohio's Public Broadcasting:

Matt Dole: 15 years' experience as a communications and media consultant at Communications Counsel, Inc., a national communications consulting firm based in Ohio, and a Senate appointee from a consumer standpoint.

Stephen Black: Lives in Cincinnati and on the boards of WCET and ThinkTV in Dayton, both for about ten years, Mr. Black stated, "I love public broadcasting."

George Sarantou: Lives in Toledo, has served on the WGTE Board for 12 years and has 37 years in financial roles. Interested in "anything we can do to keep public TV strong and help children in learning" and specifically mentioning the importance of technology.

Christine Merritt: President of the Ohio Association of Broadcasters, working and advocating to protect the ability of all radio and television stations licensed across the state, Ms. Merritt described herself as being, “a life-long supporter of public radio and public television.”

Stephen Freeze: A Public Media Connect of Dayton: CET & ThinkTV Board of Trustees Officer, Mr. Freeze expressed his dedication to local communities. As well, being a member of the BEMC commission provides a broader perspective across the state.

Dr. Jan Osborn: Superintendent of the Putnam County Educational Service Center for the past 26 years, he served 10 years on the WGTE Board, 10 years on eTech Ohio’s Board before it became BEMC in 2013. Dr. Osborn stated, “Mr. Rogers is the reason I am interested in broadcasting.”

Hannah Stoneburner: Assigned to represent as counsel for BEMC by the Attorney General’s Office five years ago, found BEMC to be a new and unique experience.

Charles See: Vice Chancellor of the Department of Higher Education, who provide fiber optics capacity for BEMC. Before this, worked for the Ohio Department of Education in utilizing public media for public education as a medium to advanced education.

Shaun Yoder: As Designee, stated Superintendent DeMaria is very committed to partnerships and is a big fan of public broadcasting’s commitment to education. ECOESC’s teaching classes in this building is a great example of partnership. Mr. Yoder concluded it is a great honor to be part of this group.

Geoffrey Andrews: Chief Executive Officer of the Management Council, advocates on behalf of Ohio’s PreK-12 stakeholders and represents and supports the collaborative efforts of the Ohio Education Computer Network; ensuring technology is available for Ohio students. MCOESC provides Zoom video conference licensing for all Ohio K-12 schools, officials of the Ohio Department of Education, as well as BEMC.

State Representative Ingram: Currently a Representative for Ohio House District 32 in Cincinnati and as Past President of the Cincinnati School Board for 20 years, has evolved in her appointment to the Broadcast Educational Commission and focus on what needs to be done, specifically relating to distance learning.

Joseph Soza: Introducing himself as a Legislative Aide attending the meeting on behalf of State Senator Teresa Feder, stated Senator Feder’s passion is education and ensuring students and constituents have access to technology and information.

Curt Steiner: Explained his roots were in public broadcasting since a college student at WOUB Radio in Athens where he reported stories on “All Things Considered” and has been involved with public broadcasting ever since. Currently CEO at Steiner Public Relations and prior to that was Senior Vice President of The Ohio State University for 7 years. Nationally and locally, radio and television stations deliver the news and, in terms of broadcasting, are really the only way to get it.

Mr. Smith added, “Especially in government. Now we are here. We want to represent the table, rather than the organization that sent us here. Not until you reach across this table and let go of your own organization can we eliminate conflict for the greater good.”

C. **Roll Call:** At 10:32 a.m., roll call was conducted by Mrs. Price.

Members Present: Chairman Robert Smith; Commissioner Geoffrey Andrews; Commissioner Stephen Black, Commissioner Matt Dole; Commissioner Stephen Freeze; Commission Designee Charles See; Non-Voting State Representative Catherine Ingram; Commissioner Christine Merritt; Commissioner Jan Osborn; Commissioner George Sarantou; Commission Designee Shaun Yoder and Commissioner Curt Steiner. Mrs. Price declared a quorum was present.

Members Absent: ; Non-Voting State Representative David Greenspan; Non-Voting State Senator Teresa Fedor and Non-Voting State Senator Michael Rulli.

