Present: Commissioner Heath Mello
Commissioner Patricia Kircher
Commissioner Nick Baxter
Commissioner Marilyn Hadley (Chair)
Commissioner Matt Blomstedt
Commissioner Paul Turman
Commissioner Greg Adams
Commissioner Dorothy Anderson
Commissioner Clay Smith

Absent: Commissioner Jacque Carter
Commissioner Lisa May

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 on the NET front door 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 Marilyn Hadley called the meeting #466 to order at 10:35 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 #465 as held on June 25, 2020. It was moved by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Mello to approve the minutes from meeting #465. Voting aye: Commissioner Adams, Anderson, Baxter, Blomstedt, Hadley, Kircher, Mello, Smith, Turman. Opposed: None.

COMMISSION ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

4th Quarter Budget Report
Chief Financial Officer, Randy Hansen presented the 4th Quarter Budget Report. It was moved by Commissioner Kircher and seconded by Commissioner Turman to approve the 4th Quarter Budget report ending June 30, 2020. Roll call was recorded as follows: Voting aye: Commissioner Adams, Anderson,
Baxter, Blomstedt, Hadley, Kircher, Mello, Smith, Turman. Opposed: None. The Finance Committee met prior to the full Commission meeting to review the report in greater detail.

FY2021 TV and Radio Capital Equipment Lists
Chief Financial Officer, Randy Hansen presented the FY 2021 TV and Radio Capital Equipment Lists. It was moved by Commissioner Kircher and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve the FY 2021 TV and Radio Capital Equipment Lists. Roll call was recorded as follows: Voting aye: Commissioner Adams, Anderson, Baxter, Blomstedt, Hadley, Kircher, Mello, Smith, Turman. Opposed: None. The Finance Committee met prior to the full Commission meeting to review the report in greater detail.

FY 2022 and FY 2023 Biennial Budget
Chief Financial Officer, Randy Hansen presented the FY 2022 and FY 2023 Biennial Budget. It was moved by Commissioner Baxter and seconded by Commissioner Kircher to approve the FY 2022 and FY 2023 Biennial Budget. Roll call was recorded as follows: Voting aye: Commissioner Adams, Anderson, Baxter, Blomstedt, Hadley, Kircher, Mello, Smith, Turman. Opposed: None. The Finance Committee met prior to the full Commission meeting to review the report in greater detail.

COMMISSION INFORMATION AGENDA

Public Media Venture Group Presentation
Vinnie Curran and Marc Hand from PMVG gave a presentation during the Commission meeting regarding ATSC 3.0 technology.

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

- We are currently allowing some staff to return to work with Manager’s approval. We continue to encourage all who can to continue to do their work off site as much as possible, and to maintain strict guidelines within NET for mask wearing, PPE, surface cleanings, etc. All essential staff continue to work onsite.
- The impact across the public radio and television industry will be felt over multiple budget years, and the financial health of the station varies greatly. There have been some staff reductions at both the station level, as well as national organizations such as PBS, NPR and American Public Media. We are in steady contact with both our peers across the country as well as PBS and NPR. A lot of uncertainty, but also a tremendous opportunity for public service in education, news coverage, and public safety despite the challenges of physical distancing.
- Funding updates:
  - The University implemented three years of budget cuts totaling 9.1%
  - The State funding is currently to be determined.
  - On the Federal level Public Broadcasting received $75 million in initial relief funding that was distributed to public TV and Radio stations across the country. NET received $512,000 total for both TV and Radio. A second relief package known as the HEALS Act requests the balance of relief funding that CPB requested - $175 million. With the Senate in recess, this funding will not be considered until September.
As far as the annual appropriation for Public Broadcasting, the House passed a six bill FY 21 appropriations package that included: $515 million for CPB, $20 million for Interconnection and $30 million for Ready to Learn. It is unlikely that the FY 21 appropriation bills will be completed before the election.

PBS stations in South Carolina and Indiana have both received CARES Act funding through their states to provide data cast distribution of educational materials to students that do not have broadband access. This is currently being done on their ATSC 1.0 signals and requires a $225 receiver in the home. As you can imagine ATSC 3.0 will offer greatly expanded capabilities in this area. South Carolina received $35 million and the Indiana stations received $1.4 million. Arkansas, Oklahoma and Louisiana each received additional funding from their state for various COVID-19 accommodations and support. We will continue to look for opportunities to close this broadband access issue for students across the state.

