



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Date: February 11, 2012  
Subject: **Transcript of BBG Meeting at 2:30 P.M. on February 11, 2012**

On February 9, a special telephonic meeting of the Board was called under Section 2.09 of the BBG By-Laws. Five Governors (Lynton, McCue, Mulhaupt, Stephens, and Wimbush) requested the special meeting.

The following Board members participated by telephone in the special meeting on Saturday, February 11, 2012 at 2:30 pm:

Governor Victor Ashe  
Governor Michael Lynton  
Governor Susan McCue  
Governor Michael Meehan  
Governor Dennis Mulhaupt  
Governor Dana Perino  
Governor S. Enders Wimbush  
Acting Under Secretary of State Kathleen Stephens

Director of the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) Richard Lobo, Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble, Director of Communications and External Affairs Lynne Weil, Special Projects Officer Oanh Tran, and Executive Assistant Douglas Schuette participated by telephone from the Cohen Building.

LOBO: [recording begins]... Ok, we're recording. Dennis, go ahead.

MULHAUPT: Ok, I guess it's over to me. I'm Dennis Mulhaupt, chair of the BBG Governance Committee. This is a special meeting of the Broadcasting Board of Governors. It's been called under Section 2.09 of the BBG By-Laws at the request of four or more Governors. In agreement of the Governors, this meeting is being held telephonically. This is an open meeting of the Broadcasting Board of Governors in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and is being recorded. The recording will be made available on the BBG website at [www.BBG.gov](http://www.BBG.gov). Are there any objections from the Governors for calling the meeting to order? Ok, hearing none, can the staff just indicate for the record who is on the call?

LOBO: Yes, attending the call are Victor Ashe, Enders Wimbush, Susan McCue, Dana Perino, Ambassador Stephens, Michael Meehan, Michael Lynton, and Dennis Mulhaupt as well as IBB-BBG staff, Jeff Trimble, Oanh Tran, Douglas Schuette, Dick Lobo and Lynne Weil.

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ASHE: Did I understand that what does Mulhaupt say that this was, well it's obviously being recorded, but it will go on the website following this conversation?

MULHAUPT: Yeah, correct.

TRIMBLE: That's correct.

MULHAUPT: Well, first order of business, let me just welcome and introduce the Acting Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Ambassador Kathy Stephens, who's representing the Secretary of State. Welcome Kathy, we're glad to have you with us.

STEPHENS: Thank you very much. I enjoyed meeting a few of you yesterday and more of you in the days and weeks to come.

MULHAUPT: Thank you so much. Ok, moving on. The BBG Chair calls meetings of the Board to order and presides over the meetings. In light of Walter Isaacson's departure from the Board, the Board must determine how it will proceed in the absence of a Chair. On February 9, this special meeting was requested by the required number of Governors. The subject of this meeting is the issue of Board leadership including the conduct of Board operations in the absence of a Chair, the selection of an interim, presiding officer. The draft decision element has been circulated to each Governor for consideration and to begin the discussion. For the record, let me read the draft decision element. Now I'm reading.

The Board acknowledges the great efforts and tremendous contributions of Walter Isaacson during his tenure as BBG Chairman from July 2010 until January 2012. The Board extends its deepest gratitude for his service to the BBG and to all of the United States international broadcasting. Inspired by Chairman Isaacson's example, the Board reaffirms its unqualified and ongoing commitment to fostering and promoting high-quality, independent and objective journalism by all BBG broadcasters. The Board rededicates itself to pursuing the mission adopted during Chairman Isaacson's tenure: "to inform, engage and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy." The Board designates Governor Michael Lynton to serve as presiding Governor on an interim basis until such time as the Board selects an alternate interim presiding Governor, Governor Lynton chooses to step down as interim presiding Governor, or a new chairman is nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

I'll open it up for any comments that any Governors might have.

ASHE: Well this is Victor speaking. I'm all for electing Michael Lynton. I don't know why we put in there until such time as we elect someone else. I mean if he takes it and resigns then of course we'll do that, but it seems superfluous to put that in.

