

Minutes of Meeting #442
Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission
Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center
1800 No. 33rd Street
Lincoln, Nebraska
June 19, 2014

PRESENT: Commissioner Dennis Baack
Commissioner Matt Blomstedt
Commissioner Curt Frye
Commissioner Patty Kircher
Commissioner Dick Shoemaker
Commissioner Clay Smith
Commissioner Darlene Starman
Commissioner Dara Troutman

ABSENT: Commissioner Ken Bird
Commissioner Kim Dinsdale
Commissioner Fred Ohles

Advance notice of the public meeting was sent to Nebraska news media by means of a news release forwarded from the Commission office with Agenda posted in the NET Lobby and on the State and NET web sites. LB 898 (related to Open Meetings Act) is also posted in the NET Board Room on 1st floor.

Chair Clay Smith called meeting #442 to order at 9:30 a.m.

Following the call of the roll, it was determined that a duly constituted quorum of Commissioners to be present.

The Chair called for public comment. There was none.

The Chair next requested approval of the minutes of meeting #441 as held on February 20, 2014. It was moved by Commissioner Blomstedt and seconded by Commissioner Frye to approve minutes of meeting #441 as presented. Motion was approved by acclamation.

AGM-Administration & Finance Randy Hansen presented the 3rd quarter budget report for period ending March 31, 2014 for both the Television and Radio Divisions. The Finance Committee met prior to the meeting to review the report in greater detail. It was moved by Commissioner Shoemaker and seconded by Commissioner Baack to approve the 3rd quarter budget reports as presented and attached to the minutes. Roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting aye: Commissioners Baack, Blomstedt, Frye, Kircher, Shoemaker, Smith, Starman and Troutman; Absent: Commissioners Bird, Dinsdale and Ohles. Motion approved.

Chairman Smith requested a review of the FY 2015 Operating Budget report. AGM Administration & Finance Randy Hansen presented the proposed FY 2015 operating budget including a summary that provided an overview of the proposed budget accounts and categories with comparisons to the FY 2014 budget. It was moved by Shoemaker and seconded by Blomstedt to approve the Commission's FY 2015 budget totaling \$10,623,870 and to also approve a July 1, 2014 base salary increase of 2.25% for non-contract, rules covered Commission employees (exempt, salaried employees) and for Commission employees covered by the union

contract (non-exempt, hourly rate employees) as recommended by the Governor and approved by the Legislature. Roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting aye: Commissioners Baack, Blomstedt, Frye, Kircher, Shoemaker, Smith, Starman and Troutman; Absent: Commissioners Bird, Dinsdale and Ohles. Motion approved.

The Chair called for an Omaha Tower project report and relocation of KYNE. AGM-Marketing Michael Winkle presented background information with additional comments from General Manager Mark Leonard and Chair Clay Smith. On August 30, 2012, the Commission directed NET staff to develop plans for a possible relocation of the KYNE transmitter facilities. A plan has been developed for a possible move to a tower owned by Gray Communications at 35th and Farnam. Subsequently a meeting was held with UNO officials on April 2014 and financial estimates were shared. It was moved by Commissioner Shoemaker and seconded by Commissioner Blomstedt that the Commission 1) authorizes staff to proceed with negotiations with UNO, appropriate vendors and agencies to complete a capital project which would lease tower and building space for a new transmitter and equipment and to remove the existing tower from the UNO campus, provided NET and the State are not required to provide any of the funding; and, 2) authorizes staff to proceed with UNO officials to reach an agreement on annual operating costs and rental revenues which would be satisfactory to both parties. Following discussion, roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting aye: Commissioners Baack, Blomstedt, Frye, Kircher, Shoemaker, Smith, Starman and Troutman; Absent: Commissioners Bird, Dinsdale and Ohles. Motion approved.

Chair Smith next requested information on the Broken Bow translator. AGM-Marketing Michael Winkle supplied details regarding recent developments involving continued service for Broken Bow. The tower and facility space supporting the translator is leased from Great Plains Telecommunications. They have notified NET that it intends to tear down and replace the tower this summer. They will also be building a new, smaller building to house their equipment and electronics. The new building will not have sufficient room for NET's equipment. To continue service, NET would need to move the translator to a new location close to the base of the tower with estimated costs totaling \$60,000. It was moved by Shoemaker and seconded by Starman to spend \$60,000 as proposed to continue the service for the city of Broken Bow. Following discussion, roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting aye: Commissioners Baack, Blomstedt, Frye, Kircher, Shoemaker, Smith, Starman and Troutman; Absent: Commissioners Bird, Dinsdale and Ohles. Motion approved.

Jim Adams, Assistant General Manager of University of Nebraska-Omaha Television reported on activities at UNO-Television including the program *Discovering Louis Grell* that will be viewed on NET2.

The Chair indicated that written Content and Education reports were included in the mailing as submitted by AGM-Content David Feingold and AGM-Education Gary Targoff. Included in the Education report was the Ready To Learn grant that was awarded to NET in the amount of \$123,788 for implementation of RTL activities in 2-4 communities. Also, supported in part was a \$13,000 grant from POV (Point of View). NET and community partners hosted three screening and discussion salons centering on the message of "American Promise".

Secretary Leonard encouraged Commissioners to attend an event scheduled for July 14th that incorporates Nebraska leaders in a discussion of "*The State of Education in Nebraska: The Future of Education*". This will be held at NET, 7:00 pm (arrive at 6:45 pm).

The Engineering report was distributed by Interim AGM for Technology Bob Huber.

Secretary Leonard announced that Ling Ling Sun has verbally accepted NET's offer for the Chief Technology Officer position. Ling Ling is currently employed by WOSU Public Media in Columbus, Ohio and will begin employment at NET on September 2nd.

He also shared an article from the New York Times titled *Worries Over Access to Free Public TV*. The concern is that the Federal Communications Commission's planned spectrum incentive auction intended to free airwaves for use by wireless broadband companies could leave parts of the country without over-the-air public television access.

Commissioners are invited to an August 5th fundraising reception/dinner event to honor Ron Hull in recognition of his 60 years of service to NET and Nebraska. The event will be at NET in the newly renamed Ron Hull Studio at NET, 6:30-8:00 pm.

The Chair next called for New Business. He indicated that NETC had received a letter of resignation from Commissioner Steve Seline due to the situation of a subsidiary of his company (Walnut Private Equity Partners, LLC) purchasing radio stations in Fremont and Blair that would put them in a conflict position with the radio group governed by the Commission. Chair Smith extended his appreciation for Commissioner Seline's service to NET and requested a plaque and letter of thanks be sent to him.

The Chair next introduced and welcomed Commissioner Patty Kircher to the Commission. She replaces Steve Seline representing District 2 on the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission. Commissioner Kircher indicated her pleasure in being appointed to the NETC and looked forward to being a part of this Commission.

Commissioner Troutman announced that former General Manager Rod Bates would be inducted into the Nebraska Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame on August 13. An email will be forwarded to Commissioners with specifics of this dinner event. The Hall of Fame Banquet will be held at the Cornhusker Marriott in Lincoln at 7:00 pm (Reception at 6:00 pm).

Being no further business, Chair Smith called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was moved by Shoemaker and seconded by Frye to adjourn meeting #442 at 10:45 a.m. Motion approved by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Leonard
Secretary