LETA FULL BOARD MEETING ♦

August 10, 2023♦ 12:00 PM ♦ LPB Auditorium & Zoom

♦7733 Perkins Road♦ Baton Rouge, LA

**Members Present:** Ted Beasley, Conrad Comeaux, Sonny Cranch, Eartha Cross, Belinda Davis, Dan Hare, Dr. Tina Holland, Dr. Laura Lindsay, Dr. Saundra McGuire, Dr. Courtney Phillips, Jeffery Thomas, Christopher Wegmann, and Tracie Woods.

**Members via Teleconference:** Shauna Sanford and David Tatman

**Members Absent:** William Bradford, Newt Dorsett, and Sharon Reine

**Employees Present:** Clarence “C.C” Copeland, Terri Crockett, Kimberly Ducote, Karen LeBlanc, Linda Midgett, Kathy Scherer, and Matt Tessier.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Conrad Comeaux, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**  Conrad Comeaux, Chairman, asked for any public comment and there was none.

**BOARD MINUTES:** Dr. Tina Holland, Treasurer, asked for the approval of the full board meeting minutes from June 8, 2023, on behalf of Shauna Sanford, Secretary. A motion to approve was made by Belinda Davis and seconded by Dan Hare. With all in favor, the motion passed.

**Financial ReportS:** Dr. Tina Holland presented the Financial Reports for LETA and FELPB. Conrad Comeaux asked for a motion to approve the Financial Reports. A motion was made by Christopher Wegmann and was seconded by Belinda Davis. With all in favor, the motion passed.

**Friends of LPB Report:** Terri Crockett, Friends of LPB (FLPB) Executive Director, gave the FLPB report on behalf of Newt Dorsett, FLPB Chair:

**PowerOn Raffle**

• Grand prize is a whole house 22kW Generac Generator donated by Optimize Generator People valued at $13,000.

• Raffle dates: June 1 – October 1.

• Drawing will be held on Tuesday, October 3.

• Current revenue: $50,780.

**2024 Louisiana Legends Gala**

Thursday, April 25, 2024.

Invited Honorees:

* Governor John Bel Edwards & First Lady Donna Edwards
* The Honorable Bernette Joshua Johnson
* Dr. Sam Nader
* Wendell Pierce
* Todd Walker

The official announcement will take place at the Friends of LPB Annual Meeting on Thursday, September 21.

**June 2023 Financials**

Revenue

At the end of June, membership revenue for the month was $201,597.29. Overall revenue as

of June was $3,028,166.75.

Expenses

Expenditures for the month totaled $151,006.82.

**Items of Note:**

4th Quarter Transfer - $266,749.87.

Total support to the Foundation - $1,422,902.96.

**Save The Date:**

• Friends of LPB Annual Meeting/Grand Opening of the Lobby

Thursday, September 21

6 – 8:30PM

Business Attire

• LPB Board Holiday Party

Tuesday, December 5

6 – 9PM

Business Holiday Attire

**PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT Report:** Linda Midgett, LPB Executive Producer, reported on LPB production projects underway:

**Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame (LSHF)**

* The LSHF is located in Natchitoches.
* This is a new partnership. The goal is to step into the sports world in a way that works for LPB.
* The live induction ceremony was streamed on July 29th and the LPB crew was there for several days, and produced several stories in that part of the state that we will air later this Fall.
* The broadcast Airs August 15th.

**2023 Statewide Spelling Bee**

* This is a new partnership with the Louisiana Leadership Institute.
* The Spelling Bee aired August 4th.

**La Veillée**

* La Veillée is a state-funded collaboration with Télé-Louisiane, a young media company that specializes in programming about French culture.
* This is our contribution to keeping French culture alive in Louisiana.
* The second season is about to begin.
* Production has begun, and the first episode will air October 5th.
* French public media organizations have expressed interest in distributing the series, and we will be working on that this year.

**Louisiana Spotlight**

* Louisiana Spotlight is our public affairs series that airs 5-6 times a year.
* We just started Louisiana Spotlight Shorts, which is a new ½-hour format that is not filmed inside the studio.
* The first short aired July 28th; it was called “High Times” and took an in-depth look at the growing cannabis and hemp/CBD business in Louisiana.
* Our next Spotlight will air in early October right before the Governor’s general election on the 14th.

**The State We’re In / Governor’s Debate**

* Longtime anchor Andre’ Moreau retired. We are thrilled with our new anchor, Karen LeBlanc, who C.C will introduce later.
* Next week we are kicking off special coverage of the gubernatorial candidates who have qualified for our debate, which will be held on September 28th.
* The debate is a collaboration between LPB and CABL, the Council for A Better Louisiana. We are working closely with Barry Erwin, one of our longtime partners on this.

**The Precipice**

* Many of you have already seen this feature-length documentary about the Point-au-Chien Indian Tribe and their battle for Federal recognition.
* We are excited to share that it has been accepted to the New Orleans Film Festival, and will screen in early November to filmmakers from around the country.

**Ritual**

* Ritual is a digital series commissioned by PBS Digital Studios hosted by Tank Ball from Tank and the Bangas.
* The series is totally produced by our LPB staff. The first seven episodes have been released, and our last episode will be released next month.
* This series has broken all kinds of viewing records for PBS Digital Studios. It has received one million views, with the first episode alone having been viewed over 369,000 times.