LYNTON: I'll tell you why. Victor, it's Michael. First of all, I'm pleased and honored to fill the role, and I will do everything in my abilities to make sure that I can be of as much help as I can possibly be. The reason for it, Victor, I think is because the emphasis is again on "interim."

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I think I've done this. And I think everybody has agreed for me to do this on the basis that it's not a long-term solution and I think what we need to do is find somebody among us or perhaps as it's pointed out in the resolution, the White House will intervene of its own accord and find a more permanent solution to the situation. And I guess you're right, it does sound redundant except it does sort of call attention to the notion that we do need to pay attention to finding a more permanent solution.

ASHE: Well, I think that's a satisfactory explanation. If for some reason there is a particular meeting you are not able to attend, what's plan B?

LYNTON: I think that's an excellent question. You've raised it with me, and your proposal to have a vice-chairman or have somebody who can – I mean I will certainly be there in March and at the following meeting. But you know, I'm not a resident of Washington, D.C., and I live way off on the West Coast, so it would be helpful to have somebody, who for whatever reason, if things come up, and unfortunately I think there are a lot of things coming up in my life, it would be helpful to have someone step in and act as presiding chair. And that was Victor's suggestion, and I feel it would be helpful to have something designated to do that. We don't have to decide on that on the call. We can just put it in as a placeholder and say we'll fill that role.

MEEHAN: This is Michael Meehan. Thank you Michael for your willingness to do this. It makes a lot of sense. Maybe what I might suggest on this matter that we use the opportunity of the next Board meeting with Michael Lynton, presuming the vote goes through just fine, as we expect, to figure some of this out because I think Chairman Isaacson had a certain work style and we had sort of divvied up responsibilities. With Susan, Dana and I co-chairing the Communications and Outreach, and the appropriate staff could reach out for us on nominal stuff. And we got issue with the budget, which Enders and I served as co-chairs for a while which the staff could reach out to us on nominal stuff. See how that work flow works for everybody, but maybe we can use part of that next meeting to figure this out so that the BBG staff which is under a lot of workload, particularly in this budget season, particularly with the activities that are coming out on Monday, will need a little more help and guidance from the Board. We can figure out something to help alleviate the workload on them.

LYNTON: I think that's a good idea. I think it should be put on the agenda.

ASHE: I think that's fine too and the advantage is we're all be present in the same room with each other, and obviously a telephone conversation is a satisfactory substitute but it's still a substitute.

MULHAUPT: Are there any other comments or questions?

ASHE: Well, I would move the motion.

MULHAUPT: Is there a second?

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MCCUE: This is Susan McCue. I just wanted to also express my gratitude to you, Michal Lynton, for taking on this responsibility, and Victor for the good point you've raised about succession. And also agree with Michael Meehan that we can take it up at the next meeting and have a whole conversation around it.

MULHAUPT: I certainly agree with the group, and I certainly agree and thank you Michael for your great service in doing this.

WIMBUSH: And this is Enders, and I totally agree. Thank you Michael.

MULHAUPT: Ok, it looks like it has been moved and seconded. All those in favor...

LOBO: Who made the second, Dennis?

MEEHAN: I did.

MULHAUPT: I guess Michael Meehan did.

LOBO: Meehan. Ok, good.

MULHAUPT: It's been moved and seconded to adopt the decision element. All those in favor say, aye.

ALL: Aye

MULHAUPT: Opposed?

MULHAUPT: So unanimously carried. Note, I would just note again for the record that the Board's decision will be made available on the BBG website. Is there any Governor that wishes to move to adjourn the open meeting?

WIMBUSH: I so move. This is Enders.

MULHAUPT: Is there a second?

MEEHAN: Second. I'm Michael Meehan.

MULHAUPT: Ok, any discussion? All those in favor of adjourning the open meeting say aye.

ALL: Aye.

MULHAUPT: Any opposed? Thank you very much.