

## Minutes of Meeting #464

Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission  
Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Center  
1800 N 33<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Lincoln, NE  
December 6, 2019

Present: Commissioner Heath Mello  
Commissioner Patricia Kircher(Chair)  
Commissioner Nick Baxter  
Commissioner Marilyn Hadley  
Commissioner Jacque Carter  
Commissioner Paul Turman  
Commissioner Lisa May  
Commissioner Greg Adams  
Commissioner Dorothy Anderson

Absent: Commissioner Matt Blomstedt  
Commissioner Clay Smith

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 Patty Kircher called the meeting #464 to order at 10:34 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**

The Chair requested approval of the minutes of meeting #463 as held on August 22, 2019. It was moved by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Baxter to approve the minutes from meeting #463. Voting aye: Commissioner Adams, Anderson, Baxter, Carter, Hadley, Kircher, May, Mello.

Opposed: None. Present after voting had commenced: Commissioner Turman.

### **COMMISSION ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA**

#### BKD Audit Report ending June 30, 2019

AGM-Administration and Finance Randy Hansen presented the BKD audit report ending June 30, 2019. It was moved by Commissioner Hadley and seconded by Commissioner May to approve the BKD Audit report ending June 30, 2019. Roll call was recorded as follows: Voting aye: Commissioner Adams,

Anderson, Baxter, Carter, Hadley, Kircher, May, Mello. Opposed: None. The Finance Committee met prior to the full Commission meeting to review the report in greater detail. Present after voting had commenced: Commissioner Turman.

#### NET Commission Nominating Committee Update

Chair Patricia Kircher gave the update that Clay Smith and Dorothy Anderson will lead the committee and will gather information from the Commissioners regarding interest in serving in a leadership capacity or on the Finance Committee or Executive Committee. Will convene at the March meeting to select Chair and Vice Chair. No further action was taken.

#### NET Commission Bylaw Revision, Notice of Meetings

It is recommended that the Commission ratify the bylaws to remove the wording “shall be sent by U.S. mail” in regards to written notice of all meetings of members of the Commission shall be sent by U.S. mail and emailed to each member of the Commission, at least (5) days prior to the meeting. It was moved by Commissioner May and seconded by Commissioner Carter to approve the NET Commission bylaw revision. Roll call was recorded as follows: Voting aye: Commissioner Adams, Anderson, Baxter, Carter, Hadley, Kircher, May, Mello. Opposed: None. Present after voting had commenced: Commissioner Turman.

### **COMMISSION INFORMATION AGENDA**

#### NET Education Update

AGM – Development, Marketing and Education Debbie Hamlett presented the report by PowerPoint for On The Road Fall 2019 as well as Sesame Street in Communities/O’Neill Hometown Celebration.

**Fall 2019 On The Road:** Kids and families in four Nebraska communities were invited to join NET for viewings of clips of Clifford the Big Red Dog, story times, kid-friendly crafts, and a chance to meet Clifford. Each family also received a free book to take home.

O’Neill Public Library – Sept. 27 – 223 children and caregivers

St. Paul Public Library – Sept. 30 – 150 children and caregivers

Kilgore Memorial Library (York) – Oct. 1 – 250 children and caregivers

Ord Township Library – Oct. 2 – 150 children and caregivers

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Hometown Celebration** – Sept. 22, 2019 Children and families in O’Neill and surrounding communities were invited to meet Super Grover 2.0, enjoy a free meal, and take part in hands-on learning activities. 538 children, 330 adults, and over 60 school staff and community volunteers attended. Mayor Scott Menish declared the day “Sesame Street Day” in O’Neill. Activities included making wands like Abby Cadabby’s, building catapults with craft sticks, making straw rockets, and creating a “friendship wall”. Sesame Workshop toolkits were available for families to take at several activity stations.

## NET Engineering Report

AGM – Technology/CTO Ling Ling Sun and Chief Engineer Dave Stewart presented the report:

### **NET Network Monitoring and Control System (NMCS)**

Operation rollout for transmissions started on Oct. 21 after successful sites acceptance test. Teleport integration was started the week of Nov. 18. Face to face meeting with vendor MNC took place on Nov. 20. Commissioners received a live demo for the completed transmission sites.

### **PBS DDMS**

- PBS currently uses diversity functions. Playout system is in use at NET location. PBS is looking at cloud solution for the Playout system.
- PBS started decommissioning satellite related Non-Real Time (NRT) file delivery equipment after system wide transitioning to sIX, a terrestrial based NRT file delivery system.

## NET Broadcast Production and Programming

AGM – Broadcast Production and Programming Nancy Finken presented the report:

### **NET Local Productions**

**And the Floods Came Nebraska 2019**, produced by Bill Kelly of NET News is a documentary about the March 2019 floods that happened across Nebraska. It premiered in August with multiple airings this fall.

### **NET Sports Highlights**

In August and September, NET Sports produced live coverage of Creighton and Nebraska women's volleyball matches and in November there's more Husker Volleyball (11/1, 11/16, and 11/30) as well as **NSAA High School Championship** volleyball action on November 9. NSAA Football Championship games are November 25 and 26.

December 6 and 7 NET Sports will produce live coverage of the Husker Volleyball NCAA Tournament.

### **NET National Productions**

We have 3 productions accepted for national distribution through NETA (National Educational Telecommunications Association).

