

**Minutes of Special Meeting of the
Oklahoma Educational Television Authority**

1:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, 2025
OETA Media Center Conference Room
7403 N. Kelley Ave.
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

DIRECTORS' PRESENT:

Wendy Argenbright, Chair
Dr. Diana Lovell, Vice Chair
Karen Auer
Sean Burrage, Chancellor
Lisa Greenlee
Bryan Harwell
Dr. Jim Hess
Dr. Jeanie Webb

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Kara Hall
Joseph Harroz, Jr
James Isaacs
Ryan Walters

VISITORS PRESENT: Finley & Cook Partner; Dan Bledsoe, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife; Rich Fuller, President of Oklahoma Broadcasters; Vance Harrison, and Friends of OETA Board President Garrett T. King.

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Polly Anderson; Chief Operating Officer Shawn Black; Vice President of Engineering & IT Lawson Adams; Vice President of Local Content Susan Cadot; Vice President of Educational Outreach Darrell Strong; Vice President of Programming Janette Thornbrue; Vice President of Marketing and Communications; Jennifer Mullens, and Executive Assistant Brandy Kennedy.

The Oklahoma Educational Television Authority Board of Directors met in person at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2025. A Notice of Meeting had been filed with the Secretary of State, and copies of the agenda and meeting documents were posted following the provisions of the Open Meeting Act.

Chair Argenbright called the meeting to order. Anderson called the roll. It was determined that a quorum was present, and the meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

The Chair invited Friends President King to introduce the OETA Champions. King acknowledged that OETA is honored to award three Champions for their commitment to supporting OETA. Our first honoree, Rich Fuller, who some of you remember from outdoor Oklahoma, and a long-time part of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. Unfortunately, he had to leave. Rich was honored for writing an incredibly powerful piece in the Oklahoman in April 2023, championing OETA's work in wildlife conservation and the promotion of the outdoors. We appreciate all that Rich has done. Mr. Vance Harrison, head of the Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters, was an ardent, eloquent, and engaged advocate for this agency in 2023. King expressed the importance of thanking the people who went out on a limb for you. I hope the board will join me in thanking Mr. Vance Harrison today.

As a surprise, in the realm of unannounced items. We also honored a third champion for recognition of her indomitable service as the head of OETA. Wishing her well on her impending retirement. Ms. Polly Anderson, we recognize you. Thank you for your time with the Board and at these meetings.

Item #5 {Action}

Auditor's report: Mr. Bledsoe reported that this report is based on the audit for 2023-2024. OETA, with the presented component FOETA supported foundation, both entities are reflected within the financial statements, consistent with how that has been in the past. He reported no issues, and it was a very clean audit.

A motion was made to approve the Audit Report by Dr. Webb, and it was seconded by Chancellor Burrage. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion to approve the report carried unanimously.

Item #6 {Action}

The Board reviewed the minutes for the special meeting of August 27, 2024. A motion was made to approve the minutes by Greenlee, and it was seconded by Dr. Webb. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion to approve the minutes carried unanimously.

Item #7

Argenbright emphasized the urgency of this meeting; Ms. Anderson's retirement is scheduled for the end of this month. The agenda will include discussing her retirement and planning for the future of this position. Argenbright spoke about how Ms. Anderson successfully guided OETA through some challenging periods. She has done an excellent job of preparing the organization for the future, creating a solid position for it to move forward. This leaves an opportunity for someone to step into a well-managed public broadcasting station. Ms. Anderson noted I have a good team! And she expressed that it has been an honor.

Argenbright announced that The Friends of OETA will collaborate with the OETA Board to form a joint search committee tasked with finding a replacement for Ms. Anderson. She emphasized that FOETA has been transparent in all its dealings with OETA. Argenbright concluded that this joint effort will be beneficial moving forward and expressed her gratitude to Mr. King for his assistance.

Item #8

Ms. Anderson reported that with the purchase of 14 transmitters, Lawson and his team were able to replace all the low-power transmitters and two full-power transmitters in Oklahoma City and Cheyenne, and she noted that this will make all the transmitters in the system less than five years old.

Ms. Anderson announced that the weekly newsletter with program highlights is being distributed to 250,000 to 350,000 recipients, and the marketing communications, documentary, and production departments are collaborating on various community events. Oklahoma ranks number one, and Tulsa is number four in the country for Antiques Roadshow, maintaining strong ratings. She also noted the new kids' program titled "Carl the Collector," which is the first children's program centered around a child with autism, and a second screening is coming soon.

In Education, we have become content creators for PBS Learning Media, and the Black Frontier Towns special has now been uploaded with curriculum and discussion questions,

with access to teachers and parents to get free service to learn about the black frontier towns of Oklahoma.

In Operations, they successfully updated our on-the-air automation hardware and software with no downtime to our over-the-air signal. Additional ratings and information are now available in the operations report.

News, Production, and Documentary live-streamed the governor's State of the State address in February, providing the signal to any interested television station in Oklahoma. While some aired the full address, others featured snippets in their evening news. We also received recognition from the Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters for our award-winning production, "A Key in Oklahoma," which highlights interesting facts about the State in Spanish with English subtitles. The award ceremony will be in Tulsa in a couple of weeks. And last, the VP of Development position has been filled, and they will begin on April 1st.

