LETA EXECUTIVE AND FINANCE BOARD MEETING

♦May 11, 2023♦ 12:00 PM ♦

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

**Members Present:** Conrad Comeaux, Sonny Cranch, Eartha Cross, Dr. Tina Holland, Dr. Laura Lindsay, and Chris Wegmann.

**Members attendance via Zoom:** Newt Dorsett andShauna Sanford.

**Members Absent:**

**Employees Present:**  C.C Copeland, Matt Tessier, Terri Crockett, Kimberly Ducote, Marlesha Ross, and Kathy Scherer

**Call to Order:** Conrad Comeaux, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM, and asked if there were any public comments. There were no public comments.

**Approval of Minutes:** On behalf of Shauna Sanford, Secretary, Conrad Comeaux asked for the minutes from the 3-9-23 LETA meeting to be approved. A motion to approve was made by Chris Wegmann and was seconded by Sonny Cranch. Motion carried.

**Financial Report:** Dr. Tina Holland, Treasurer, presented and asked for a motion to approve the Financial Report. A motion to approve was made by Eartha Cross and was seconded by Sonny Cranch. Motion carried.

**Friends Report:** Newt Dorsett, Friends of LPB (FLPB) Chair, gave the FLPB report, which included financial highlights for the month.

**FUNDRAISING**

**Legends Gala and Auction**

• This year’s gala was a tremendous success!

• Current revenue, including sponsorships, donations and auction is $295,500.

• The online auction closes Sunday, May 14 at midnight.

• Several board members expressed their disappointment that they were not notified about the pre-reception at the Governor’s Mansion. This event is open to all board members, honorees, and major donors. Terri Crockett, FLPB Executive Director, added that, going forward, an email invitation will be distributed to all LPB Board Members - LETA, Foundation for Excellence in Louisiana Public Broadcasting and Friends of LPB.

• The FLPB Board will vote on the 2024 honorees at the June Board meeting. If you would like to nominate someone, please send a brief bio to Terri Crockett at tcrockett@lpb.org by Friday, June 2nd.

**Antiques Roadshow**

• Thank you to our sponsors of the VIP Reception - William B. Wiener, Jr., Visit Baton Rouge and Louisiana Seafood - approximately 400 guests attended the event at the LSU Ag Center Botanic Garden. The net proceeds from the reception total approximately $10,000.

• The following day, over 3000 guests attended the appraisal event.

• Special thank you to the 120 volunteers who assisted our guests at the event, including Chris Wegmann. Without dedicated volunteers such as Chris, Antiques Roadshow simply would not be possible.

**PowerOn Raffle**

• The PowerOn Raffle will kick off on **Thursday, June 1** with the official start of hurricane season.

• Grand prize is a whole house Generac Generator donated by Optimize EGS valued at $14,000.

**March 2023 Financials**

At the end of March, membership revenue for the month was $212,905.03. Overall revenue as of March was $2,305,119.35. Expenses for the month totaled $141,338.67.

At the end of the 3rd quarter, the transfer to the Foundation is $324,383.36, bringing our total year-to-date support to $1,156,153.09.

A number of Board members complimented the FLPB and LPB teams for such a wonderful Antiques Roadshow experience. The President & CEO of Visit Baton Rouge, Jill Kidder, told C.C that they saw an increase in hotel bookings thanks to the Antiques Roadshow tour stop in Baton Rouge.

It was also noted that FLPB receives 75% of net proceeds from car donations.

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

• Our FY 24 Budget has been reduced by $400K which was for the KLPB Lafayette antenna. C.C has been working to get the funding fully restored ($1,645,953) - $400,000 Short. We are still waiting for our date to appear before Senate Finance. It was recommended that All LETA Board members reach out to the members of the Senate Finance Committee to get support from them in restoring our funding for the KLPB antenna project. The funding for WYES and WLAE was also taken out of our request, and it needs to be restored as well. C.C added that phone calls to legislators are better than sending emails.

• The tower crew arrived on May 8th to begin the WLPB Guywire replacement. The contract stipulates 125 days for completion. C.C gave a visual overview of the project. They have added 10 additional rain days to the contract.

• KLTS – Shreveport generator has a bad voltage regulator. A rush order has been placed for a new one.

• We have signed the contract for the lobby renovations and the materials are being ordered.

• We took a lightning hit on our studio STL radio which is located on our 150-foot tower next to the building. We have lightning arrestors on the tower, but this was a direct hit. We ordered a replacement and had it installed and have ordered another backup radio.

• PBS has signed a 2-year contract with Hulu Live+. We are also on the free streaming app called Local Now on Roku and Apple TV and Firestick.

• C.C will be attending the PBS Annual Meeting in San Diego. This is the yearly meeting held for General Managers and staff to discuss strategy and funding. LPB received a $21,500 grant from Arkansas PBS to collaborate on their Southern Storytellers project.

• C.C will be attending the Louisiana Association of Broadcasters Conference at the end of May. Matt Tessier, Deputy Director, Tom Woodside, Director of Engineering, and Steve Ringo, Transmitter Manager, will attend the Engineering Day. This is previously where C.C found the tower company to do the KLTS tower lights at a huge cost savings.

• We are working with Louisiana Department of Education on a homelessness initiative to provide educational outreach through the LPB children’s series, *Ziggy’s Arts Adventure*. LPB could receive $1 million in funding, which would need to be spent by 9/2024.

• We have developed 25 educational lesson pods for *Why Louisiana Ain’t Mississippi…* that we are reviewing with Jay Dardenne this afternoon. Kudos was given to the LPB Education Services team.

• Randy Morris of the Rural Hospital Association is purchasing 100 *Why Louisiana Ain’t Mississippi…* books from us at $125 each. Jay Dardenne will also need two cases for an engagement.

• Matt Tessier, Deputy Director, reported on additional updates from the legislative session:

Matt Tessier began by offering kudos to all involved in making Young Heroes Day a success and Kathy Scherer, Public Information Officer, added how the Governor’s staff made it possible for the Young Heroes to meet with him in between his meetings and how legislators introduced and recognized the Young Heroes on the House floor. Matt also complimented the Friends team on the success of the VIP Party for Antiques Roadshow.

• House Bill 201, concerning remote participation by public bodies, has passed out of the Senate with a few amendments that would not affect LETA.

• House Bill 412 would establish and fund the Dolly Parton Imagination Library of Louisiana. The bill passed the House Education Committee. Louisiana is the only state to partner with the Dollywood Foundation that has a television network as a fiscal agent. There could be up to $8 million in funding to operate the project for 5 years. The legislature has put $2.5 million in the special fund created for this purpose, which would run the program for about 2 years. In the event that the funding is stripped from the bill, we have asked for an amendment to clarify that LETA will be relieved of its duties if the appropriated monies are insufficient. C.C noted that Dolly Parton will come to Louisiana if all zip codes in all 64 parishes participate in the program.

• Matt reminded Board members that Tier 2.1 financial disclosures are due Monday.

**Chairman Report:** Conrad Comeaux noted the 200th anniversary of Lafayette Parish. There was a presentation about all the different cultures that settled Lafayette including Jewish, Syrian, Lebanese, Creole, African, Acadian, and Spanish. Conrad will share this with Linda, as this might be worth exploring as an LPB project.

**Adjournment:** Conrad Comeaux adjourned the meeting at 1:02PM.

Minutes submitted by Kathy Scherer and Matt Tessier.