

**MINUTES**  
**PUBLIC SESSION**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING**  
**WASHINGTON, D.C.**  
**Tuesday, April 5 – Wednesday, April 6, 2022**

**Call to Order**

Chair Ramer called to order the public session of the Board of Directors at 4:03 pm Eastern Time on Tuesday, April 5, 2022. The following directors participated virtually:

Bruce M. Ramer, Chair;  
Laura G. Ross, Vice Chair;  
Ruby Calvert;  
Miriam Hellreich;  
Robert Mandell;  
Tom Rothman; 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;  
Anne Brachman, Senior Vice President, Government Affairs;  
Stacey Decker, Senior Vice President, Innovation and System Strategies;  
Kathy Merritt, Senior Vice President, Radio, Journalism and CSG Services;  
Deb Sanchez, Senior Vice President, Educational Media and Learning Experiences;  
Kathryn Washington, Senior Vice President, Television Content;  
Stephen Wilkins, Senior Vice President, Human Resources and DEI;  
Stephen Wolfe, Chief Technology Officer, Senior Vice President, Information Technology;  
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  
Sarah Kildall, Board Affairs, Manager.

### **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 7 through 9. 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 interest 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 the February 15, 2022, meeting. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were approved as presented. (*6 in favor, 1 abstention*)

### **Chair and Directors' Remarks**

Chair Ramer reported that Congress released its Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, to fund the federal government through September 30, 2022. CPB received a \$50 million increase to its base appropriation, which will be allocated on October 1, 2023, additional funding for Ready To Learn, and special funding for public safety through FEMA at the Department of Homeland Security. Chair Ramer commended CPB staff's work to advance public media's mission. There were no additional remarks from board members.

### **President's Report**

Ms. Harrison reported on CPB funding to public media to cover Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In February, CPB provided an initial \$500,000 emergency grant to NPR to support an increase in the numbers and security of NPR news staff rotating in and out of Ukraine and the region. On a local level, public media stations are reporting on the crisis in Ukraine in ways that are responsive to the interests of their communities, many of which have Ukrainian immigrant populations.

Ms. Harrison reported that in March she was named to the Arts & Culture Council of America250, which was established by Congress through the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission to inspire Americans to participate in the upcoming 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States in 2026. Ms. Harrison reported that CPB is collaborating with the civic education initiative called "More Perfect," which in conjunction with America250 will identify ways to tell America's evolving story.

Ms. Harrison reported on recent projects and investments. *Benjamin Franklin*, a two-part documentary directed and produced by Ken Burns, aired on PBS on April 4 and 5, 2022. Virtual discussions, "Conversations on Franklin," were held before the premiere. CPB provided a two-year, \$750,000 grant to public radio station WAMU for *1A Remaking America*, a partnership between 1A and six stations. This program builds on the success of the CPB-funded *1A Across America* election project, which elevated local journalism through community engagement, and live broadcasts for a national audience. CPB also renewed support for StoryCorps' *One Small Step Communities*, through which StoryCorps is partnering with stations in Michigan, Tennessee, Colorado, Georgia, North Carolina, and Minnesota in its work to include more rural communities.

Ms. Harrison reported on CPB-supported education work including content that reaches and connects the “missing middle” age group of teens and tweens. Last month, the Cooney Center and CPB announced that 12 stations, both television and radio, will receive \$15,000 grants through the *By/With/For Youth: Inspiring Next Gen Public Media Audiences* initiative to support local production and engagement. These stations will produce short-form videos, podcasts, public affairs radio and television content, and animated educational videos.

Ms. Harrison reported on CPB support for diverse content and projects. A new CPB grant will support the expansion of *Code Switch*, NPR’s popular podcast on race and identity, including the *Code Switch* radio program as well as live and virtual events. Other public media content attracting diverse audiences include *La Frontera with Pati Jinich* and *The American Diplomat*. Black History Month content and engagement included the work of KTSU, licensed to HBCU Southern Texas University, featuring local African American history makers through on-air vignettes, social media posts, and on the station website. CPB also awarded funding to PBS Digital Studios to support Regional Digital Centers of Innovation, which will strengthen the digital production work of local stations that are serving diverse communities.