D. **By-Laws Review:** Assistant Attorney General Stoneburner reported while a review process is not necessarily required, BEMC wants to ensure with a new Chairman the Commission is aware of its By-Laws, summarizing:

- 1) BEMC must have six voting members in the room to conduct a meeting;
- 2) The Commission has four non-voting legislative members who are an important part of the team;
- 3) BEMC has regular meetings, typically one per quarter, but could have more if warranted;
- 4) Commissioners must be physically present for a meeting;
- 5) Prior notification and legal notice with purpose of the meeting is required to call a special meeting;
- 6) Public meetings do not require agenda be posted;
- 7) BEMC doesn't currently have a public comment section under Section 7 wherein the Chair is under discretion for public speaking;
- 8) Minutes are adopted for the last meeting and are available for public inspection;
- 9) The Vice Chair is elected annually at the first meeting of each fiscal year;
- 10) Executive Committees requires Vice Chair and a Commissioner elected by the Commissioners; and
- 11) Special Committee Meetings must be advertised with notice under Open Meetings Act. It is not set in BEMC's By-Laws that special committees may take any action; any action would require Commission authorization.

In response to questions, reported:

- 1) It is not acceptable to attend a meeting by telephone, as that would be out of compliance with the *Meetings Act*, for which prior notification is required and a quorum must be present; and

E. **Election of Vice Chair:**

Resolution (20-02): Approval of May 9, 2019 Minutes: 10:07 a.m. – At 10:40 a.m., Mr. Sarantou made a motion to re-elect Dr. Osborn as Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by Mr. Andrews and passed by roll-call vote:

AYES: Mr. Smith; Mr. Andrews; Mr. Black; Mr. Yoder; Mr. Dole; Mr. Freeze,
Mr. See, Ms. Merritt; Dr. Osborn; Mr. Sarantou; and Mr. Steiner.
NAYS: None.
ABSTAIN: None.

F. **Commission Committee Structure:** Mr. Smith passed a list around the table for Commissioners to check off their interest in participating in various committees: Executive, Finance, Policy & Procedures and Engineering and Broadcast Operations.

III. **BEMC Agency Overview:**

A. **Organization Chart:** Mr. Phillips reviewed BEMC's organization chart with the Commission, reporting there are 23 full-time positions and 2 positions for Interns. A high school new intern, William, is part of a first-time venture for BEMC. William is exploring BEMC's approach to engineering and broadcast operations.

B. **FY20-21 Appropriations & Subsidy Allocation Formula:** Mr. Phillips reported:

- 1) BEMC distributes just over \$6 Million in annual subsidy payments.;
- 2) Payroll numbers look good for the fiscal year. BEMC is very labor intensive, especially in Master Control. (Mr. Smith added, while reviewing financials he was struck by the number of years BEMC's budget has been the same.) Continuing, Mr. Phillips reported:
- 3) There are ongoing efforts to reduce expenses and identify areas for cuts and additional funds are essential for the next biennium.; In Fiscal Year 2020 there was some increase in subsidy funding – Radio Reading Services had no increase, but received a \$50,000.00 allotment to expand services in Ohio from the State of Ohio's Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD).
- 4) Referencing BEMC's Television and Radio FY19 Allocations Worksheet on the screen, reported the formula shares 75.25% for Television allocation and 24.75% for Radio and has not been revisited since 2007; posing the question, perhaps now is time for a review with lots of change in the last 12 years including the recent sale of spectrum.
- 5) Radio Reading Services allocations are based upon the number of hours originated each week.

- 6) Multi-Media subsidy allocations are equal amount for all 11 primary and secondary stations versus a subsidy variance for primary and secondary stations in the operating subsidy.
- 7) Suggested a review committee for this topic.

Mr. Smith agreed an annual or periodic review should be implemented by process of committee, adding no change in subsidy allocation shall be implemented for fiscal year 2020. The new committee may recommend changes or may leave things alone for fiscal year 2021.

- 8) Fiscal year 2020 contracts were drafted for one year.;

In response to an inquiry, Mr. Phillips talked about requests for funding increases and reported BEMC received no increase.

Mr. Smith suggested a strategy like appointing a committee to have a dialog, not an opportunity to agree or disagree, but an opportunity to engage. If one is not a part of a discussion, then there is a feeling of disenfranchisement.

