

MINUTES
TELEPHONIC PUBLIC SESSION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING
WASHINGTON, D.C.
April 28, 2021

Call to Order

Chair Ramer called to order the public session of the Board of Directors at 2:01 pm Eastern Time. The following directors participated virtually:

Bruce M. Ramer, Chair;
Laura G. Ross, Vice Chair;
Ruby Calvert;
Miriam Hellreich; and
Robert Mandell.

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;
Kathy Merritt, Senior Vice President, Radio, Journalism and CSG Services;
Deb Sanchez, Senior Vice President, Education and Children's Content Operations;
Kathryn Washington, Senior Vice President, Television Content;
Stephen Wolfe, Chief Technology Officer, Senior Vice President, Information Technology;
Kimberly Howell, Inspector General;
Kate Arno, Vice President, CSG and Station Initiatives;
Deborah Carr, Vice President, Operations and Strategy;
Brendan Daly, Vice President, Communications;
Michael Fragale, Vice President and General Manager, Education Strategy and Content;
Beth Jacobs, Vice President, Digital Strategy and Innovation;
Joy Lin, Vice President, Journalism;
Nick Stromann, Vice President and Controller;
Beth Walsh, Vice President, System Strategies;
Jacquie Gales Webb, Vice President, Radio; and
Camille Morgan, Operations Coordinator.

The following guests were also in attendance:

Raney Aronson-Rath, Executive Producer, PBS' FRONTLINE;
Susi Elkins, Director of Broadcasting and General Manager, WKAR Public Media;
Meg Miller, Founding Partner, Gray Miller Persh LLP;
Neal Shapiro, President and CEO, The WNET Group; and
Dennis Wallace, Managing Partner, Meintel, Sgrignoli and Wallace.

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 9 and 10. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the agenda was adopted unanimously 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 March 2, 2021. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were approved unanimously as presented.

Chair and Directors' Remarks

Chair Ramer thanked Congress and the Administration for the \$175 million of funding provided to public media through the American Rescue Plan Act, signed into law on March 11, 2021. Chair Ramer thanked the CPB Board, staff and the advisory group of public media representatives for their contributions to the development, approval and implementation of the distribution plan to stations.

Chair Ramer introduced two video testimonials from Representative Tom Cole (R-OK) and Representatives Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) and Dan Meuser (R-PA). Representative Cole reported on the bipartisan legislation, "Education for Democracy Now" focused on the importance of civic education and constitutional governance. Representatives Krishnamoorthi and Meuser introduced the Partnership for American Jobs Act, legislation inspired by CPB's American Graduate initiative, focused on preparing Americans for jobs and strengthening the economy. If passed, the Partnership for American Jobs Act would establish a grant program at the U.S. Department of Education for CPB to award grants to public media stations to develop radio and television content for workforce opportunities with state and local partners.

Vice Chair Ross asked about the funding structure of the Partnership for American Jobs Act. Ms. Brachman reported that the legislation authorizes appropriators to determine the amount. The bill will be reintroduced after further endorsement with bipartisan support. Ms. Calvert reported on a discussion with Representative Krishnamoorthi about the need to engage middle school students. Mr. Mandell thanked Ms. Harrison and the government affairs team for their work.

Chair Ramer noted for the public record that two resolutions were adopted by unanimous written consent earlier in the year: 1) an amended 2021 board meeting schedule; and 2) the authorization for the distribution plan for the stabilization funds received under the American Rescue Plan Act 2021 from Congress. The resolutions are posted on CPB's website.

President's Report

Ms. Harrison thanked Representatives Tom Cole (R-OK), Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) and Dan Meuser (R-PA) for their testimonials to CPB as well as the Administration and Congress for their recognition and support of public media's work and emergency funding. Ms. Harrison thanked the CPB Board, management, and the public media advisory panelists for their collaboration in the development of an automated station grant certification and payment

process for the distribution of funds received under the American Rescue Plan Act 2021, guided by the language of the Act and intent of Congress.

Ms. Harrison reported on CPB's appropriation and budget request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Congress, including an infrastructure package request to OMB and Congress. OMB is expected to release its full FY 2022 budget in the second half of May 2021. The Administration is not proposing any rescission of CPB's FY 2022 funding.

Ms. Harrison reported on meetings with Representatives Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), Tom Cole (R-OK), Ashley Hinson (R-IA) and Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ) and their support of public media and CPB's work in journalism, education and public safety.

Ms. Harrison reported on the launch of the CPB-funded Public Media Workforce Collaborative, comprised of four public media stations in Michigan, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania that serve over 13 million listeners and viewers. CPB is supporting the Workforce Collaborative's goal to find ways to attract, develop and retain a diverse and highly skilled workforce through a two-year grant to build recruitment, professional development, and workplace culture programs to strengthen diversity and enhance collaboration and resource sharing among the stations. The Workforce Collaborative will produce a playbook of best practices that will be shared with the system.

