



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors
Date: May 15, 2013
Subject: **Minutes of the Continuation of April 11, 2013 Meeting¹**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) held a meeting at 3:30 p.m. EDT as a continuation of the Board's April 11, 2013 meeting. The Governors had adjourned the April 11 meeting to a fixed time due to the lack of a quorum, in accordance with the BBG By-Laws and Robert's Rules of Order. The meeting was held at BBG Headquarters in Washington, D.C., which was attended by members of the public and also open for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The gathering was attended by the following Board members:

Governor Victor Ashe
Governor Michael Meehan
Under Secretary Sonenshine (via telephone)

Governors Michael Lynton and Susan McCue were not in attendance at the meeting.

Other persons in attendance are listed at the end of these minutes.

The agenda is set forth in Attachment 1.

Governor Meehan called the meeting to order and noted that meeting was being recorded and streamed live on the BBG website.

With the absence of Presiding Governor Lynton and the departure of Alternate Presiding Governor Mulhaupt, the Board agreed to have Governor Meehan act as chair *pro tem*.

Governor Meehan noted that there was no quorum of the Board so that the Board members were not able to make decisions at the meeting.

Governor Ashe noted World Press Freedom Day on May 3 and expressed deep concern about a couple of particularly egregious and troubling cases in countries that lack press freedom and where BBG reporters continue to face threats and harassment. He said that there was still no news on the fate of Alhurra's correspondent Bashar Fahmi, who has been missing in Syria for almost nine months. On behalf of the Board, Governor Ashe asked for anybody with

¹ Adopted by the Board at the August 21, 2013 BBG Meeting.

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information about Mr. Fahmi's whereabouts or well-being to step forward, and called for his immediate release.

Governor Ashe stated that Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Turkmen Service correspondent Rovshen Yazmuhamedov was detained on May 6 in Turkmenistan and last seen by his parents at a Turkmen detention center. While no charges have been filed, Mr. Yazmuhamedov's fate was unknown; however, Amnesty International, Reporters Without Borders, Human Rights Watch had all appealed for Mr. Yazmuhamedov's immediate release amid concerns about the possible risk of torture while in detention. At Governor Ashe's invitation, RFE/RL Acting President Kevin Klose provided a brief update and expressed his concern for Mr. Yazmuhamedov's wellbeing.

Governor Ashe reported that, while on personal travel in Southeast Asia in early May, he also conducted business for the BBG. He said that his trip to Cambodia coincided with Radio Free Asia (RFA) President Libby Liu's visit, where they met with RFA's staff and journalists. Governor Ashe added that U.S. Ambassador William Todd also visited the RFA's office on May 3. Governor Ashe noted that people he met had volunteered information indicating RFA is their first choice for news and information. In Bangkok, Thailand, Governor Ashe met with International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) Regional Marketing Officer Birgit Berg and Voice of America (VOA) correspondent Barry Newhouse.

Governor Meehan spoke about the trip to Moscow, Russia, which he and Governor McCue took in early May 2013 to consider management reorganizational issues related to RFE/RL's Moscow office and to discuss the challenges for U.S. international media. He noted that they met with journalists, human rights activists, VOA Moscow Bureau Chief Jim Brooke, and U.S. Ambassador Michael McFaul. He said that the trip was very productive and had inspired him to consider the possibility of cooperating and sharing of resources with other media. Governor Ashe noted that he plans to be in Moscow after visiting Prague, Czech Republic in mid-June. At Governor Ashe's request, RFE/RL Acting President Kevin Klose updated the Board on the resignation of RFE/RL Russian Service Director Masha Gessen effective April 30, the discussions with service members regarding their future employment, and the appointment of Irina Lagunina as Chief Editor of RFE/RL Russian Service based in Prague. Governor Ashe echoed Governor Meehan's appreciation for Mr. Klose's leadership, including his unique background and qualifications.

At Governor Ashe's invitation, Ms. Liu commented on the tense political situation in Cambodia and expressed her appreciation for the visit by U.S. Ambassador Todd and the Embassy's close coordination with RFA in light of increasing pressure and intimidation by the Cambodian government. VOA Director David Ensor noted that both VOA and RFA have good-sized audiences in Cambodia.

Mr. Klose emphasized the importance of Governors McCue and Meehan's trip to Moscow and described the positive impressions that the Board's visit had left among human rights activists. Mr. Klose then thanked the Governors and noted their trip resulted in further outreach and contacts that have been very helpful to RFE/RL.

