

Commonwealth Public Broadcasting Corporation  
Minutes of a Corporate Board Meeting on January 19, 2017

The Board of Directors of Commonwealth Public Broadcasting Corporation met at the Corporation's headquarters in Richmond, Virginia, on January 19, 2017, pursuant to a notice to each member and following public notices posted on the Corporation's website and broadcast on its radio and television stations.

Directors present included Chairman Todd Stansbury, President and CEO Curtis Monk, Ms. Cynthia Bailey, Ms. Liz Blue, Mr. Dick Crawford, Mr. Josh Dare, Dr. David Gould, Mr. Steve Humble, Ms. Marlene Jones, and Mr. Stephen Loderick. Ms. Louise Martin participated by telephone.

Staff members present were John Felton, Ami Kim, Debbie Mickle, Bill Miller, Katherine Mitchell, Mark Spiller, and Lisa Tait. CFO Larry Dankner represented NETA.

#### Call to Order

Mr. Stansbury called the meeting to order at 11:03 AM.

Mr. Dare moved approval of minutes of the previous meeting of the Board, of October 20, 2016. Ms. Blue seconded the motion and approval was unanimous.

#### Community Station Board Reports

##### Radio

Mr. Miller reported on three debates in which WCVE Radio was involved prior to the November elections. Radio news director Craig Carper was one of three panelists for a Richmond Mayoral candidates forum, the station provided the only live broadcast debate between the candidates for the open 4<sup>th</sup> District Congressional seat, and WCVE Radio organized and staffed a non-broadcast forum among candidates for City Council for the City of Petersburg.

He noted that WCVE Radio provided in-depth reports on Alzheimer's Disease complementary to the television broadcast of Alzheimer's: The Caregiver's Perspective. Mr. Miller indicated that Giving Tuesday, a first time, one-day fundraising event the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, brought in \$7,985 in pledges. For the year in membership so far, the average gift is down but the number of new gifts is up. He said that a main objective this year is to increase the number of new members.

Mr. Miller reported that General Assembly coverage resumed on January 11 and that, in addition to daily report on WCVE Radio, the department is producing daily, 90-second reports on the General Assembly for WCVE Television.

He noted that measuring and pricing for Capital Campaign-funded production studio renovation is under way.

Mr. Miller reported a recommendation from the WCVE-FM Community Station Board that the station's HD-2 News/Talk service be promoted more aggressively. Promotion of that service is a priority for the second half of the fiscal year. The CSB's anecdotal input was that the HD-2 News/Talk service is strong and that availability online and with HD Radios is also satisfactory, but that awareness is lacking. The CSB also expressed support for the state legislative preview program produced in the fall of 2015 and encouraged production of such programs in the future. He noted that the next CSB meeting was scheduled for the following day.

Following Mr. Miller's report, Mr. Stansbury welcomed Steve Humble to the Board and greeted Board member Louise Martin, who was participating in the meeting by telephone from Mexico.

## Television

Mr. Felton reported that the station's State Capitol studio, now located in the basement of the General Assembly Building, is proposed to move to the Oliver Hill Building when the General Assembly Building closes for reconstruction. Television staff would prefer to move to the Pocahontas Building, where General Assembly offices will be located during construction. Negotiations are under way to preserve studio space and for it to be housed in the best possible location. Mr. Stansbury suggested a planning session to organize working on the issue through contacts with clerks and individual legislators.

Mr. Felton noted that production revenue for television is \$22,000 under goal to date and nearly \$10,000 under in revenue compared to the same time last year. Work is under way to cultivate a large commercial production client to compensate for former client Spang TV, the departure of which left a \$50,000 revenue gap. He identified challenges to the satellite uplink business at the General Assembly Building studio from new technology alternatives such as Skype.

Mr. Felton indicated the year just ended is the busiest ever in television production, identifying *Virginia Currents*, *Charlottesville Inside Out*, *Virginia Home Grown*, *Flying Squirrels Insider*, *Feeling Good About America: The 1976 Presidential Election*, *Gerry-rigged: Turning Democracy On Its Head*, *The First English Thanksgiving in the New World*, *Alzheimer's: A Caregiver's Perspective*, *the Richmond Mayoral Debate*, and the *State of the Commonwealth Address* early last year as completed productions. The station also had a major editorial and administrative role in *9/11: The Pentagon and Pearl Harbor*, *USS Oklahama*, *The Final Story* for PBS distribution.