Ms. Harrison reported that the next phase of American Graduate will address the pandemic's impact on education and career opportunities for young people. Ms. Harrison reported on CPB support for public media journalism's news coverage over the last year and the digital audience growth for PBS NewsHour and FRONTLINE. World Channel secured the rights to re-broadcast *Eyes on the Prize*, the iconic 1987 14-part history series on *Race in America*, on April 4 the anniversary of MLK Jr.'s death.

Ms. Harrison noted the toll of the pandemic in Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities, and reported that CPB awarded more than \$300,000 to Native Public Media and Historically Black College and University (HBCU) public radio station KTSU to coordinate public outreach campaigns about COVID-19 among 51 public radio stations in native and Black communities to provide information about vaccines to vulnerable, underserved communities.

Ms. Harrison reported on CPB support for content and engaging focused on Asian American issues and history. On March 27, the Center for Asian American Media's (CAAM) Executive Director Stephen Gong moderated a panel organized by GBH American Experience on "The Roots of Anti-Asian Hate." PBS, in association with CAAM, curated content on pbs.org about the extraordinary contributions of Asian Americans including *The Asian Americans*, *The Chinese Exclusion Act* and *The Story of China*. More than 30 lesson plans based on *The Asian Americans* series are available to assist teachers in exploring ways that Asian Americans have shaped our nation's history.

Ms. Harrison reported that CPB's general session at the virtual 2021 PBS Annual Meeting will take place on May 17 and feature a panel discussion on public media's role in a diverse civil society with presidential historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jon Meacham and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author Isabel Wilkerson.

Chair Ramer and Vice Chair Ross thanked Ms. Harrison for her report. Ms. Calvert thanked the Chair, Vice Chair and CPB leadership for their guidance and the efficiency of the distribution model. Ms. Calvert asked about the Edison Research on the State Capitol News

Surveys for local journalism. Ms. Merritt reported that CPB is working with Edison Research to survey 150 public radio and television stations in state capitols to assess the extent public media is covering state government news. Results from the survey are expected mid-summer 2021. Ms. Calvert requested the Ready To Learn research and case studies conducted to improve community partnerships.

Legislative Update

Ms. Brachman reported on the annual appropriation process, CPB's infrastructure funding request to OMB and Congress, and the Administration's FY 2022 budget. APTS, PBS and NPR are working with the co-chairs of the Public Broadcasting Caucus in the House to draft a letter to appropriators in support of CPB's funding requests. Senator Gillibrand is expected to lead the Senate letter once the Senate starts its appropriations process. CPB is drafting testimony to House and Senate appropriations committees on how the appropriation would be stewarded in support of our nation's public media system. CPB's testimony will focus on Ready To Learn, American Graduate, local journalism, public safety and public media's work during the pandemic to maintain programming and services.

Ms. Brachman reported on CPB's Infrastructure Request. Over the past five years, the CPB Board has taken action to determine the infrastructure needs of the system and submit a funding request to Congress through the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittees. CPB worked with NPR, PBS and APTS to develop this request and emailed more than 50 public television and radio station, representing every type of licensee, for information about their infrastructure needs. CPB conducted a System Technology Assessment in 2017 that catalogued more than 60,000 pieces of equipment throughout the system that needed to be either updated or replaced. The Assessment projected the system's financial capacity to address equipment repair and replacement needs would reach a cumulative shortfall of more than \$300 million by 2020. The Assessment found that 86% of television stations and 75% of radio stations tend to postpone replacing technology when faced with a lack of funds. As the public media system postpones equipment replacement beyond end-of-life, it accrues technological risk that affects the educational, informational and public safety services to their communities.

Ms. Brachman reported that this standalone infrastructure funding request to Congress is critical to maintaining and modernizing the physical infrastructure of the public media system. CPB's request proposes that NTIA at the Department of Commerce manage the \$300 million grant program. Ms. Brachman reported that Congress is discussing and drafting different infrastructure proposals and, with the Board's approval, CPB will submit its request to Congress and OMB on April 28, 2021.

Discussion ensued about NTIA's history managing the discontinued Public Telecommunications Facilities Program. Ms. Calvert noted that stations do not have a deferred maintenance fund to repair or replace that equipment. Mr. Mandell asked whether the infrastructure funding request is premature when the transition to NextGen TV may require different equipment for stations. Ms. Brachman reported that Congress has made clear in conversations over the years that NextGen TV is a market-driven transition and that any infrastructure funds provided are not intended to address that transition specifically but rather to help stations replace and update their current technology and infrastructure.

