

**MINUTES
PUBLIC SESSION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING
WASHINGTON, D.C.
Monday, April 27, 2020**

Call to Order

Chair Ramer called to order the public session of the Board of Directors at 1:13 pm Eastern Time. The following directors participated virtually:

Bruce M. Ramer, Chair;
Patty Cahill, Vice Chair;
Ruby Calvert;
Judith Davenport;
Miriam Hellreich;
Robert Mandell;
Laura G. Ross; and
Liz Sembler.

The following officers and staff were also in attendance:

Patricia Harrison, President and Chief Executive Officer;
Michael Levy, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer;
Teresa Safon, Senior Vice President, Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary;
West Smithers, Senior Vice President and General Counsel;
Bill Tayman, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer;
Stephanie Aaronson, Senior Vice President, Engagement;
Anne Brachman, Senior Vice President, Government Affairs;
Ted Krichels, Senior Vice President, System Development and Media Strategy;
Kathy Merritt, Senior Vice President, Journalism and Radio;
Maja Mrkoci, Chief Content and Innovation Officer;
Deb Sanchez, Senior Vice President, Education and Children's Content Operations;
Kimberly Howell, Inspector General;
Deborah Carr, Vice President, Operations and Strategy;
Beth Walsh, Vice President, Media Strategy Operations; and
Sarah Kildall, Board Affairs Manager.

Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) was also in attendance.

Adoption of Agenda and Determination of Closed Status

Chair Ramer called for a motion to adopt the meeting agenda and close the meeting for agenda items 8 through 10. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the agenda was unanimously adopted as presented.

Invitation to Disclose Conflicts of Interest

In accordance with the CPB Code of Ethics for Directors, Chair Ramer invited directors to disclose possible conflicts of interests regarding the meeting agenda. There were none.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Ramer called for a motion to approve the minutes of the public session of February 27, 2020. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

Chair's and Directors' Remarks

Chair Ramer thanked CPB management and staff for their professionalism and commitment to the mission, and thanked Ms. Harrison for her leadership and constant communication with the Board during this time of crisis, as public media continues to deliver vital content and services. He reported that the Board acted quickly to adopt three resolutions via unanimous written consent since the last board meeting. The first was the submission of a request for emergency funding on behalf of public media; the second was approval of a distribution plan for the \$75 million that CPB received through the "Coronavirus Aid, Relief, And Economic Security Act" (CARES Act); and the third resolution authorized CPB to submit a subsequent request for additional funds. CPB is grateful for the financial support for public media stations and bipartisan support from Congress.

Chair Ramer noted the resolution in the materials concerning the location of the July 8-9, 2020 board meeting – changing it from an in-person meeting in Washington, D.C. to a telephonic or virtual meeting. Chair Ramer called for a motion to adopt the resolution. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the resolution was unanimously approved as presented. Chair Ramer lastly wished Ms. Sembler a happy birthday.

President's Report to the Board

Ms. Harrison thanked Chairman Ramer, Vice Chair Cahill, and the Board for their leadership, support and counsel, informing CPB's decisions during this unprecedented time for our country.

Ms. Harrison reported that people are turning to public media more than ever for trusted news, information, and educational content. CPB, PBS, NPR, APTS, and public media radio and television general managers and staff, are working every day to meet the constantly changing information, education, health and safety needs of America's communities. Public media had a strong foundation in place on which to build. CPB, with the leadership of the CPB Board, put the foundation in place by emphasizing innovation and the utilization of technology to provide all Americans with public media content and services, free of charge, on all platforms; supporting journalism collaboratives; educational content and services; supporting work to increase the digital footprint of stations, connecting new and diverse audiences to fact-based, accurate information; and diversity, especially important at a time when minority communities are suffering disproportionately from the pandemic.

Ms. Harrison reported that within the last hour the Treasury Department transmitted \$75 million in stabilization funds to CPB. These funds were provided for public media as part of the CARES Act. Working with the Board and public media leaders, CPB has a distribution plan in place that will greatly assist public media stations, especially small and rural stations. As a result, the funds will be disbursed immediately. Ms. Harrison thanked the CPB team, led by Mr. Levy with Ms. Merritt, Messrs. Krichels, Tayman and Smithers, and the Advisory Group of public radio and television representatives.