Mr. Felton reported on ongoing production projects, including *Hope Emerges: McGuire Veterans Hospital* and *JFK 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, an annual production done in partnership with the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia. A previously produced program, *The Kennedy Half Century*, focused on the implications Kennedy's presidency had on subsequent administrations. *JFK 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday* focuses solely on Kennedy the person and politician.

Mr. Felton noted that the station has cultivated a number of local producers who make good programs that can be acquired, in most cases, for free. Titles from the last year included *Remembering WLEE*, *Red Onion State Prison*, *Chesapeake Bay Environmental Documentaries*, *Keeping Virginia Wild*, *The Urban Forest*, *From the Wings: Live Art*, *Draw Back the Curtain*, *Preserving Virginia*, *The Last Hunt Clubs*, and *Monroe Hill*.

He reported that the remote production truck has been ordered and is being customized to fit requested equipment specifications. The truck is expected to arrive by February. After training and during the spring/summer season partnerships will be identified for location productions in the performing arts particularly in music and theatre and town hall programming.

## Department Reports

### Digital

Ms. Kim reported that the stations' digital reach is growing, with social media followers and website traffic. The stations' main email list includes 24,000 recipients. The Ready To Learn email list has 1946 recipients. Email open rates vary from 17 to 50 percent. The WCVE Facebook page has 7199 followers, with an increase of 34 percent since January 2016, and WCVE's Twitter presence has 3958 followers.

Mr. Kim said the stations' website is adding more live content offerings and growing multimedia content. Approximately 32 percent of new visitors are using mobile devices. There were 39,893 website visits in December 2016, an increase of 13,000 from December 2015.

She identified some popular posts including the State of the Commonwealth Address, which brought in 560 viewers online – far exceeding expectations, and Virginia Currents. She spoke to the diversity of content available on the Assembly '17 legislative coverage section of the website. Ms. Kim also described targeted advertising efforts, including Mogo interactive advertising, to promote the station's trip to England raffle

Mr. Monk noted that Ms. Kim is a member of the PBS Digital Advisory Council and that the station is increasingly using online and social media to engage audiences.

### Community Engagement

Mr. Monk noted that Katherine Mitchell, Director of Community Engagement, now reports directly to him. He said that the level of importance of community engagement activities supports this organizational change.

Ms. Mitchell reported that the Community Idea Stations has been approaching Community Engagement strategically for two years and is on the cutting edge nationally using events and outreach to strengthen the stations. She said her team supports radio and television by increasing audience, and digital by providing opportunities for increased social media engagement, driving

people to the website and getting more people to sign up for e-communications. Community Engagement supports development by providing unique experiences and volunteer opportunities for major donors, new ways that corporate sponsors can provide support, and bringing new people in to the database to cultivate for membership.

Ms. Mitchell noted that Community Engagement contributes to the mission by creating experiences that enhance the vibrancy of the community. She said, we educate, entertain and inspire beyond the broadcast. She estimated that by the end of this year, Community Engagement will directly connect with more than 10,000 people, just through the events that are hosted at least one every month.

She indicated that events strive to represent all of the stations' impact areas and balance geographically and demographically. The Mercy Street premiere was the first time an event was held in Ashland. She said Splash and Bubbles was the first event at the Science Museum. Participants in the Alzheimer's Workshop said it was the best they had ever attended. The Charlottesville Inside Out premiere was one of the first events held in Charlottesville.

Ms. Mitchell reported that Ken Burns Vietnam is scheduled for broadcast in September. Meetings with community partners will be planned to determine the best local outreach and programming. She said that efforts are increasing in low income communities. One other educational outreach program is Science Matters, which she described as unlike anything in the country and a great example of a program that creates both impact and revenue. Ms. Mitchell introduced Science Matters manager Debbie Mickle.