Anderson was asked to address the transmitters and their key to emergency communications. She explained that the warning alert response network is the backup for emergency alerts sent through your cell phone. It's that jarring Amber Alert that can often occur at night. Public television stations provide the redundant path and collectively reach 99% of the American population. She also mentioned in the last meeting that a transmitter map was presented that overlaid the commercial station's transmitters. It's a very strong network.

Item #9 (Action)

Black reported from the personnel report, two part-time housekeeping employees have been hired to replace an external contract that charged us \$36,000 a year, saving us over \$12,000 a year while also giving the new hires a pay raise. He also noted that Noah Mack was hired as a multimedia journalist. And he received two resignations, the Community Engagement Coordinator and the VP of Development. Emphasizing Ms. Anderson's report that the VP of Development has been filled and will start on April 1st.

The financial chart shows under budget and on track to stay that way for the rest of the year. He emphasizes that the gap is mainly due to unspent funds from the transmitters. Although spending looks lower now, he expects to remain under budget by year-end, partly because of unfilled positions.

The Revenue Report, with a total of \$1.9 million in revenue at the end of February, is expected to receive about \$200,000 more, totaling around \$530,000, by the end of March. Projected expenses totaling around \$426,000 will leave us with an estimated \$2 million. A portion of this includes funds from the Community Service Grant {CSG} from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which we will spend at a rate of less than \$100,000 per period.

The Financial Report, Black, highlighted that some of the larger budget categories, particularly salaries, are currently under budget, which means some savings in that area. He emphasized line 31, which covers miscellaneous administrative costs, including items like phone and electricity bills. In January, we spent \$121,000 on our asset property insurance. Overall, we are trending positively in this category, and we do not anticipate spending the entire remaining budget, which stands at \$346,000.

Regarding line 41, we allocated \$2.8 million for transmitters, but we have not yet

spent the full amount. To date, we have used approximately 55%, which totals around \$1.4 million. There is still some budget remaining, and once the bills arrive, we will need to settle those payments.

Mr. Black was asked if there was any use for robotics sweeping or mopping. He reported that the agency is always looking for ways to save money.

Argenbright called for a motion to approve the financial and administration reports. Auer motioned, and Greenlee seconded. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion to approve the report carried unanimously.

Item #10 {Action}

Chair Argenbright reports all is in acceptance of the retirement of Ms. Anderson. And she emphasized all the hard work that Ms. Anderson has done. Noting that people don't realize what's behind the scenes of the jobs we're doing. I think Ms. Anderson deserves a big round of applause and thank you for your great work!

Argenbright called for a motion to accept Ms. Anderson's Retirement. Dr. Lovell motioned, and Hartwell seconded. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion to approve Ms. Anderson's Retirement carried unanimously.

Item #11{Action}

Chair Argenbright reported that this joint resolution is an updated agreement created by the Friends of OETA. This states that the Friends of OETA and OETA will operate under a joint resolution 20-02-2025-01. Mr. King has appointed two members of the Friends of OETA board, and then we are going to recommend the appointment of Ms. Greenley and Dr. Lovell to be our search committee for the board. The Friends of OETA will hire a search committee, and a firm will be hired to search for talent at other PBS broadcast stations nationwide.

Argenbright called for a motion to approve Joint Resolution #20-02-2025-01. Chancellor Burrage motioned, and Dr. Hess seconded. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion to approve the report carried unanimously.

Item #12 {Action}

Chair Argenbright reported that this joint resolution is for the Interim Executive Director of OETA. The intent was to start the search for a new Executive Director back in October, but delays have held us up. In the meantime, we recommend that Mr. Black, our current COO at OETA, serve as Interim Executive Director in addition to his current duties and take on the role of DOGE Oklahoma Liaison to assist with the new legislative process. The Friends of OETA and the OETA Board will discuss any additional compensation for his extra duties.

Argenbright called for a motion to approve Joint Resolution #20-02-2025-02. Dr. Hess motioned, and Greenley seconded. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion to approve the report carried unanimously.

Item #13 {Action}

Chair Argenbright reported that the original posting for the Executive Director position has been revised. One significant change is that the Executive Director will also serve as the CEO of the Friends of OETA. This decision aims to enhance the transparency between the two. Noting that FOETA has generously offered this as a good-faith gesture.

Argenbright called for A motion to approve the revised posting for the Executive Director Position. Chancellor Burrage motioned, and Dr. Webb seconded. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion to approve the report carried unanimously.

Item #14

The Chair announced the next regular meeting is set for Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at 1 p.m. at the OETA network headquarters in Oklahoma City, OK.

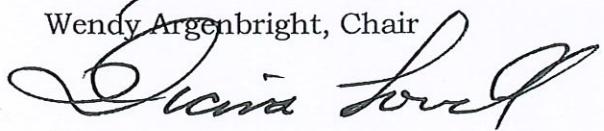
Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Authority, Chair Argenbright called the meeting adjourned.

Adopted this day of Monday, June 24, 2025.



Wendy Argenbright, Chair



Diana Lovell, Vice Chair