Ms. Harrison reported that in early March, CPB began communicating CDC advisories to staff, implementing safety measures throughout CPB, as well as assessing requirements for telework. CPB's IT team quickly equipped staff, strengthened cybersecurity safeguards, and led training sessions on virtual meeting software. Company-wide telework went into effect on March 16. As a result of this preparation, CPB administrative functions continued without interruption. CPB staff has continued to work remotely since that time. Ms. Harrison thanked CFO Bill Tayman and IT Vice President Stephen Wolfe for their work to make the transition to telework possible.

Ms. Harrison reported on CPB's work to address the economic impact of the pandemic on public media stations. The second portion of CSG payments were issued as quickly as possible. During the first four weeks of CPB telework, 98.8 percent of Television and 94.9 percent of Radio CSG payments were made.

Ms. Harrison reviewed how CPB worked with public media leaders to develop an emergency stabilization funding request for public media through the CARES Act, which was subsequently approved by the CPB Board, resulting in \$75 million of vital funding assistance for public media, especially at this time when stations are experiencing severe reductions in underwriting, donor and state support.

Ms. Harrison reviewed additional measures CPB has taken to communicate during this period of crisis and remote work, including restructured internal meetings and communications and enhanced external meetings with public media leadership and communication with the public media system.

Ms. Harrison reported that CPB has been gathering examples of how stations are serving their communities during this crisis, sharing these through regular communications to the Board, the public media system, members of Congress, and the Public Broadcasting Caucus.

Ms. Harrison provided several examples of public media's work to address COVID-19. For example, KUAC-TV in Fairbanks, Alaska, a state where internet access is patchy, the station is working with the Fairbanks School District; offering five hours per day of at-home learning for sixth through twelfth graders on the World Channel; eleven hours of PBS Kids content on their primary channel for kindergartners through fifth grade; and created a homeschool resource website. In conjunction with the school district, KUAC-TV invited teachers to attend "History Night with Ken Burns," a live conversation on April 29, to be hosted by Ken Burns, for teachers and parents on how to support students and inspire their interest for U.S. history during this transition to online teaching.

Ms. Harrison reported that on a national level, Ken Burns and PBS have made his films available for free, streaming on all station-branded PBS platforms. PBS Newshour's coverage on the coronavirus, made possible with additional CPB funding, extended to primetime on March 19 with "Confronting Coronavirus: A PBS Newshour Special," anchored by Managing Editor Judy Woodruff. PBS Newshour is livestreaming all White House briefings as well as many briefings from governors on COVID-19. NewsHour Weekend is broadcasting without the use of a control room. As schools close and learning is disrupted, public media stations are using their broadcast capacity to reach students at home, offering content structured for specific grade levels and paired with online toolkits, featuring resources for families and educators.

On the radio side, David Isay launched Storycorps Connect to enable young people to connect with the elderly, many of whom are in nursing homes and isolated. NPR developed a

suite of coronavirus news services and NPR's international team covered the spread of the virus overseas early on. The journalism collaborations launched with CPB funding are supporting, enhancing, and amplifying local-regional COVID-19 reporting. The CPB-supported Native Public Media and Native Voice 1 are offering their programs free for three months to any stations struggling to fill broadcast hours while keeping their staffs safe.

Ms. Harrison noted that executive session materials include an update on the adjustments that CPB has been making to the business plan to support the production of this vital news and content as well as a briefing on public television interconnection.

Ms. Harrison reported that people are turning to public media for these valuable services and content in record numbers and noted significant increases in audience numbers on all platforms for PBS, NPR, and public media stations. PBS primetime ratings are up significantly as is streaming, children's programming and games. PBS NewsHour viewership is up 34 percent compared to the same time last year. Washington Week viewership has also increased. NPR.org had its highest month of traffic with over 95 million users and both NPR and member stations have seen more than twice the traffic to their websites compared to the same time last year.

Ms. Harrison stated that these achievements are even more remarkable given the funding reductions impacting public media organizations and their own transition to remote working. The nation is realizing that returning to life as it was will not happen soon. Public media is proud to be in place to serve the nation during this time of need. Ms. Harrison concluded her report.

Ms. Calvert suggested that the Board be copied on CPB communications to the public media system. Chair Ramer suggested that the CPB be selective and only relay communications of general interest to the Board. Ms. Calvert agreed and commended CPB for coordinating the weekly meetings with other leaders in the public media system. Ms. Calvert also suggested that as a future follow-up item, CPB examine what public media has learned during this crisis, noting that in Wyoming, public media is learning more about how Native communities are being affected by COVID-19.