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There followed a brief discussion of the previously scheduled BBG meeting in Prague, Czech Republic on June 19. Governor Ashe announced that he would be in Prague while Governors McCue and Meehan would be in Washington participating via video conference. Under Secretary Sonenshine indicated that she would be traveling with the Secretary of State to India around that time but could be available by telephone.

Governor Ashe asked Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), for a report on the status of OCB's facilities as a result of an accidental fire. Mr. Garcia-Perez reported that the newsroom was being repaired, and that employees and contractors continued to work in cramped conditions to ensure no disruption in broadcasts for Cuba. In response to Governor Ashe's question related to furniture replacement cost, Governor Meehan reminded Governor Ashe of attorney-client privilege information and asked that the subject be discussed in Governors' Briefing which can be held after the meeting.

Under Secretary Sonenshine ended her participation by telephone to attend an urgent matter.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol – guidance provided by the Governance Committee – for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, Governor Meehan invited Ann Noonan, Executive Director of Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting (CUSIB) to speak for three minutes. Ms. Noonan congratulated Governors Ashe, McCue and Meehan for receiving the Champion of Free Speech Award from the New York Chapter of the Visual Artists Guild for their hard work in promoting and improving U.S. broadcasts to China, Tibet, Russia, and other nations without free media, and for their efforts in restoring the integrity of RFE/RL. She applauded the efforts by Mr. Klose to reform RFE/RL. She noted that CUSIB remains concerned that cuts to VOA and RFA broadcast services to China continue and implores the BBG to restore radio frequencies and money for these services. She also noted CUSIB's concern regarding the President's nomination to replace Governor Ashe while two other vacancies still remain unfilled, and that CUSIB requests that the White House reconsider its decision to replace Governor Ashe and submit new nominations to fill vacancies on the Board.

Paul Westpheling, General Vice President of American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 1812, also spoke. Mr. Westpheling discussed the 2009 case involving reduction in-force (RIF) at OCB. He also discussed the pending Negotiated Labor Management Agreement, including the Agency's last and best offer before implementation. At the IBB Director's invitation, April Cabral, IBB Senior Policy Advisor, explained the contract negotiations process and provided additional details on the status.

Governor Meehan requested that further discussion of the points raised by the Union should take place in Governors' Briefing and made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Governor Ashe seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

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Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) Director Richard Lobo, IBB Deputy Director Jeffrey Trimble, IBB Chief of Staff Marie Lennon, Deputy General Counsel and Board Secretary Paul Kollmer-Dorsey, Director of Communications & External Affairs Lynne Weil, Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran, Congressional Coordinator Suzie Carroll, Director of Public Affairs Letitia King, Senior Policy Advisor April Cabral, Executive Assistant to the IBB Director Douglas Schuette, Director for the Office of Technology, Services and Innovation Andre Mendes, Director of the Office of Performance Review Kelu Chao, Associate General Counsel Elizabeth Parish, and Board Operations and Policy Advisor Ashley Lancaster; David Ensor, Director of the Voice of America (VOA); Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting; Kevin Klose, Acting President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Kelley Sullivan, Vice President of Administration for the Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN); William Clancy, MBN Chief Financial Officer; Barbara Brady, VOA Chief of Staff; Rebecca McMenamain, VOA Acting Associate Director for Language Programming; Steve Redisch, VOA Executive Editor; and Dan Sreebny, Senior Advisor for BBG, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

Witnessed:

Paul Kollmer-Dorsey
Secretary

Attachment:

1. Agenda - Continuation of April 11, 2013 Meeting

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ATTACHMENT 1

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS May 2013 Agenda

Wednesday, May 15

Continuation of April 11, 2013 Meeting

(This meeting is a continuation of the April 11, 2013 meeting, at which the Governors fixed a time for an adjourned meeting due to lack of a quorum, in accordance with the BBG By-Laws. The meeting will deal with the business that could not be dealt with on April 10 or 11 because of the absence of a quorum.)

Chairman Pro Tem Remarks

- A. Adoption of Minutes of December 14, 2012 Meeting
- B. Adoption of Minutes of February 22, 2013 Governors' Briefing
- C. Governance Committee Report
(Governors McCue, Ashe)
- D. Strategy & Budget Committee Report
(Governor Meehan)
- E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting (June 19 & 20 in Prague)