

LOUISIANA EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION AUTHORITY FULL BOARD MEETING

**April 9, 2026 ♦ 12:00 PM ♦ LPB Board Room
7733 Perkins Road ♦ Baton Rouge, LA 70810**

Members Present: Dan Hare, Sonny Cranch, Jeff Thomas, Misty Wyble, Emily Andrews, Chris Wegmann, Christie Gomez, Sharon Reine, Erin Donelly, Dr. Courtney Phillips, and Tracie Woods (12:25).

Members Absent: Taft Kleinpeter, Dr. Saundra McGuire, William Bradford, Conrad Comeaux, Lance Harris, and Howard White.

Others via Teleconference: Dr. Laura Lindsay.

Staff Present: Clarence "C.C" Copeland, Kimberly Ducote, Angela Bessix, Matt Tessier, Andrell Ward, My Sherie Johnson, Darrell Forest, Oscar Tickle, and Terri Crockett (Friends of LPB).

CALL TO ORDER: Dan Hare, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM.

INTRODUCTION OF NEWLY HIRED STAFF: C.C Copeland, President/CEO recognized the following new LPB staff: Andrell Ward (Human Resources Director), My Sherie Johnson (Digital Producer), Darrell Forest (TV Multimedia Specialist), and Oscar Tickle (TV Producer).

PUBLIC COMMENT: Dan Hare, Vice-Chair, inquired if any member of the public in attendance had any public comment, and there were none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Sonny Cranch, Secretary, presented the minutes of the LETA full board meeting of February 12, 2026, and asked that the minutes be approved. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Jeff Thomas and was seconded by Chris Wegmann. Emily Andrews abstained from voting on the item. With all in favor, the motion passed.

LETA FINANCIAL UPDATE: Sonny Cranch, Secretary, presented the LETA financial update on behalf of Dr. Laura Lindsay. A motion to approve the financial update was made by Chris Wegmann and was seconded by Sharon Reine. With all in favor, the motion passed.

FRIENDS OF LPB REPORT: Terri Crockett, Executive Director (FLPB) gave the Friends report on behalf of Howard White, FLPB Chair:

- Dream Getaway Raffle – ticket sales represent a 5% increase, year over year.
- Louisiana Legends Gala is April 30. Honoring Charles Alexander, Richard Lipsey, Dr. Calvin Mackie, Judy Perry Martinez, Tommy Ryder, and Hunt Slonem.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Matt Tessier, Deputy Director and In-House Counsel, reported on the following:

- The case of *Maxwell Olson and Global Weather Productions, LLC v. Louisiana Educational Television Authority dba Louisiana Public Broadcasting; United States District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana; Case# 3:25-cv-00914-RLB*, has been dismissed.

- Matt reminded the board to complete their Tier 2.1 Financial Disclosure forms by May 15, 2026.
- We are tracking a number of bills that could affect LETA as an agency:
 - HB 155 (McMakin) – Pending Sen Jud C - Original bill added the state capitol as one of the no-fly-zones for drones. Amendments added several areas to the state capitol grounds no-fly-zone: Capitol Annex, Capitol Gardens, Pentagon Barracks, Veteran's Memorial Park, Capitol Lake, A.Z. Young Park, Clairborne Building, Old Department of Insurance Lot.
 - HB 50 (Schlegel) – Pending Sen Ed - Extends the sunset date for the Louisiana Dept. of Education to July 1, 2031.
 - HB 73 (Bacala) – Pending Senate / SB 1 (Jenkins) – Pending H&GA, would make changes to the Open Meetings Law by allowing for voting via electronic voting machine in open meetings.
 - SB 47 (Mizell) – Pending H&GA - would require inclusion of board members' email and phone number on the state boards and commissions website; would require phone number for chairperson at which they can be reached as emergency contact.
 - HB 627 (Mike Johnson) - Pending House Floor – requires certain boards and commissions (LETA included) to broadcast their meetings and make recordings available for 2 years.
 - HB 1049 (Owen) – Pending H&GA – Requires presence of board attorney at public meetings, or presiding officer with knowledge of open meetings law; requires draft of minutes to be made available within 1 month of meeting.
 - We're continuing to monitor HB 1 and 398 (McFarland), the main and supplemental appropriations bills relative to our agency's funding.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: C.C Copeland, LPB President and CEO, reported on the following:

- C.C recognized Kim Ducote, LETA Director of Business Services, for a brief overview of LETA's financial structure.
- C.C provided an overview of LETA's budget for the FY26–27 state budget, including acquisitions and major repairs.
- NPR and PBS obtained an order in federal district court declaring that the First Amendment prohibits the executive branch from removing federal funding via executive order when the removal of that funding is based on viewpoint discrimination. However, the impact is rendered moot with respect to congressional rescissions of federal funding from public media.
- PBS stations nationwide continue to suffer and experience layoffs.
- C.C gave an update on FY 26-27 PBS dues, indicating that a 5% increase is expected.
- LA 64 is our travel show that eventually will cover all 64 of Louisiana's parishes.
- Upcoming projects with national distribution include *Capturing America: The Carol Highsmith Story*; *Zydeco*, and *Ritual Season 2*.

DISCUSSION OF WLAE: C.C Copeland, LPB President and CEO, briefed the board on a potential offer or proposal by Willwoods Community foundation for LETA to purchase Willwoods' ½ interest in WLAE-TV, contingent on appropriation of sufficient funds by the legislature. Chris Wegmann made a motion to table the discussion until more information becomes available, which was seconded by Jeff Thomas. Chris Wegmann withdrew the motion and made a substitute motion to decline such offer or proposal until more pertinent

information becomes available, which was seconded by Sonny Cranch. With all in favor, the motion passed.

CHAIR'S REPORT: Tracie Woods, Chair, reported on the following:

- Next LETA Executive and Finance Committee meeting is May 14, 2026.
- Next LETA full board meeting is June 11, 2026.
- The Chair presented Chris Wegmann with an award honoring him for his service as former Chair of LETA.

OTHER BUSINESS: There was no other business.

Adjournment: Tracie Woods, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 1:23 PM.

Minutes prepared by Angela Bessix and Matt Tessier