- **Small Town Cops**
- **Jam**
- **A Romantic Evening with Jackie Allen** (NET is the presenting station for this independent production)

## NET News and Radio

Director of Radio Bill Anderson presented the report:

- NET News teamed with the University of Nebraska College of Journalism and Mass Communications to co-sponsor a public forum "Ethics and The Media: Putting Principles into Practice at NPR." The event was held Thursday, November 7 at the UNL Student

Union Auditorium and attracted approximately 150 people. The forum featured Elizabeth Jensen, NPR's public editor, and Mark Memmott, NPR's supervising senior editor for standards and practices. NET News Director Dennis Kellogg moderated the discussion, which included case studies from real-life scenarios in the NPR and NET newsrooms and questions on journalism ethics from the audience. The day also included a one-hour discussion with Elizabeth, Mark and NET staff on media ethics in the morning, a lunch discussion with the NET News team, and visits by our NPR guests to two classes at UNL's College of Journalism and Mass Communications.

- "Speaking of Nebraska" returned for four new episodes in October. Hosted by NET News Director Dennis Kellogg and produced by Becca Costello, the new episodes focused on Nebraska's long-term flood recovery, mental health issues, rural drug use and the future of libraries in the state. A special episode of Speaking of Nebraska will examine business incentives in the state, which is expected to be a major issue in the upcoming legislative session. That episode will be hosted by Fred Knapp and will air on NET Television on December 19 and NET Radio on December 20.
- Friday LIVE was recorded live before an audience at The Golden Husk in Ord, part of the NET fall 'On the Road' tour of Central Nebraska. Featured on the program were regional musicians Shelia Greenland and Laddie Bruha and Cowboy Poet R.P. Smith. As is customary for the program when NET produces it remotely, a segment on Ord and Valley County history was part of the broadcast.
- NET Music Director Genevieve Randall continues her work with NET's Emerging Media Department as host of the latest iteration of the PlainStory Podcast. The podcast introduces listeners to a diverse number of musicians and artists who call Nebraska home or who otherwise have made Nebraska their new home. Through music many of the guests on PlainStory use music to help them create a new home in the Cornhusker State or recall the home they left behind.

### NET Emerging Media

AGM – Emerging Media Chad Davis presented the report:

#### **Projects Currently in R&D include:**

- PlainStory Podcast (Season 3): Center of Gravity – podcast series looking at the rise of skating subculture in Nebraska and exploring the ways that subculture has enhanced and enriched Nebraska's core culture
- Nebraska Heritage VR Project (w.t.) – an immersive experience modeling a piece of Nebraska's cultural heritage
- Augmented Reality extension of NET Member Magazine (tested, launch TBD)

#### **Projects in Production include:**

- *PlainStory* season 2, "The Sound of Home"
  - Podcast series exploring the diversity of Lincoln through the indigenous music traditions that have accompanied immigrants and refugees to the city over the years
  - Concluding December 2019
- *Freakworks*
  - A profile of local circus troop for YouTube/Facebook distribution
  - Anticipated release: January/February 2020

- University Hall (w.t.) (with Carson Center, Digital Humanities, UNL Libraries)
  - Extended reality builds of the original UNL campus (circa 1870s)
  - Version 1.0 Launch: February 2020

### Recently Completed Projects Include

- *Watershed*
  - A 16-part 360°-video series for PBS.org about thinking at watershed scale
  - Promotion begins nationally in January 2020

### General Manager's Report

General Manager Mark Leonard presented the report:

- Update on STELAR legislation: Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act Reauthorization. It allows Satellite companies to substitute distant television stations into homes instead of the local broadcast stations that serve the region. Nebraska is one of 12 states that are affected by the current legislation, with satellite viewers in western Nebraska seeing the broadcast of the Denver PBS station instead of NET. The reauthorization is under current review by Congress, and we (and the commercial television broadcaster of Nebraska) urge our representatives to let it lapse.
  - It does not appear at this time the legislation will be allowed to lapse. The reauthorization will be good for 5 years and at that time NET will advocate again for its repeal.
- UNL staffing changes: The search for the next Executive Vice Chancellor is winding down and a new hire will be named soon.
- The Compliance update was given by Nikki Sinclair, Executive Assistant.
  - NET retained a former CPB lawyer named Bob Winteringham to audit our NET compliance procedures. He found that most of NET's practices are generally compliant with CPB General Provisions. He had some recommendations that NET has started to implement.
  - A Donor Privacy Policy has been written and the language was approved by vote of the Foundation board members.
  - NET should adopt further written policies and procedures to ensure compliance with CPB's use of Community Service Grants funds and recordkeeping requirements.
    - The policies have been written and are compliance with CPB guidelines.
  - NET should ensure complete and up to date written procedures have been implemented for reporting non-Federal financial support ("NFFS") on its annual financial reports ("AFRs").
    - These policies are being written now in tandem with the NFFS and AFR process that goes through January 2020.
  - NET should consider prohibiting nepotism for NET employees. In crafting an anti-nepotism policy, NET management should also consider factors such as practical circumstances and functionality as well as line of authority or reporting in defining nepotism.
    - This policy has been completed and available for viewing.

- NET should confirm it requires employees in fiduciary roles to use vacation time annually.
  - HR Director Julie Thomsen is currently drafting guidelines and has UNL and State support for the policy.
- NET should consider having employees in fiduciary positions be bonded.
  - This recommendation is still being researched. Unsure if NET falls under the guidelines of needing this policy.
- Implements written procedures for the public to review the statistics about the composition of its workforce NET files with CPB at NET's main offices.
  - Written procedures are now included in the Front Desk Procedure manual and anyone wanting to view the statistics can do so at the kiosks located by the front desk in the main lobby.

### **ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

Then next Commission meeting is March 27, 2020.

There being no further business, Meeting #464 was adjourned at 12:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Leonard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Leonard