Resolution re CPB's Infrastructure Funding Request

Chair Ramer called for a motion to approve the resolution to submit CPB's infrastructure budget request of \$300 million to OMB and Congress. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the resolution was adopted unanimously.

Update on American Graduate

Ms. Sanchez thanked Ms. Harrison and the CPB Board for their leadership and support. Ms. Sanchez reported that American Graduate was launched in 2011 to address the high number of students who were not completing high school. In partnership with The WNET Group, CPB has worked with national partners, such as America's Promise Alliance and Johns Hopkins University, local stations and hundreds of community-based organizations and schools to understand the contributing factors preventing high school students from achieving this milestone. American Graduate has been a trusted platform to share stories about young people struggling with issues beyond normal challenges and has inspired community members and leaders to serve as mentors. As graduation rates began to rise, American Graduate was on the forefront of new challenges of post-high school education and work experiences, such as how to prepare students for high-demand skilled careers that were often unfilled in local communities. Ms. Sanchez reported that partnerships with businesses and schools strengthened American Graduate's continued commitment to this work.

Ms. Sanchez reported on the challenges and opportunities resulting from the pandemic, such as the impact of school closures, lost instructional time, disruptions to learning and a different and uncertain job market. Ms. Sanchez shared a video of experts' perspective about these education and job market changes. As the job and education market continue to shift, the potential for American Graduate will continue to evolve as work continues with youth who need to see a path in a post COVID-19 economy. CPB has partnered with the Joan Ganz Cooney Center (JGCC) to study public media's role in young people's media environment, including the dominance of online video in students' lives and the way youth rely on how-to videos to support their education, creativity, socialization and the development of life skills.

Ms. Sanchez introduced Mr. Shapiro, president and CEO of The WNET Group. Mr. Shapiro's leadership established The WNET Group as a driving force of American Graduate and American Graduate Day, which showcased inspirational stories of student success with stations, national partners, and celebrities.

Mr. Shapiro reported on the 21st century model of virtual career fairs and using public media's unique skill as storytellers to reach expanded youth audiences through short and compelling presentations designed for youth. The virtual career fair experience will direct participants to career resources, such as internships and aptitude tests. The goal is to develop a plan for stations to develop and contribute content and build on past American Graduate successes. This work will be informed by experts in business, education and youth for a continuously evolving initiative and research conducted by Hart Research. Mr. Shapiro reported that *American Graduate: Path to the Future* will launch on June 8, 2021, with discussions between CPB leadership and panels featuring business leaders, educators, guidance counselors and youth, followed by companion discussions hosted by partner stations.

Chair Ramer noted the success of *American Graduate* and how it inspired the Partnership for American Jobs Act and thanked Mr. Shapiro and Ms. Sanchez for their update.

*Chair Ramer convened a break at 3:31 pm Eastern Time.
Public session resumed at 3:45 pm Eastern Time.*

Update on FRONTLINE

Chair Ramer introduced Ms. Merritt and Ms. Raney Aronson-Rath, executive producer of PBS' FRONTLINE. Ms. Merritt reported on CPB's ongoing support for FRONTLINE and Ms. Aronson-Rath's leadership and work to expand FRONTLINE's audience.

Ms. Aronson-Rath reported on the events of the past year, illustrated through a video "A Year in Review" as well as FRONTLINE's adaptation to remote work during the pandemic. Ms. Aronson-Rath noted the importance of CPB's support for FRONTLINE's global news coverage of the COVID-19 crisis.

Ms. Aronson-Rath reported on the shift in audience demographics, audience preferences for accessing information and media content through streaming services, and the importance of reaching audiences who are not watching. Ms. Aronson-Rath reported on FRONTLINE's mission to identify concrete ways to diversify staff, producers and perspectives in journalism, both in front of and behind the camera, and across platforms.

Ms. Aronson-Rath reported on FRONTLINE's broadcast pipeline and partnerships to create interactive, immersive content, such as *Un(re)solved*. Vice Chair Ross asked about the interactive technology used in the Holocaust Museum. Ms. Aronson-Rath reported that *Un(re)solved*'s immersive experience was informed by such technology and noted the integration of voice activation to access information. *Un(re)solved*'s Tamara Shogaolu, artist, filmmaker, and technologist, was inspired by other augmented experiences as well.

Ms. Aronson-Rath reported that CPB's leadership and partnership has provided valued guidance. Chair Ramer thanked Ms. Aronson-Rath for her update and work leading FRONTLINE.

Ms. Aronson-Rath exited the meeting at 4:26 pm Eastern Time.

