LETA EXEC AND FINANCE MEETING

♦December 9, 2021♦ 5:00 PM ♦

 LPB Board Room/Zoom♦7733 Perkins Road♦Baton Rouge, LA

**Members Present:** Valencia Burton, Julie Cherry, Conrad Comeaux, Sonny Cranch, Eartha Cross, Dr. Belinda Davis, Nancy Harrelson, Kathy Kliebert, Laura Lindsay, Chris Wegmann, and Tracie Woods.

**Members Absent:** Dan Hare, Richard Hartley, Dr. Tina Holland, Robert King, and David Tatman.

**Employees Present:** Beth Courtney, C.C Copeland, Kim Ducote, Linda Midgett, Marlesha Ross, and Kathy Scherer.

**Call to Order:** Conrad Comeaux, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:21 PM.

**Approve minutes:** Conrad Comeaux asked for minutes of 10-14-21 to be approved. Motion was made by Chris Wegmann and seconded by Laura Lindsay. Motion carried.

**Financial Report:** Chris Wegmann, Treasurer, presented the Financial Reports for LETA and FELPB. Valencia Burton, Chair, asked for a motion to approve the Financial Report. A motion was made by Tracie Woods and seconded by Kathy Kliebert. Motion carried.

**Friends Report:** C.C Copeland, Deputy Director, gave the Friends of LPB report that included financial highlights for the month.

**President’s Report:** Beth Courtney, President and CEO, gave kudos to the LPB staff for their good work over the past year. C.C Copeland reported on the status of state funding and infrastructure projects. Work on the roof will begin soon. The tower lights and painting project for KLTS Shreveport has been moved to January 2022. We completed the CPB annual report and filed it last week. On Monday, we received the notice to proceed from the state for the KLPB Transmitter. While we started the project in July 2021, the current supply chain issues mean we are now looking at a late April 2022 delivery. Since the project must be completed by June 30, we will meet with the company in charge of installation after Christmas to chart out what other work can be done prior to the delivery, as we will only have 2 months to complete the project and want to ensure the project is done correctly with no shortcuts. DIRECTV STREAM is adding PBS stations to its line-up the week of December 13. The tape archive arrived today and will be installed December 14-16. This project install was due in September but there have been supply chain delays for this, as well.

**Education Services** – C.C reported that so far, 29 children are signed up for our Christmas Play & Learn taking place December 20-22. The LDOE preliminary contract came for the Ready to Learn FCL workshops in the amount of $59,305.

**Production** – Linda Midgett reported that we recorded Christmas at the Mansion on Tuesday. This is our year-end Christmas special hosted by the Governor & First Lady. The guest performing artists were the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. The broadcast premiere date is Thursday, December 23at 7PM with an encore on Monday, December 27 at 9PM. LPB submitted a proposal to CPB for $400K for a second season of Ziggy’s Arts Adventure; we should have an answer by February. LPB has applied for a trademark for the series. The Board encouraged making sure the Ziggy creator, Clay Achee, has a copyright on the character and that LPB has a licensing agreement in place. Production wrapped on “Safe Haven,” LPB’s new digital-first series on the Green Book. The series includes 8 episodes, which are all on LPB’s YouTube channel. LPB hosted a well-attended screening at the Capitol Park Museum with reporter, Kara St. Cyr, and producer, Emma Reid. The series was such a success that the head of ExxonMobil’s national foundation called ExxonMobil Baton Rouge resulting in an additional $10k for two more episodes and a special that will air in February for Black History Month. We have commitments from Ochsner, LWCC, Benson Family Foundation and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana for a total of a half million dollars to produce Jay Dardenne’s “Why Louisiana Ain’t Mississippi…Or Any Place Else.” We will begin production in January for this 4-part special, which will be the biggest production LPB has done in quite a while. It’s going to be a positive celebration of Louisiana heritage and history. LPB is producing a program on Beth and her contributions to the state through her leadership of LPB that will air the day she retires on Monday, January 31. Louisiana Public Square is being rebranded as Louisiana Spotlight. The first episode will also air on January 31. The series will now be quarterly verses monthly. Linda showed the trailer for January topic – the fight for federal recognition and cultural preservation of the Pointe-au-Chien tribe. This subject is being developed into an LPB documentary, as well.

**Other Business:** Valencia called for a motion for a new slate of LETA officers: Conrad Comeaux, Chair, Christopher Wegmann, Vice Chair, Dr. Tina Holland, Secretary, and Julie Cherry, Treasurer. A motion was made by Laura Lindsay to adopt the slate and seconded by Belinda Davis. The motion carried.

The Board members expressed their gratitude and thanks to Valencia for her two years of service as Board Chair.

Conrad reported that the Search Committee interviewed two firms today and has one interview to go. These are firms that PBS recommended. Conrad made a motion that the Search Committee remain comprised of the seven-member 2021 Executive Committee: Valencia Burton, Conrad Comeaux, Chris Wegmann, Dr. Tina Holland, Kathy Kliebert, Julie Cherry, and Eartha Cross. Valencia seconded. The motion carried. Sonny Cranch stated that while we are doing a national search, qualified candidates within the organization should be given careful consideration, as well.

**Adjournment:** Valencia made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:06PM. Conrad seconded. Motion carried.

Minutes submitted by Marlesha Ross and Kathy Scherer.