Minutes of Meeting #461
Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission
Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center
1800 N 33rd St.
Lincoln, NE
December 13, 2018

Present: Commissioner Fred Ohles (Chair)
Commissioner Patricia Kircher
Commissioner Nick Baxter
Commissioner Marilyn Hadley
Commissioner Matt Blomstedt
Commissioner Clay Smith
Commission Darlene Starman

Absent: Commissioner Lisa May
Commissioner Rod Markin
Commissioner Randy Schmailzl
Commissioner Stan Carpenter

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 websites. LB898 (related to Open Meetings Act) is also posted in the NET Boardroom on the first floor.

Chair Fred Ohles called the meeting #461 to order at 10:37 a.m.

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

The Chair called for public comment. There were none.

CONSENT AGENDA

COMMISSION ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA
June 30, 2018 BKD Audit report, 1st Quarter Budget Report, Nominating Committee
AGM-Administration & Finance Randy Hansen presented the June 30, 2018 BKD Audit report. The audits cover television and radio. Both audits are of clean opinion. It was moved by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Blomstedt to accept the audit findings. Roll call was recorded as follows: Aye Commissioner Baxter, Blomstedt, Hadley, Kircher, Ohles, Smith, Starman. The Finance Committee met prior to the full Commission meeting to review the report in greater detail.
AGM-Administration and Finance

Randy Hansen presented the 1st Quarter Budget report ending September 30, 2018. It was moved by Commissioner Blomstedt and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve the 1st Quarter Budget report. Roll call was recorded as follows: Aye Commissioner Baxter, Blomstedt, Hadley, Kircher, Ohles, Smith, Starman. The Finance Committee met prior to the full Commission meeting to review the report in greater detail.

Nominating Committee Chair Marilyn Hadley presented the nominations for Officers of the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission. The nominations were as follows: Chair – Patricia Kircher. Vice Chair – Marilyn Hadley. Finance Committee – Patricia Kircher, Marilyn Hadley, Clay Smith, Lisa May. Executive Committee – Matt Blomstedt, Patricia Kircher, Marilyn Hadley, Clay Smith. Secretary – Mark Leonard. Treasurer – Randy Hansen. Roll call was recorded as follows: Aye Commissioner Baxter, Blomstedt, Hadley, Kircher, Ohles, Smith, Starman. The Nominating Committee met prior to the full Commission meeting to nominate officers.

There will be three open positions on the Commission with the retirement of Fred Ohles in March 2019, Stan Carpenter in December 2018 and Randy Schmailzl in December 2018. Three names were submitted to the governor’s office to assist in appointing the positions: Greg Adams representing the Community College system, Paul Turman representing Nebraska State Colleges, and Jacque Carter representing private educational institutions.

COMMISSION INFORMATION AGENDA

NET Education Update
AGM – Development, Marketing and Education

Debbie Hamlett presented the update:

Daniel Tiger visited NET and libraries in Southeast Nebraska to share a special episode of Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood for the 50th Anniversary of Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood:

8/16: Fairbury Public Library – 30 attendees
8/20: Hastings Public Library – 100 attendees
8/22: Aurora Public Library – 100 attendees
8/23: York Public Library – 286 attendees
8/25: NET – 82 (2pm) & 88 (4:30) attendees
8/26: Beatrice Public Library – 225 attendees

On October 30, NET invited kids and families from the two title 1 schools nearest NET as well as neighbors living in the vicinity in Lincoln to join us for NET’s first neighborhood Halloween Party. The Halloween special episode Wild Kratts: Creepy Creatures was shown along with educational games, crafts, and a costume contest. There were more than 200 families in attendance.

The 2018-19 season of Indi Lens Pop-Up is set. The first film in the series DAWNLAND will show at UNL on Dec. 6th. The full list of films and schedule can be found on the netNebraska.org website. NET is again partnering with UNL student affairs and the Union for Contemporary Arts. An additional partnership with UNL athletic department will feature a late film addition: Wrestle in April. All films in the UNL series are part of the UNL commitment to diversity and inclusion and is recognized as one of the programs signature events.
In early November NET and nine other grantee stations attended the formal project launch with WNET hosting a three-day conference at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca, New York. In late April and early May 2019, Nature will be presenting American Spring LIVE, a three-night live television and online event highlighting spring’s arrival in a variety of iconic locations across North America. The program will be among the most ambitious in Nature’s long history.

There will be a very robust NET webpage and Facebook presence for this project. In addition to depicting how animals and plants respond to winter’s end, American Spring LIVE will encourage viewers to take an active role in the study of seasons and our changing climate by participating in an array of citizen science projects. Citizen Science facilitates the collection, submission, and analysis of data by the general public, working in collaboration with professional scientists. From counting birds in their backyards, to monitoring the budding and blooming of spring flowers, to tracking the arrival of monarch butterflies in their communities, viewers will be provided with tools and resources for contributing information to ongoing scientific studies.