Ms. Mickle described Science Matters as an educational and multimedia initiative, engaging community partners to create compelling local content. It provides a hub for all STEM events in the community. Science Matters reaches 154 local partners, and five local and 134 statewide school systems. From September 2015 to September 2016, 195 science reports were produced for WCVE Radio, and 122 articles were produced for the stations' website. Ms. Mickle noted that awards had been received from the Virginia Association of Broadcasters and the Richmond Technology Council.

Mr. Monk described Science Matters as a big success with a ten-year history. It raises awareness of science in the community, and it's goal is to engender and sustain interest in science among students and others. Mr. Stansbury indicated that he is glad to see Community Engagement elevated in the company structure. He noted that the Charlottesville Inside Out event was one of the best musical programs he has seen in Charlottesville.

## Finance

Mr. Loderick introduced the Committee report, noting that the Finance Committee met the previous day. He indicated that Brian Ford from RBC delivered a report on the Company's Investment Portfolio and asked Mr. Dankner to report on the Company's Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statement.

Mr. Dankner indicated that the Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2016, shows total assets down \$741,682 since the start of the fiscal year, due primarily to depreciation expense of \$580,000. He also noted that Accounts Payable is up \$127,122 since June 30, 2016. Mr. Monk pointed out that \$620,000 was transferred from Investments into Cash for Operations because of acquisitions related to Capital projects.

On the Profit and Loss Statement, Mr. Dankner said total revenues as of December 31, 2016, are \$212,540 below budget. He suggested that fundraising events would make up part of the shortfall by year's end. Underwriting and Contributions account for \$139,000 of the negative variance; those lines are also expected to catch up to budgeted amounts by June 30, 2017. The shortfall in Production Services is currently \$116,000 and a shortfall in that line item is expected to continue to yearend. Mr. Dankner also noted that \$200,000 in planned gifts would be realized in the second half of the year; the budgeted amount on that line is \$0.

In Expense variances, Mr. Dankner reported that health insurance payments are \$79,000 over budget, a figure due mostly to the timing of payments. Technical Operations Supplies and Engineering Repairs are \$11,000 over budget due to work required on radio transmitters at Heathsville and Chase City. Total overruns by yearend are expected to be \$21,000 combined on those lines.

Mr. Dankner indicated that business entertainment expenses are \$28,000 below budget and are expected to remain under budget for the rest of the year. Talent fees are below budget by 20,000 and are expected to finish the year under budget. Dues and membership fees are \$18,000 below budget and are expected to finish the year at that level. Mr. Dankner noted that production services expenses are over budget by \$73,000 as the end of December. A negative variance of \$54,000 is expected by the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Tait reported on Development income through December 31, 2016. Total membership contributions are off five percent from the previous year, and Radio membership is down 12 percent, a situation she attributes to the presence of a second NPR station in the market, which allows listeners to tune away when on-air fundraising is under way. Commonwealth Circle giving is up seven percent, bringing total individual giving to one percent less than last year.

Ms. Tait indicated that Corporate Support income is 11 percent behind last year as of the end of December but expressed confidence that the number would be closer to budget by the end of the fiscal year. She indicated that a planned gift was deposited on January 3, 2017, and would be reflected on the next quarter's report, and that two raffles are currently under way which would also add income in the next quarter. Overall, Ms. Tait expressed optimism that all Development income lines would reach budgeted goals.

Mr. Loderick reported that the Company's investment portfolio had a six percent return in the preceding year, from January 1 to December 31, 2016, with a current balance of \$7,478,173.

## Other Business

Mr. Miller reported on FCC rulemaking which would require board members of noncommercial educational stations (such as WCVE-FM and WCVE Television) to obtain FCC Registration Numbers using their Social Security Numbers and to include those numbers on periodic Ownership Reports filed by stations with the FCC. The next biennial Ownership Report for WCVE would be filed by December 1, 2017. Mr. Miller noted that the Company's FCC attorneys had advised him that the rule is expected to be overturned by the FCC before the filing period in the fall of 2017.

## Executive Session

At 12:47 PM, upon motion duly seconded, the Board voted unanimously to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing proprietary business issues and personnel matters. The Board excused those present and went into executive session at 12:47 PM.

At 2:25 PM, the Board returned to open session with a declaration from the Chair that no business was conducted during the executive session.

## Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, the Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 2:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

William N. Miller  
Secretary to the Board