**South Dakota Board of Directors for Educational and Telecommunications**

**March 18, 2025**

**Virtual Meeting**

**Board Members Present:** Kay Jorgensen, Doyle Estes, Dave Landry, Jerry Oster, Julie Ashworth, Shuree Mortensen, Erika Tordsen, Lisa Rahja, and Julie Overgaard

**Staff Members Present**: SeVern Ashes, Twyla Olson, Fritz Miller, Byron Pillow, Teri Roetman,

Brad Van Osdel, Ryan Howlett, Cara Hetland, Marcy Drew, and Laura Peterson.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Kay Jorgensen at 9:30am.

Julie Overgaard did roll call.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Doyle Estes to approve the December 6th meeting minutes as presented.

A second by Jerry Oster. Motion carried.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Laura Peterson gave the financial report. As of February 28th, our total year-to-date revenues were over 7 million dollars. SDPB has used 4.8 million dollars of available general fund appropriations. The remaining fund appropriations for personal services will be exhausted in March. Operating expenditures will likely be exhausted in May. CPB will issue the second payment of our FY25 funding in March. This is expected to be $536,000. Other funding sources are on track with FY24 revenues. Friends of SDPB funds have increased over last year. Laura went over the operating expenses. They have decreased $211,000 from last year due to changes made to cut costs. Current projections show expenses for the remainder of the fiscal year at around 2.8 million dollars. Laura reported on the March financials and the FY26 budget projections.

Julie complimented Laura on keeping everything on course; her work is very much appreciated.

A special thanks for Cara and Brad as well for keeping a handle on things to keep expenses down. We will do what we can to keep the budget intact.

Kay mentioned this board’s job is to ensure local programming and help enhance SDPB to better serve the citizens of South Dakota.

A motion was made by Julie Overgaard to accept the financial report as presented. A second by Doyle Estes. Motion carried.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Julie reported all in all things went well during Capitol Hill Day two weeks ago. Public Broadcasting is under funding threats nationally as well as here in South Dakota. The presidents of PBS and NPR have been asked to testify in front of Majorie Taylor Greene, Republican from Georgia and her subcommittee DOGE. This request cites concerns about the potential use of federal funds to produce biased programming. The hearing will take place later this month. It will be a roller coaster ride for a while longer, but the state-level efforts paid off as our funding was fully restored. Legislators heard from many of our supporters. Julie is very happy and grateful to the staff for hanging in there while not knowing what was going to happen. Congratulations to Cara and Brad’s teams for keeping things moving along without being distracted from what was going on. We do have some positions open; we will discuss while figuring out next year’s budget.

**FRIENDS OF SDPB REPORT**

Ryan Howlett reported their fundraising efforts continue. There is a broad support of our local content and all the services we provide. The Friends of SDPB staff and board members have been working hard on advocacy the past few months. They were very pleased with the reactions and support from the state. Friends will begin their budget process soon.

**DIRECTOR OF CONTENT REPORT**

Twyla Olson gave congratulations to her content team. They pulled together and worked together as a team to continue the high quality and quantity of work. She is very proud of the staff and their great work. Attendance has been great for *Dakota Life* premiers, around 100 people have been attending. The next list of towns featured are Agency Village, Newell, Clear Lake, Edgemont, Eureka, White River and Centerville. There will be more information on Facebook. Cara’s team had a lot of last-minute changes, but they all handled it well. We received a grant for outreach around the PBS *Independent Lens* series. Nathan Hofer’s team did a great job with this. Partnerships were made and screenings were well received.

**DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING, OPERATIONS & DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES REPORT**

SeVern Ashes reported the last six months have been stressful. The staff kept their heads up and continued their work. Very proud of his team and thankful for such a dedicated team. On January 9th our new FM station KWSD Mitchell 89.1 went on the air. SeVern is incredibly proud of the field engineers team led by Vern Haas. All hands were on deck in preparing this site for this launch.

It is fully operational and on the air. This was a complete team effort to make this happen in a short amount of time. There was an over the air television broadcast format change on March 3rd. The switch was made to improve picture quality across all the channels, making them consistently HD rather than a mix of HD and outdated SD. The motion clarity is so much better than before, especially for any fast-moving scenes. Basketball coverage on SDPB2 and SDPB3 will see great improvements. Engineering has been knee-deep in legislative coverage and supporting Cara’s team. The meetings are turned around in 20 minutes so LRC can reference the meetings. We did get funding to replace the hardware in the committee rooms. We are adding open captioning next year. Speech to text. LRC wants to increase video usage moving forward. We are ready on our side but will need more storage for the video. Will do a complete study over the next six months to be prepared for the next session.

**DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMMING & COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

Fritz Miller reported the FCC Chairman sent letters to PBS and NPR regarding underwriting concerns with announcements. The representatives reached an agreement and will send us the language for underwriting. We will review it to ensure our announcements meet the requirements. We frequently review our procedures to make sure we are observing the rules and regulations. We have extra eyeballs to ensure we didn’t miss anything. We have an agreement with FNX, Native American programming to stream on our website and hoping to make this a 5th channel available. We are gearing up for an event at KWSD FM, our newest tower, the event will be held on June 6th. Fresh Produce designed our rebrand, they were awarded American Advertising Addy Awards, for the work they did for us. They were recognized by our peers regionally and nationally. Programming is always changing; the end of May *Doc Martin* will be leaving the schedule due to rights.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Kay Jorgensen reported the agenda has been completed. She thanked everyone and asked that we keep moving forward to serve our state.

A motion was made by Doyle Estes to adjourn the meeting at 10:33am. Second by Jerry Oster.

Motion carried.