Update on Transition to NextGen TV

Chair Ramer introduced Michael Levy, Dennis Wallace, managing partner of Meintel, Sgrignoli and Wallace, Susi Elkins, director of broadcasting and general manager of WKAR Public Media and Meg Miller, founding partner of Gray Miller Persh, LLP.

Mr. Levy reported on the transition to NextGen TV, also known as ATSC 3.0. The timeline for the NextGen TV transition, despite delays due to the pandemic, is moving forward with attention to opportunities, challenges and uncertainties for public media stations.

Mr. Wallace reported on NextGen TV as a new television transmission standard and first major upgrade to television broadcasting since the digital transition in 2009. NextGen TV is an Internet Protocol (IP) system that will improve the television viewing experience with higher audio and video quality with Ultra HD (4K) resolution, mobile reception, accessibility, personalization, interactivity and spectrum efficiency.

Mr. Wallace reported on the deployment timeline for NextGen TV, noting there is no federal mandate to transition, but by the end of 2021, approximately 62% of households will be transitioned to NextGen TV. Major players in the transition process are Pearl, BitPath, the Public Media Venture Group (PMVG) and Signal Infrastructure Group (SIG). Pearl is comprised of eight major broadcast companies working to launch the NextGen TV service with more than 300

local broadcast TV stations. BitPath is a consortium founded by Sinclair and Nexstar with 343 TV stations reaching 60% of U.S. and focused on data and mobile use cases. PMVG is a partnership of 30 public television stations working on technology and business models for NextGen TV, and SIG is focused on Single Frequency Network (SFN) deployments.

Ms. Calvert asked about the adaptation of transmitters and the ability to upgrade software. Mr. Wallace reported that almost all transmitters on the market are eligible to upgrade their software to be compatible with NextGen TV. Ms. Hellreich asked about the Hawaiian Islands and transmitter transitions to NextGen TV. Mr. Wallace reported that Honolulu is expected to transition in 2022.

Ms. Elkins reported on WKAR public media's station experience in the transition to NextGen TV and its early repack to expand broadcast. WKAR was granted an experimental license by the FCC in Spring 2018. WKAR created a NextGen Media Innovation Lab at Michigan State University for public service application in three areas: education, fundraising and public safety. The Media Innovation Lab launched in Fall 2019. Ms. Elkins reported on Curious Crew, a local children's program, used as a baseline to create a new NextGen TV environment to explore the convergence between broadcast and broadband. Ms. Elkins reported on the interactivity programmed into the broadcast using the IP infrastructure and artificial intelligence with emotion detection through face recognition.

Ms. Calvert asked if WKAR is channel-sharing with a commercial broadcaster. Ms. Elkins reported that WKAR is not channel-sharing and is focused on ATSC 3.0's public service use cases for stations, such as elections and debate coverage, until the East Lansing market transition happens. Ms. Calvert reported on the use for public safety applications and asked whether first responders are using this technology. Ms. Elkins reported there are station partnerships with public safety officials in their state. Ms. Hellreich discussed how the emotion detection can address mental health in students.

Ms. Miller reported on the value of NextGen TV for public media, public service opportunities and the importance of "future proofing" for NextGen TV, to anticipate events and minimize stress on public television stations. The challenges of NextGen TV include complex FCC regulations with technical and legal qualifications and simulcast requirements, costs, return on investment, impact on both sides of the digital divide, and the need for modifications to existing technology. Ms. Miller stated with certainty that the transition to ATSC 3.0 will happen, but the timing is uncertain. She stressed the importance of patience and planning.

Mr. Mandell asked if there is alignment between commercial entities and public media. Ms. Miller reported that there is a divide between public media and commercial entities. Cable companies are not required to carry ATSC 3.0 transmissions, but this transition is an opportunity to work with Multichannel Video Programming Distributors (MPVD). Chair Ramer asked about the benefit of NextGen TV and the difference between ATSC 3.0 versus ATSC 1.0. Mr. Wallace reported that the tangible value to consumers is that it will provide better video and audio quality and more access to content. Ms. Miller reported on the importance of protecting consumers using this new technology. Discussion ensued regarding privacy issues.

Mr. Levy thanked Mr. Wallace, Ms. Elkins, Ms. Miller and Ms. Walsh, for their insight and expertise.

Future Agenda Items

Chair Ramer invited members of the Board to send suggestions for future agenda items to him, Vice Chair Ross and Ms. Safon.

Executive Session

At 5:56 pm Eastern Time, Chair Ramer closed the meeting for executive session.

[The minutes for these discussions are contained in the executive session record of April 28, 2021.]

The meeting adjourned in executive session.