Local partners are:

- Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium
- Omaha STEM Ecosystem
- Homestead National Monument of American
- Ducks Unlimited
- Beyond School Bells who operates partnerships that enhance Community Learning Centers in 31 Nebraska rural and urban communities.
- Osher Life-Long learning- OLLI

NET Engineering Report
AGM-Engineering Ling Ling Sun presented the update:

FCC Filings
- We have filed TV transmitter power increase with the FCC for KXNE, KMNE, KLNE, KHNE and KYNE. KHNE TV power increase has been approved. Other filings are still pending at time of this report.
- Displacement Applications were granted and construction permits issued for all three NET translator sites. New call signs will be Neligh K27NI-D (channel 27), Broken Bow K31OC-D (channel 31), and Culbertson K21OI-D (channel 21). Work is in progress preparing bids and grant applications.

Capital Equipment Refresh Project
- Legislature appropriated fund for third phase equipment refresh for the project. Purchasing equipment and parts is underway. Both OCIO and Courts approved their part of third phase purchasing for the Capitol equipment refresh project.
- Completed bid requests for most equipment for ‘Capitol – Warner (East) Chamber Hearing Room Project’. The project is completed and is scheduled for Transportation and Telecommunications Committee hearing on 12/5/2018.
• Equipment removal from affected Capitol Hearing Rooms to make way for The Capitol HVAC Project.

Request for Proposal (RFP) for the NET Network Monitoring and Control System
• Has been submitted to State Purchasing for processing.
• Pre-bid conference was held on April 19th.
• RFP opening date was May 31st, have received four responses.
• RFP evaluation has begun on June 11th. The evaluation period is June 5th -22nd.
• RFP evaluation committee conducted RFP oral interviews with bidders on July 31st. State Purchasing requested “Best and Final Offer” after the oral interviews.
• RFP contract is awarded to MNC Software Inc.

Video surveillance systems upgrade
• New building security system is installed and running at NET building.
• Work is in progress to upgrade all transmitter sites. The new system ties-in with UNLPD monitoring system.

NET Broadcast Production and Programming
AGM – Broadcast Production and Programming Nancy Finken presented the update:

Let’s Go Luna
• A new PBS KIDS series premiered November 21 with characters that travel around the world with their friend Luna the moon. Kids 4-7 will explore cultures worldwide while building citizenship and social skills. Let’s Go Luna airs on NET weekdays at 9am and 2:30pm and on NET PBS KIDS and daily at 4pm and 12am on NET PBS Kids.

FRONTLINE: The Facebook Dilemma
• The promise of Facebook was to create a more open and connected world. But from the company’s failure to protect millions of users’ data, to the proliferation of “fake news” and disinformation, mounting crises have raised the question: Is Facebook more harmful than helpful? This major, two-night event investigated a series of warnings to Facebook as the company grew from Mark Zuckerberg’s Harvard dorm room to a global empire. With dozens of original interviews and rare footage, The Facebook Dilemma examines the powerful social media platform’s impact on privacy and democracy in the U.S. and around the world. An encore presentation will air Dec. 11 and 18. (This change happened after the NET December magazine was published.)

The Great American Read
• The premiere of THE GREAT AMERICAN READ “Fall Kick Off” was September 11. Viewers went on a journey through America that introduced our list of the 100 best-loved books and explored the many ways in which these novels affect, reflect and connect us all. The final episode revealed the #1 Best-Loved Novel is To Kill a Mockingbird.

Big Red Wrap-Up
• It has been a great season of “Big Red Wrap-Up” with a lot to talk about as the Scott Frost era begins. After 20 years as host of the show, Kevin Kugler has announced that he’s stepping down from the show, but still hopes to work with NET in the future on special assignments and projects. Kevin’s national career has really taken off, which is great for him and for NET, but he needs to make more time for other work and for his family. We are very grateful for all that Kevin has done for the show and for the station and look forward to working with him in the future. We have not named a new host yet.

Democracy and the Future of Journalism
• Humanities Nebraska was the driving force behind a series of community discussions in six locations (Norfolk, North Platte, Scottsbluff, Kearney, Omaha and Lincoln) surrounding the topic “An Issue of Trust: Democracy and the Future of Journalism.” NET, the Nebraska Press Association, UNL Journalism and Mass Communications, and local newspapers were partners in presenting panel discussions that were very well attended in all six communities. Audience members were very engaged asking questions about The First Amendment, the role of the press, fake news, media ethics, etc… NET recorded 3 of these forums for future use online and in an upcoming television special. NPR’s Sarah McCammon, who got her first broadcast reporting job at NET, participated as a panelist in North Platte and the moderator in Kearney. NET’s Bill Kelly was the moderator for the Lincoln forum.