NET Education Update
Chief Strategy Officer, Debbie Hamlett presented the report:

- **Well Beings Mental Health Community Engagement online discussion series** – Aug. 20 @ 4pm
  - Supported in part by a grant from WETA
  - Rescheduled from an in person event in March to online in August.
  - Our first online mental health discussion will be moderated by NET News Director, Dennis Kellogg with mental health professionals and young adults on the topic of anxiety, depression and suicide among young adults aged 10-24. According to the CDC, suicide is a leading cause of death for ages 10-14 and the 2nd leading cause of death for ages 15-24. There will be additional online discussions, topics may include: mental health cultural stigmas within diverse communities, college student and teacher forums.

- **Starting in August, last Thursday of every month, the Education team will have online training sessions directed to specific grades. These sessions will include:** highlights of where to find/how to use PBS and NET resources, discussion to gather information from teacher on their needs and to connect them to each other.

- **FY19-2020 Annual Report Stats**
  - **NET Total Audience** 1,000,000 people a month watch, listen and visit NET online.
    - netnebraska.org
      - 1,321,149 users, an increase of 68% from last fiscal year
      - 3,782,508 page views, an increase of 45% from last fiscal year.
      - (Our live on-demand page did better this year, while the COVID-19 resource page and the live on-demand government streams also added to this increase)
    - nebraskastudies.org - 377,356 page views, 18.5% increase over last year
    - nebraskavirtualcapital.org - 258,349 page views, 16.6% increase over last year
    - nebraskastories.org - 15,567 users, 43% increase. 28,981 page views, 40% increase over last yr.
    - Plainstory Podcast Downloads - 6,541
    - All governmental streaming -Legislature, legislative hearings, courts - 38% increase
    - Streaming Radio - 49,876 total users. 24,058 from web site. 7,759 from NET Nebraska App

- **Top 3 News Stories online**
Former Husker Dishman Discusses Wife’s Tragic Death.  

153 New COVID-19 Cases Reported, Nebraska’s Largest One-Day Increase Yet  
Published: April 18, 2020. Users: 12,320, page views: 15,985

Alcohol, Speed Contributed To Gretna Crash That Killed Four Teen Girls Last Month  
Published: July 16, 2019. Users: 11,269, page views: 13,414

• **COVID-19 News online**
  184,547 users accessed COVID-19 related content on NET’s website.
  COVID-19 content on NET’s website resulted in 321,326 page views.

• **APPS**
  PBS.org -- 73,181 average monthly users.
  PBS Video App -- 6,983 average monthly users.
  PBSKids.org -- 41,379 average monthly users.
  PBS Kids App -- 102,668 average monthly users.
  NET Nebraska App -- 4,000 increase of 45% more users than last year

• **Social Media Channels**
  NET Facebook – 19% Increase followers
  NET Twitter – 6% Increase followers
  NET Instagram – 46% Increase followers
  300,000+ likes (All NET accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter)
  50,000+ shares (All NET accounts on Facebook and Twitter)
  35,000+ comments (All NET accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

**NET Engineering Report**
Chief Technology Officer, Ling Ling Sun presented the report:

• **PBS DDMS**
  o Glycol leak was found in Liebert’s HVAC system. Repairing work to begin ASAP.
  o Ethernet Private Line (EPL) 200 Mb connectivity has been cut over to CenturyLink EPL.

• **Network Operations and Distribution**
  o PBS Live Linear Streaming (LLS) encoder is installed, LLS is tested and working.

• **Network Transmission**
  o KMNE:
    ▪ Funding for the KMNE tower lighting system was received last week. Working with the state purchasing on finalizing the purchase.
  o KTNE

• **Radio**
  o KUCV has experienced Studio to Transmitter Link (STL) interferences which affect HD1 and HD2 signals in the mornings and afternoons. A temporary remedy has been put into place while continuing the interference investigation.
  o New update:
    ▪ KUCV on-air signal was cutover to the new terrestrial circuit on July 27, 2020. Continue fine tuning audio levels.

• **ITS**
Cisco DUO two-factor authentications is implemented to the existing NET remote access VPN environment.

**Other Projects and Initiatives**
- NET Network Monitoring and Control System (NMCS)
  - NMCS has entered its 2nd implementation phase. Work has started in ITS, Production, Master Control functional areas. Progress continues on Facilities.
- UNL NEXTT Grant Application
  - NET is a partner of UNL National Science Foundation Grant application for Platform for Advanced Wireless Research (PAWR) using KHNE site for High Tower High Power 5G broadcasting research.
    - New update:
      - The application was selected in July as one of the two finalists in the competition.