**Ziggy’s Arts Adventure**

* We just completed filming our second season of this puppet series about the arts.
* We are working on a statewide and national distribution plan.
* We are working to secure funding through the Louisiana Department of Education and several state arts agencies. We have an exciting plan to get this into Louisiana classroom.
* CPB (Corporation for Public Broadcasting) is thrilled with our plan and we are submitting a grant to them to pilot a statewide distribution to 3-5 states nationally.
* We will share more on that in the coming months.

C.C Copeland, LPB President and CEO, concluded the Production Department presentation by introducing the new anchor of Louisiana: The State We’re In, Karen LeBlanc. Karen introduced herself to the board and expressed her gratitude and excitement to be working at LPB.

**PLEDGE REPORT:** Kathy Scherer, LPB’s Pledge Producer gave an update on Pledge activity. The August pledge drive began this month beginning with pledge breaks for *Why Louisiana Ain’t Mississippi…*, with an emphasis on the curriculum supports developed for the program by LPB. There will be pledge breaks for the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame on August 15th, featuring pledge guests D-D Breaux, Paul Mainieri, and M.L. Woodruff, and hosted by Lyn Rollins. We also have a pledge break for the 30th anniversary of *Great Scenic Railway Journeys*, *Shreveport Little Theatre: Maker of Dreams*, *Unrivaled: Sewanee 1899*, *Cajundome City*, *Fats Domino: Walkin Back to New Orleans*, and PBS NewsHour. Lastly, General Russel Honoré taped a message of support for LPB.

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:** Matt Tessier, LPB Deputy Director gave an update on Act 393 of the 2023 Legislative Session, the bill by Senator Hewitt allowing boards of certain public bodies to allow remote participation under certain circumstances. One last minute amendment to the bill before it passed was an added requirement that any state agency utilizing the new law will have to promulgate an administrative rule to do so. It was also explained that a portion of the necessary administrative rules had been promulgated by the Division of Administration, specifically, the rule dealing with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). That rule provides that any board member or member of the public (or their caregiver) with an ADA disability can request the ability to attend the meeting remotely. Matt also gave an update on Act 181 of the 2023 Legislative Session which established Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library of Louisiana, which LETA was tasked with administering to promote, foster and encourage literacy in children ages 0 – 5. LETA’s role will be to receive the state appropriation and deploy the funding for a state match for the local program partners administering programs in their areas.

**President’s Report:** C.C Copeland, LPB President and CEO, gave the following reports and updates:

* The FY 24 state budget has not been finalized yet by the state, preventing us from making final payments on certain projects. Furthermore, the state didn’t allow us to carry forward money from the prior year for certain projects, including the Baton Rouge antenna. We are going to use part of our FY 24 one million dollar acquisitions/major repairs funding for this project. The remainder will be spent on the following priorities:
* Production vehicles
* Tech server replacement
* LPB building rewire
* Production intercom
* PC replacements
* Security cameras
* WLPB NextGen (ATSC 3.0)
* We’re already beginning to look ahead to the FY 25 budget. We’re going to ask the Legislature to fund the following priorities, among other things:
* Monroe transmitter with side-mount antenna
* Generators for three sites: WLPB, KLPA and KLTS
* Rebrander
* Parking lot repair
* C.C gave a preview of LPB’s new LED studio lights, which are energy efficient and provide plenty of power. The studio lights can also create a green screen backdrop with light temperatures set to green.
* C.C also gave a progress report on the LPB lobby remodel.
* The General Circular on Prohibited Political Activities was released.
* LPB has been selected by Maryland Public Television (MPT) to participate in their acclaimed HBCU series. We will produce a 7-minute short on the Bayou Classic for HBCU Week that will air nationally. It will also be added to an hour-long program in the late Fall and will be shown on the World Channel. Our return on investment is $20K.
* The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) has just announced that FEMA’s Next Generation Warning System (NGWS) competitive grant program is ready for applications. This grant program will enable public television and public radio stations to replace and upgrade infrastructure that enhances critical alerting and warning capabilities in our communities. The total amount of NGWS grant funds available is $34 million for FY 23.
* Later this month we will deploy new technology that will allow us to break away from our on-air programming in Baton Rouge to run separate programming in Shreveport. This will allow us to monetize pledge programs in Shreveport in the future.
* We plan to upgrade the existing LiveU system to be able to switch 4 live camera streams for live productions like the Legends Gala.
* We are now streaming on Local Now (CH.4161) and we have a fully executed broadcast agreement with HULU/PBS to stream on Hulu. PBS is now on 20 different streaming platforms.
* CPB has invited groups of general managers to Washington D.C. for a two-day strategy session. This was the first time in history that CPB has ever been left out of the House of Representatives congressional budget. This is all part of their plan to gather data and points to present to Congress.
* C.C was recently elected to serve on the American Public Television (APT) Board of Trustees.

**CHAIRMAN’s Report:** Conrad Comeaux announced the next meeting of the LETA Board will be the September 14th, 2023, meeting of the Executive and Finance Committee and subsequently on October 12, 2023, when the full LETA Board will meet again.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** Conrad Comeaux called for discussion of any other business of the board. Sonny Cranch broached the subject of having the board travel to accommodate board members from different areas.

**Adjournment:** Conrad Comeaux adjourned the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:35 PM.

Minutes submitted by Kathy Scherer and Matthew Tessier