NET News and Radio
Director of Radio Bill Anderson presented the update:

• In mid-November we hosted a special music edition of Friday LIVE and moved the production to a site other than The Mill. We didn’t go far. In fact, we walked no more than a few steps from Master Control to the NET Meeting & Events Space. That short move gave us the luxury of inviting the public to join us for live performances by the nationally touring Talbott Brothers, Hope Dunbar and Michael Fitzsimmons. It was both a radio and visual media success as we carried it live at NETnebraska.org and on Facebook Live.

• While, technically not a remote broadcast, our mid-term election coverage included live field reports from reporters stationed at campaign headquarters. It was complimented by our Nebraska election updates during local cut-ins on the election coverage of PBS Newshour. NET also had a significant presence on social media and we carried some updates on Facebook Live. It added insight and unique detail to what was otherwise produced in the studio. With reporters in the field moving about the region, it also opened up opportunities for thorough recorded features and interviews the next morning on NPR’s Morning Edition.

• In October, NET hosted the nationally distributed radio show, ‘Live from Here with Chris Thile’. Our Development & Membership team made it possible for VIP donors to attend a pre-show rehearsal and dessert reception and the hundreds of fans at the two-hour show were treated to great music, a fun host and good comedy sketches. I received an email from the production and stage manager the following week and he was exuberant in his praise of Lincoln and the VIP crowd at the rehearsal, “I can honestly say that the
rehearsal audience was the best we’ve ever had and any town with an Ivanna Cone and a Single Barrel Chophouse within walking distance of the theater is okay by me.”

NET Emerging Media
AGM – Emerging Media Chad Davis presented the update:

The 360-video collaboration between Nebraska Stories and Emerging Media, “House of Art,” is a finalist for a NETA Award. Award winners will be announced in January. If it wins, this will be the first time a 360-video has won a NETA Award in direct competition against traditional (fixed frame, “flat”) media.

Projects Currently in R&D include:
- Android App Extension
  - Extending NET’s Android app to Chromecast, Android Auto, Google Home
- 360 Player experience for possible iOS and Android app integration in Q1 2019
- Augmented Reality extension of NET Member Magazine (for Q3 2019)
- Trade (w.t.)
  - podcast exploring how the act of trade touches every American

Projects in Production include:
- On the Table (co-pro with NET News)
  - A nationally targeted podcast about the Farm Bill and why it matters
  - Production ongoing until the new bill is signed.
- Pop Quiz Nebraska
  - A trivia skill for the Amazon Alexa platform based on NET’s Nebraska Studies website
  - Anticipated release: January 2019
- UNL150 (w.t.) (co-pro with Carson Center, Digital Humanities, UNL Libraries)
  - Extended reality representation of the original UNL campus (circa 1870)
  - Public beta launch: February 2019

Recently Completed Projects Include
- Pivotal
  - Tightly scoped microsite aggregating NET’s food/water/ag content
- Star Party
  - 360-video profiling the annual star party near Valentine, NE

General Manager’s Report
General Manager Mark Leonard presented the update:

- Adverse adjudication filing for the FCC - A report needs to be filed with the FCC by February 1, 2019 if there are any findings against our stations’ licensees, its officers, governing board members, and/or owners. We are checking with the University to see if there are any findings that we need to report. Commissioners will let the station know if they have any adverse adjudications findings they need to report.
- NET has won numerous awards in 2018. A full list was provided in the Commission Board Packet for review.
• PMVG meeting was held at the Google offices in San Francisco. There was a deep dive into potential applications for ATSC 3.0 television standard as well as a chance to learn much more about Google’s strategies, involvement in providing news and news services, and much more.

• CPB Compliance audit- NET contracted with Bob Winteringham from the law firm Fletcher, Heald and Hildreth for a review of NET’s compliance with CPB requirements. This has been an ongoing issue within the public broadcasting industry, and is now resulting in some significant fines from CPB for non-compliance. The audit was Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, and we expect a written report from Bob in 30 days. Previously Bob was General Counsel for CPB. We expect to review the report with the Commission at the February meeting, and may ask Bob to join us either in person or by phone to answer any questions.

• Q Catalyst/ Digital Content Accelerator project-NET is one of 17 stations that were selected to participate in a yearlong consultancy project. The DCA is a yearlong program, led by digital change management experts from QCatalyst, designed to accelerate each station's digital growth and ability to serve its local audience. The program takes an inclusive approach to digital transformation, involving all parts of the station organization.
  o QCatalyst uses an interactive, collaborative approach to guiding each station’s GM and executive team through the process. Steps include an evaluation of the station's digital opportunities, a comparison with competitors, and extensive hands-on training and coaching. It culminates with each station undertaking a two-month digital project to put into practice everything that has been learned.
  o Three pilot stations were selected last year to participate. They each reported significant and lasting benefits, including the enthusiastic embrace of digital by all parts of their organizations.

• Michael Winkle will retire from NET after 29 years on December 31, 2018. He was presented with a service award during the NET holiday gathering on December 12, 2018.

**ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

Then next Commission meeting is February 21, 2019.

There being no further business, Meeting #461 was adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Leonard