Chair Ramer thanked Ms. Harrison for her report.

Legislative Update

Ms. Brachman reported that by the end of March, CPB had met with all House and Senate Appropriations Committee members' offices and professional staff to discuss the budget request and respond to questions. While conversations with members and staff are extremely important, it is also critical that committee leadership receive strong bipartisan support for CPB's request. APTS, PBS and NPR worked closely with Public Broadcasting Caucus Co-Chairs, Congressmen Amodei (R-NV), Blumenauer (D-OR), Upton (R-MI), and Yarmuth (D-KY), as well as with Senators Gillibrand (D-NY) and Sullivan (R-AK) in the Senate for Member signatures on a letter to Appropriations Committee leadership in support of CPB's funding request. This year there were 181 signatures on the House Labor-H letter, and 55 signatures on the House Homeland Security letter. In the Senate, there were 46 signatures on the Labor-H letter. Overall, there are fewer signatures this year compared to last year, due to the fact that the letters had to be closed out early because of the pandemic.

In March, CPB also submitted testimony to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees on how a \$515 million appropriation would be stewarded in support of our nation's public media system. The testimony focused on early learning, including Ready To Learn; the

American Graduate: Getting to Work initiative; public safety; journalism; veterans; and the early work of local stations responding to the coronavirus.

Congressman Blumenauer joined the meeting at 1:54 pm Eastern Time.

Remarks from Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), Public Broadcasting Caucus Co-Chair

Chair Ramer introduced Congressman Earl Blumenauer and noted that on the Board's agenda is a resolution of appreciation for the Public Broadcasting Caucus for its work on behalf of public media.

Congressman Blumenauer reported on the lasting positive impression public media's work has made on its congressional champions, and the importance of public broadcasting in a time of crisis. He noted that public media's role in providing news and education to people nationwide, who are quarantined at home, is more vital now than ever before. Public media is doing this work with limited resources, and the \$75 million to the public media system will help with this important mission.

Congressman Blumenauer reported that he and the Public Broadcasting Caucus will continue to bring awareness of public media's work to individual members of Congress, and is looking forward to strategizing with CPB and the national organizations in the future. He expressed gratitude for his co-chair, Congressman Upton, and thanked Ms. Harrison and the Board for the opportunity to share his remarks. Chair Ramer thanked Congressman Blumenauer for taking the time to address the Board.

Legislative Update Continued

Ms. Brachman thanked Congressman Blumenauer's staff and reported that while not in the office, Appropriations Committee staff are working around the clock. In addition to fielding all of the emergency funding requests that are being sought for the next supplemental, they are also beginning to put together FY 2021 appropriation bills so that they are prepared once Congress returns its attention to this year's funding cycle. CPB remains in regular contact with each of them to ensure that they are fully aware of public media's content and services during these times, and that they also understand the financial needs of the public media system.

Ms. Brachman reported on CPB's recent government affairs activities. On March 12, Congressman Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) and Congressman Meuser (R-PA) introduced the "Partnership for American Jobs Act," which was inspired by CPB's American Graduate: Getting to Work initiative. Together, the Congressmen will be seeking bipartisan support as they pursue consideration by the House Education and Labor Committee. This is a long-term effort, and the Board will be kept apprised as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, Ms. Brachman and her team have been working closely with the CPB communications team, APTS, PBS and NPR to collect station stories of service to share with Congress. These communications have been well received and many Hill staffers – Republican and Democrat – thanked CPB for the information and requested follow-up meetings, more information, and offered to amplify local public media stations' work on their Member's social media platforms. Senator Lamar Alexander from Tennessee, for example, tweeted that Tennessee public media stations would receive over \$2 million from the CARES Act through CPB.

Resolution of Appreciation for the Public Broadcasting Caucus

Chair Ramer called for a motion to approve the resolution in the materials. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the resolution was unanimously approved as presented. Chair Ramer requested that CPB provide the resolution to the Public Broadcasting Caucus.

Future Agenda Items

Chair Ramer requested that suggestions for future agenda items be relayed to him, Vice Chair Cahill and Ms. Safon.

Chair Ramer called for a break at 2:12 pm Eastern Time.

The meeting resumed in executive session at 2:54 pm Eastern Time.

*[The minutes for these discussions are contained in
the executive session record of April 27, 2020.]*