Ms. Harrison thanked the Board for their leadership and counsel and concluded her report.

### **Journalism Update: Ukraine Coverage**

Chair Ramer welcomed the guest speakers to the meeting: John Lansing, President and CEO of NPR; Edith Chapin, Vice President and Executive Editor of NPR News; Mary Louise Kelly, co-host of *All Things Considered*; and Raney Aronson-Rath, executive producer of *FRONTLINE*.

Mr. Lansing thanked CPB and the Board for their support as NPR increased news coverage in Ukraine. He spoke about the rise in authoritarianism and assaults on journalistic truth-telling around the world, noting that the war in Ukraine is the most significant news story in terms of the global order since World War II. NPR stations in the United States have been able to collectively help bring these important stories to the American people from all angles. With CPB support, NPR’s content can remain free over the radio, online and through podcasts, and enabling NPR to reach 99% of the news audience in the United States.

Ms. Chapin reported on the timeline of NPR’s coverage of the Russian attack on Ukraine and the importance of keeping reporters safe overseas. NPR’s onsite reporters and staff photographers have been reporting vital news stories and photographs in real time, focusing distribution on five platforms: audio; text and photographs on the website; Twitter; TikTok; and Instagram. Ms. Chapin reported on safety protocols for reporters in a war/conflict zone and the role of technology in enhancing communications and security.

Ms. Kelly spoke about the importance of reporting on location and reported on her experience leading the first NPR team into Kiev in January. The opportunity to speak directly with the foreign minister in Ukraine, paired with reporting and interviews from Washington, D.C., gave the NPR audience the full story and helped drive the national and international conversation surrounding these events. This conflict has created the biggest refugee crisis since World War II. It is vital to cover it as well as illuminate how it is affecting the world order and reshaping energy markets. Ms. Kelly thanked CPB on behalf of the NPR newsroom and journalists, for supporting coverage of this crisis.

Ms. Aronson-Rath thanked CPB for its long-standing support for FRONTLINE and thought partnership around editorial standards and security for reporters covering war stories. She reported on the FRONTLINE documentary team's logistical work and publishing strategies for covering the conflict in Ukraine. Their in-depth work made possible the long-form documentary *Putin's Road*, published online on March 15 and broadcasted on PBS primetime; the upcoming long-form documentary called *Putin's War Crimes*. FRONTLINE is also working with the Associated Press on an interactive war crimes tracker that has been updated with 103 verified potential war crimes in Ukraine.

*Chair Ramer exited the meeting at 5:13 pm Eastern Time.  
Vice Chair Ross served as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.*

Ms. Calvert asked about FRONTLINE's work with other Western press organizations and how Russian commentary on these events is included. Ms. Aronson-Rath reported on their work with the BBC and CBC. FRONTLINE has investigative journalists inside Russia, and there are journalists outside of Russia who are speaking to the current events. The security situation is volatile and constantly monitored.

Mr. Rothman asked about whether public media journalism and reporting can be brought to Russians through the digital space or if the crackdown on the press has made it impossible. Ms. Aronson-Rath reported that FRONTLINE's YouTube channel, which includes two documentaries and FRONTLINE's transparency work, is available in Russia and may be reaching people there. Ms. Kelly reported on other social media applications in Russia that allow people to post and view content.

Ms. Hellreich asked about the safety of reporters covering the conflict and refugee centers. Ms. Chapin reported on the in-depth logistics and planning around reporter security, and that NPR has three security advisors, one of which has been living in Ukraine and worked with a reporting team in 2014.

