LETA FULL BOARD MEETING

♦April 8, 2021♦ 12:00 PM ♦

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

ZOOM Conference (COVID – 19)

**Members Present:** Ted Beasley, Conrad Comeaux, Eartha Cross, Dr. Belinda Davis, Dan Hare, Nancy Harrelson, Dr. Tina Holland, Kathy Kliebert, Laura Lindsay, Chris Wegmann, Valencia Burton and Tracie Woods

**Members Absent:** Julie Cherry, Millard F. Sonny Cranch, Bo Harris, Richard Hartley, Rob King, and David Tatman

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

**Call to Order:** Conrad Comeaux called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM.

**Approval of minutes:** Conrad Comeaux asked for minutes of 2-11-21 to be approved. Motion was made by Dr. Belinda Davis and seconded by Chris Wegmann. Motion carried.

**Financial Report:** Chris Wegmann gave the Financial Report. Laura Lindsay made a motion to approve the financial report. Nancy Harrelson seconded. Motion carried.

**Friends Report:** Terri Crockett gave the Friends Report that included updates on the Ultimate Patio Raffle and the Louisiana Legends Awards Gala. There are approximately 19,400 members at present.

**President’s Report:** Beth Courtney reported that testifying to the Senate has been postponed. She presented a brief video to the board about LPB’s 2020 Bridging the Gap Education Initiative, as well as its emergency coverage. The video will be shown during testimony at the legislature when she, C.C and Kimberly request one time infrastructure funding to repair and upgrade equipment and technology. Since the beginning of 2020, LPB has facilitated, aired and streamed over 180 press conferences about Louisiana’s response to COVID-19 and 47 press conferences about hurricane activity.

Beth reported on LPB Education Department activities for Education Manager, Nancy Tooraen. 151 families have registered thus far for LPB’s Statewide Virtual Family Community Summit on Saturday, April 17. LPB is hosting a summer camp for 5-6 year olds June 21-25, 2021. LPB is also producing a new muppet show Ziggy’s Arts Adventure about an alien named Ziggy who comes to Earth to learn about the arts.

She also spoke about the new Ken Burns/Lynn Novick series, Hemingway, and the new WWII drama, Atlantic Crossing, on Masterpiece.

LPB Executive Producer, Linda Midgett gave an update on production activities: She reported on upcoming weekly coverage about the Legislative Session on Louisiana: The State We’re In, moving the conversation forward regarding Title Nine news, Ziggy’s Arts Adventure being geared towards K-5 and Deep in the Delta: Coming Home, a project supported by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to develop stories in rural communities about coming home. LPB is excited to work with Arkansas and Mississippi on this project that will include a digital series, hour-long documentary, and a podcast series allowing viewers to see the communities through the eyes of the people in the Delta. LPB is also a presenting station for Reel South, producers of independent film about the American South. This season of Reel South includes the film, Flat Town, about how a football game, the Tee Cotton Bowl, unites the diverse Ville Platte community. LPB hosted a virtual screening for Flat Town on April 1 that included the Mayor of Ville Platte, the Tee Cotton Bowl founder, and the filmmaker as guests.

Public Information Officer and Pledge Producer, Kathy Scherer discussed the virtual preview screening for the new Independent Lens docuseries Philly D.A. about former civil rights attorney, Larry Krasner, who won his long-shot bid in 2017 to become Philadelphia District Attorney. Following the preview screening on Monday, April 12, Robyn Merrick, VP of External Affairs for Southern University will host a discussion by expert panelists who will address issues involving the criminal justice system in Louisiana.

C.C Copeland gave an engineering update that included an overview of each project within the one-time funding request to the legislature for LPB infrastructure. He explains what took place in Alexandria with the KLPA Antenna. He also reported on recent repairs needed after February’s ice storm.

**Chairman’s Report:** Vice-Chair Conrad Comeaux, standing in for Chair Valencia Burton, gave the Chairman’s Report. He asked the board about their comfort level meeting in person for upcoming LETA Board Meetings. Most board members elected to meet at LPB for the next meeting on Thursday, June 10. Masks will be required. Others elected to continue attending by Zoom. Beth mentioned that board seats held by Nikki Godfrey and Gigi Carter are now vacant and we will be preparing to have those seats filled with the requited forms in alignment with Board of Commissions policies. The forms are due by May 2021. Reminders were requested.

**Other Business:** Conrad Comeaux mentioned that he and Valencia Burton attended an ATPS National Public Television Conference. One focus area was on datacasting (broadcasting of data using radio waves). Stations may have this before an upgrade to full broadband access (high speed internet access). He also mentioned how Maryland Public Television serves as ad agency for state departments bolstering relationships in the process. In Louisiana, this is not as possible because of other variables, but LPB does partner with the state on production elements where we can. (Emergency coverage, the Louisiana Department of Education, tourism)

**Adjournment:** Conrad Comeaux adjourned meeting at 12:55 PM.

Minutes submitted by Marlesha Ross and Kathy Scherer