**NET Content—Television and Radio**

Chief Content Officer, Nancy Finken presented the report:

- NET Television’s first channel, NET will be available for live streaming as part of a new PBS live linear streaming initiative. When users go to pbs.org they will have the opportunity to watch live TV. Users will be able to watch only the station(s) that serve the market where they are physically located. Using geo-fencing technology, a requirement by the license holders of television content, a user in a Nebraska zip code will have the opportunity to watch NET live, the same schedule he/she will see when watching NET on regular television. Using that same technology, NET will be offering viewers who use our website and app the same opportunity to watch NET live. Note that if a web user from outside the NET broadcast service area tries to access NET live, they won’t be able to do that. The live broadcast stream of NET will be available only to viewers who are physically in our service area. This will be a free service launching in late August, exact date TBA. This is an important advancement in service, especially for satellite viewers in Nebraska who do not get NET as part of their channel lineup. Streaming via computer, tablet, or phone will be a free option to watch NET live as long as they have bandwidth to support video streaming.

- NET continues to carefully navigate production to ensure the health and safety of our staff during the pandemic. This summer we have continued to provide our core services keeping our radio, television, and online services going as well as regular productions including NET News Speaking of Nebraska and Signature Stories, Backyard Farmer, Friday Live, All About Books, Nebraska Legislature Live, and Shrine Bowl.

- We are making some changes to the NET Radio FM schedule, adding new shows and rearranging the weekend schedule. Among the new programs are On Point, Reveal, To the Best of Our Knowledge, and World Café. Details will be posted on the NET website for the new schedule that takes effect August 17.

- From our new series on innovation and creativity, What if…a segment from one of the pilot episodes was just awarded a prestigious Heartland Emmy. Producer Mike Tobias introduced the audience to Winston, a 5th grader from Omaha who is an amazing composer.
• We are carefully going into field production for the next season of Nebraska Stories, a documentary on local health departments and their response to the pandemic, What If, music performances for JAM, Big Red Wrap-up, and more.
• Our news team, producers, announcers, engineering and production staff create content in new ways employing best practices working onsite and remotely.

NET Emerging Media
Chief Innovation Officer, Chad Davis presented the report:

Projects Currently in R&D include:

- Nebraska Heritage VR Project (w.t.) – an immersive experience modeling a piece of Nebraska’s cultural heritage
- Robbers Cave VR (w.t.) – potential VR experience based on LIDAR scans of the Robber’s Cave system in Lincoln
- Homestead Virtual Tour – WebVR tour of Homestead National Monument
- Untitled Nebraska History Podcast – podcast seeking to develop ‘new history’ stories by relying on primary sources for inspiration and key research

Projects in Production 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 mainstream culture
- University Hall VR Experience
  - Extended reality builds of the original UNL campus (circa 1870s)
  - Version 1.0 Multiplatform Launch: August 2020
- NET Corporate Website

NET Administrative
Chief Administrative Officer, Julie Thomsen presented the report:

• All Staff Meeting - GM and Leadership Team held an All Staff Meeting via Zoom on July 30. Quarterly Employee Excellence Awards were presented to two staff members in recognition of their work above and beyond their regular duties and responsibilities. Leadership Team members also shared updates from their respective areas including the latest budget information provided by the State and University.
• Diversity Efforts – In support of NET’s commitment to diversity, I continue to represent NET on UNL’s Diversity and Inclusion Council. The council is designed to serve as a communications channel between and across units to identify ways to enhance efforts of diversity and inclusion.
• NET joined Think.Public.Media- a group that was born out of a vision from Keith Woods, NPR’s Chief Diversity Officer. The Public Media Village is a system-wide effort to raise the profile of public media organizations for journalists of color. Staff from NET HR participated in virtual career fairs of the National Association of Black Journalists and National Association of Hispanic Journalists Conference August 5th – 7th and the Asian American Journalists Festival August 12th – 15th.
• Compliance - NET will again utilize the Harassment Prevention Training provided by CPB to ensure compliance for NET’s FY 2021 CSG Harassment Prevention Certification. The online training module is designed to increase awareness and knowledge of applicable laws
surrounding harassment prevention. All NET employees, officers, and interns must complete Harassment Prevention Training by September 18, 2020.

- NET Workplace Safety - A PPE (personal protective equipment) Working Group was formed in May consisting of a cross section of NET employees representing various work areas. This group meets every 2-3 weeks to review PPE needs, monitor PPE supplies to support the work, and share best practices to provide a safe working environment during the pandemic. A document outlining requirements for staff working at NET locations and visitors to NET was developed based upon the most current State, University and CDC guidance. Numerous Plexiglas barriers were installed to provide protection in areas that have several staff working or in open areas. NET continues to allow some staff to return to work with Manager’s approval. Staff must adhere to the strict guidelines that include mask wearing, physical distancing, hand washing, Zoom meetings, surface cleanings etc..... We are still encouraging staff who can to continue to do their work off site as much as possible.

**ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

Then next Commission meeting is December 3, 2020.

There being no further business, Meeting #466 was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Leonard

Mark Leonard