IV. **Executive Director Report:**

- A. **Staff Updates:** Chief of Operations Jarrod Weiss resigned in August and Master Control Operator Jackie Flinn has submitted her resignation effective later in September. BEMC has reassigned Mr. Weiss' workload and is analytically processing a necessity for replacement of this position; reshuffling to determine if the available position will be filled with a replacement administrator or with an engineer. BEMC have five employees in the Union. All new hires will be administrative staff, which provides BEMC maximum flexibility within our organization chart.
- B. **ECOESC Welcome to BEMC:** On August 21st, BEMC conducted a ribbon-cutting event to officially welcome East Central Ohio Educational Service Center (ECOESC) teachers who are actively teaching from offices in this building via Zoom Video Conferencing.
- C. **Operating Financial Status:** Mr. Phillips reviewed BEMC's financial statement handout with the Commission, mentioning BEMC has just over \$312,000.00 available spending for the remainder of fiscal year 2020.
- D. **FY20 Staff Priorities:** With BEMC's FY20 Major Priorities handout on the screen, reported:
 - 1) BEMC has informed The Office of Budget Management (OBM) of intent to spend all remaining Fiscal Years 2019/2020 capital funds prior to the end of this calendar year 2019.;
 - 2) BEMC shall present Capital recommendations for upcoming Fiscal Years 2021/2022 at the next meeting. There will be some equipment replacements.
 - 3) BEMC's Fiscal Administrator's forthcoming retirement;

Video Network Operations Center (VNOC) enhancements; Senator Fedor's resolution presented to ECOESC folks in recognition of 20 years' connecting classes in Ohio was circulated for the Commissioners to review.

E. FY20 Fall Broadcasting Tour:

Executive Director Phillips sought interest from Commissioners not previously indicating interest in joining BEMC senior leaders on visits to Public Broadcasting affiliates. A chart was circulated for Commissioners to make additions or revisions.

- F. FY 18-19 State Audit Report:** Cristin Ewart, Auditor of State's Senior Audit Manager reported the scope for BEMC's fiscal years 2018 and 2019 audit focused on revenue, non-payroll & payroll transactions, Ohio laws, and ethics & reporting compliance. BEMC has no petty cash and no outside bank accounts. Also covered were general compliance, internal structure and management compliance, principle laws and regulations.

Audit results were presented in the Management Letter as, "No comments". Ms. Ewart stated the Auditor of State is unbiased and, therefore, cannot give out a sticker or report a good or bad job. In the past, there were far more findings; last exam there were fewer.. This year, there is a clean management letter. Discussed testing criteria. Mr. Phillips added policies & procedures and fiscal procedures are current.

V. Senior Management Reports:

- A. Engineering & Broadcast Operations:** Chief of Engineering & Broadcast Operations Craig Stevenson reviewed the discrepancy report handout, reporting:

- 1) There were only 3 discrepancies with a 99.99% volume of playlist accuracy and expressed satisfaction with Master Control Operations staff;
- 2) HA Design Group will perform updates on October 28th. BEMC anticipates no complications.;
- 3) In July, a cloud-based system for delivery of files was implemented, for which The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) supplied a redundant server.;
- 4) In the last three weeks, BEMC updated its archive system, increasing capacity. There is some duplicity BEMC cannot afford to lose, but BEMC may reduce the amount of redundancy to reduce storage.;
- 5) Recent audio issues with BEMC's Selenio signal processing system have been corrected.;
- 6) BEMC has completed refurbishment, including electrical conduit upgrades and replacement of reflectors, to two outside satellite dishes originally installed in 1994 and 1998.

- B. VNOC / Distance Learning / Multimedia:** Chief Information Officer Laura J. Bryson reported:

- 1) The new school year is underway. Expressed appreciation to Licking Area Computer Association's (LACA) Dave Stein who was present as a guest at this meeting for his tremendous assistance throughout the implementation process for

ECOESC teaching classes out of this facility. BEMC provisions internet and Zoom video conferencing support.

- 2) BEMC has created and printed distance learning-related flyers on topics such as the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and Zoom hosting on our BEMC's website. On October 1st, there will be program training opportunities relating to career connections; and
- 3) All fiscal year 2019 multi-media projects have been approved and will be available soon. Mr. Phillips added multi-media videos are produced in collaboration with The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and next steps are determining ODE's needs for fiscal year 2020 for which approximately \$1 Million in subsidies through BEMC are allocated. Affiliate Public TV stations produce these excellent tools for use by every school in Ohio.

VI. Adjournment:

Resolution (20-03) Motion for Adjournment: 12:09 p.m. – Mr. Dole moved to adjourn. Mr. Black seconded. The adjournment motion passed via unanimous voice vote.



Robert C. Smith, Chairman
Broadcast Educational Media Commission



Date