Vice Chair Ross asked Ms. Aronson-Rath whether FRONTLINE has considered highlighting the theme of democracy versus authoritarianism. Mrs. Aronson-Rath reported that FRONTLINE's fall slate of programs is going to focus on democracy and is being produced through several collaborations. Ms. Kelly reported that NPR also plans to cover the theme.

Vice Chair Ross thanked the presenters for their reports.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned for the day at 5:29 pm Eastern Time.

### **Public Session**

Public session resumed at 2:00 pm Eastern Time on Wednesday, April 6, 2022.

### **Television Content Update: *The American Diplomat***

Chair Ramer welcomed the CPB Board, staff and guest speakers, Leola Calzolari Stewart, co-producer and director of *The American Diplomat* and Cameo George, executive producer of "American Experience".

Ms. Washington, CPB Senior Vice President of Television and Content, reported on how the framework of the Board's three Ds – Diversity, Dialogue and Digital – guides CPB's content investments. *The American Diplomat* exemplifies this framework – it is diverse in its subject matter

and production team, is defined by the meaningful dialogue it has inspired nationally and internationally and can be streamed anytime and anywhere on PBS.org in perpetuity.

Ms. Washington introduced filmmaker Leola Calzolari-Stewart. Ms. Calzolari-Stewart thanked CPB and the Board for their support. She reported that the film was inspired by the convergence of her own experience in the foreign service community; the rarity of Black foreign service families; and interest in the early work and stories of Black diplomats, which led her to read the book *Black Diplomacy*, by Dr. Michael Krenn. She wanted to tell these often-untold stories and open the world of diplomacy to young viewers of color

Ms. Calzolari-Stewart reported that the film's development began in 2015, and public media had a crucial role in its creation, especially Black Public Media, Firelight Media Documentary Lab, American Experience (co-producer) and CPB.

Ms. George thanked CPB for its continued support of American Experience, which is television's longest running and most watched history documentary series. With an archive of nearly 300 films, this library serves as a primary resource to other filmmakers, journalists, educators and students and a way to engage with American history. American Experience promotes civic discourse by highlighting the history of topics like the COVID-19 pandemic and anti-Asian attacks and rebroadcasting films that highlight racial, ethnic, gender and geographic diversity.

Ms. George stated that *The American Diplomat* showcases diverse voices and rich storytelling. She reported on related engagement events, both nationally and internationally, including screenings, panel discussions and participation in National History Day. This film is not only an important piece of content but is also an education tool for students across the country. By supporting new producers like Ms. Calzolari-Stewart, American Experience is helping audiences find new content and new perspectives.

Ms. Calvert asked if any foreign services training schools have been consulted. Ms. George reported that American Experience has been working with middle schools, high schools and a series of colleges. Screenings have taken place at embassies but also on college campuses. There has also been work with PBS LearningMedia to develop a curriculum that can be used in schools. Ms. Calzolari-Stewart spoke about the importance of the film as a teaching tool and for showing students the possibility of a career path in foreign service.

Amb. Mandell commended Ms. Calzolari-Stewart for her work on the film and noted that while recently educating future ambassadors, he has seen a shift in diversity that could probably be attributed to tools like this film that reach diverse young people. Mr. Rothman asked if *The American Diplomat* could qualify for an Oscar with a limited theatrical run or if American Experience had rules against it. Ms. George thanked Mr. Rothman and stated that once a film airs on television it becomes disqualified for an Oscar campaign. Discussion ensued about diverse public media films and Oscar eligibility.

Ms. Sembler asked about Ms. Calzolari-Stewart's experience at Firelight Media and having a mentor like Stanley Nelson. Ms. Calzolari-Stewart reported that Firelight Media was very supportive in preparing her for her directorial debut with this film and commended their work nurturing diverse talent and visions.

Chair Ramer thanked Mses. Calzolari-Stewart, George, and Washington for their presentations.

**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 2:49 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 5-6, 2022.]*

*The meeting adjourned in executive session.*