

Minutes of Virtual Special Meeting of the Authority

1:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Facebook Live Location: <https://www.facebook.com/OETAOK>

DIRECTORS PRESENT BY VIDEOCONFERENCE:

Joy Hofmeister, Chair
Terri Cornett, Vice Chair
Wendy Argenbright
Richard Beck
Cheryl Evans
Lisa Greenlee
Kara Hall
Glen Johnson
Suzanne Lair
Mike Martin

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Burns Hargis
Joseph Harroz, Jr.
Larry Rice

VISITORS PRESENT: Assistant Attorney General Marc Pate; Patricia Sawyer of Whitten and Burrage Law; and, Michael Burrage of Whitten and Burrage Law.

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Polly Anderson; Vice President of Finance Shawn Black; Vice President of Production Susan Cadot; Vice President of Operations Janette Thornbrue; Vice President of Educational Outreach Curtis Calvin; Vice President of Engineering and Technology Lawson Adams; External Relations Director Chad Haney; Marketing and Communications Manager Aaron Morvan; and, Executive Assistant Brandy Kennedy.

The Oklahoma Educational Television Authority Board of Directors met virtually through Zoom and Facebook Live in special session at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, 2020. A Notice of Meeting had been filed with the Secretary of State and copies of the Agenda and meeting documents were posted in accordance with provisions of the Open Meeting Act as amended by SB661.

The Chair called the meeting to order and Anderson called the roll. It was determined that a quorum was present and the meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.

Item #4

The Chair recognized Anderson for the Executive Director's report. Anderson informed the Board that as of March 18, 2020, OETA staff began telecommuting. Some staff did take a little longer to fully telecommute, such as the News Department, due to the time needed to install and transition to various technology capabilities. Master Control Operators have been at OETA every day so that all four channels remain on the air. Also, members of the Engineering Department have physically gone in occasionally to work on equipment. Now all staff are working from home, staying safe, staying connected, and communicating well through the use of Slack Channels, Zoom meetings, and emails.

A quick report for fundraising year-to-date, OETA is ten percent over in terms of dollars raised compared to last year. With the number of new donors, OETA is forty percent over last year at this time. Although last year particularly at this time in April and May, it was a really trying time for OETA. So those numbers go in the right direction. Also, Friends of OETA, Inc. purchased a subscription to the Nielsen ratings service. In the first quarter, OETA's highest rated program was Ken Burns' documentary *Country Music*. As the narrative he put together said, it was a "staggering" 6.9 rating. That really is a staggering number. OETA's numbers are about 20% higher compared to last year, which is amazing considering the uptick in streaming services. Most places are under where they were last year. For the most recent ratings period, which was March 26 through April 22, Oklahoma City was the highest rated station among all media markets. And OETA's top ten for that same period was *Garth Brooks: Gershwin Prize*. Seven of the top ten programs were various episodes of *Antiques Roadshow*, one episode of *This Old House*, and one episode of *Nature*, so OETA has a good array of top programs.

OETA has an upcoming pledge period May 29 through June 7. Beginning May 29, there will be a *Downton Abbey* marathon, where every episode of all six seasons will be aired over sixty hours through the Memorial Day weekend. After that OETA loses rights to *Downton Abbey*. Lastly, we are very proud to have partnered with the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) to provide at-home learning opportunities for all Oklahoma students, pre-K through twelfth grade, Monday through Friday 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., twelve hours per day, broadcasting on the OETA World Channel, which we repurposed. OETA is planning to continue this programming through May 15, and may continue with a scaled back version after that date. OETA and OSDE has had a great partnership. There are also assets on *PBS LearningMedia*. This is a free service for parents, students and teachers, and it is linked to each of the programs OETA is showing over the air so that families that do not have internet access will still be able to access the same resources for distance learning.

Item #5

The Chair thanked the work Anderson and her OETA team have done in conjunction with the Department of Education Office of Curriculum and Instruction in providing so many resources and programming opportunities for children pre-K through twelfth grade in a variety of disciplines, including Math, Reading, Social Studies, as well as Science and the Arts. The Chair noted that it has been very meaningful. OSDE now has 15,000 unique teacher users who have a log in and are participating in PBS' digital learning, and she hopes to see those numbers continue to grow. The Chair included the plan to use the summer months to think of innovative partnerships as OSDE thinks about arts camp and science camp needs, including some possible programming that OETA can provide in conjunction with these camps. As a result, OSDE is in discussion with the Oklahoma Arts Council and OETA to partner together with OSDE in order to address learning loss over the summer.

Action Item #6

The Board received and reviewed the minutes for the special meeting of February 18, 2020. The Chair entertained a motion to approve the minutes. Cornett made a motion and Evans seconded the motion. Seeing there were no comments or discussion requested, the Chair called for a roll call vote. Anderson conducted roll call to adopt the minutes. All were in favor and the motion carried. The Chair announced the minutes as adopted at 1:14 p.m.

Action Item #7

Anderson stated that “OETA is entering into executive session on the advice of their attorney and because of disclosure it would significantly impair litigation.” Kennedy provided instructions on how to enter the virtual executive session.

Chair Hofmeister entertained a motion to go into executive session. Johnson made the motion and Martin seconded the motion. Anderson called the roll to enter executive session. The vote was unanimous and the Board entered executive session at 1:18 p.m.

At 1:58 p.m., Anderson noted there was a quorum present, so the Chair entertained a motion to come out of executive session. Johnson made a motion to exit executive session and Martin seconded the motion. Anderson conducted a roll call vote. All were in favor and the motion passed; the Board came out of executive session at 2:00 p.m. The Chair noted that no votes were taken during executive session, and that the Board received notes from council.

The Chair also requested to let the record show that the Board is very grateful for Anderson and recognizes her leadership in building a strong organization that is reflected in both the ratings that the Board is seeing and the confidence that the public is demonstrating with increased fundraising.

Item #8

Anderson announced the next regular meeting is set for Tuesday, June 23, 2020 at 1 p.m. at the OETA network headquarters in Oklahoma City, OK.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Authority, Chair Hofmeister called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting and Evans seconded the motion.

The Chair thanked Lair for her many years of service, commenting that “She has been the epitome of an engaged board member, and one who has devoted so much time, intellect and heart in the service of OETA. And at one time, she had served on the OETA Foundation Board as well. We appreciate you so much Suzanne, your leadership, and again we are just eternally grateful for your work leading through this time especially.”

Lair addressed the Board, responding that “It’s been a pleasure. I actually have had the opportunity to serve since 2003, finishing out a term for someone and then was reappointed twice. So I feel very blessed in the situation I’ve been in with OETA, for just years to grow up within this organization and to learn about it from all aspects. As a public school administrator, I value and appreciate what OETA brings to the table across the state, and it’s just been really exciting. I can’t compliment OETA enough in conjunction with the State Department of Education. Particularly at this time where OETA has provided distance learning all over the state. So I will always be a supporter of OETA and I look forward to supporting in another way outside of boardmanship.”

The Chair thanked Lair, then called for a roll call vote to adjourn. All were in favor and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

Adopted this day of June 23, 2020.



Joy Hofmeister, Chair



Terri Cornett, Vice Chair

