

eTech Ohio Commission Meeting Minutes
35 E. Chestnut Street, Columbus, Ohio
July 12, 2012

Present: Commissioner Andrew Bowers, Commissioner Designee John Childs, Commission Chair Designee John Conley, Commissioner Designee Greg Gicale, Commissioner Bruce Hawkins, Commissioner Jan Osborn, Commissioner William Sams, and Commissioner Glenn Watts

eTech staff present: Jocelyn Zadzi, Administrative Assistant, Katy Coy, Communications Director, Greg Davidson, Interim Executive Director, Scott Gaughan, Director of Networking and Planning Services, Krista Shaw, Chief Operating Officer, Sarah Luchs, Chief Learning Officer, Laura Bryson, Chief Information Officer, Victoria Boczkowski, Conference Director, and Jill Grier, Legal Counsel, Attorney General's Office

I. Opening and Roll Call

Commission Chair Designee John Conley opened the eTech Ohio Commission (eTech) meeting and asked that the roll call be read. Administrative Assistant Mitzi Dunn called the roll and stated there was a quorum present.

II. Approval of Minutes

Commission Chair Designee Conley asked for a motion to approve the June 14, 2012, minutes. With the mention by Commissioner Sams and notation of an edit to the minutes on page two, second paragraph a motion was made to approve the minutes by Commissioner Sams. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watts. All of the Commissioners voted in favor of the motion and the minutes from June 14, 2012, were approved as edited.

III. Reports and Administrative

A. Chairman's Report

Commission Chair Designee Conley said that there was a recently signed statewide contract for Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP). This will enable the State of Ohio, cities, counties, and local governments to leverage a state VOIP contract. The contract is with Cincinnati Bell. He encouraged the Commissioners to share that at the local level as they are going to utilize the OARnet 'backbone' in this process. With that, the costs were lowered significantly.

Commissioner Hawkins commented about the VOIP relating to the E911 standards. He said it would be very costly to meet the standards of E911 and wanted to know if there were any thoughts on that. Commission Chair Designee Conley said that will need to be addressed. There were provisions in the contract for sustainability equipment on the premises for emergencies. Cincinnati Bell will be completely managing this VOIP contract as a third party operation.

Commission Chair Designee Conley shared that a few state agencies will begin the VOIP services in September. This is a quick turnaround time.

Commissioner Watts asked for more details regarding the VOIP contract and Commission Chair Designee Conley said he would send information to all the Commissioners to share with their constituents.

B. Interim Executive Director's Report

1. Interim Executive Director Greg Davidson said that the SalesForce application is online. This is a K-12 application that went live this week. eTech is now taking applications for the K-12 subsidies. The deadline for the application is October 31st. They will begin to send the applications over to the Department of Education (ODE) for payment when they have a considerable amount of them. Commissioner Designee Childs will provide Interim Executive Director Davidson with a contact at ODE for the payment processing.
2. Relating to the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA) training, eTech has issued a Request for Quote (RFQ) and all the Commissioners were notified. They are in the inquiry period and have been getting quite a few questions. This RFQ will close next week.

They have contacted other states and some of them have not gotten back to them. Of those that have, they are utilizing a free service, Common Sense Media which does not offer the testing component which will not meet Ohio's needs. Interim Executive Director Davidson asked the Commissioners to please alert anyone who would be interested in submitting for this RFQ.

3. Interim Executive Director Davidson provided a staff update. He said Laura Bryson is the new Chief Information Officer (CIO). She was promoted from within eTech. Sarah Luchs is the new Chief Learning Officer (CLO). She was transferred from ODE and co-led the Digital Learning Task Force (DLTF). One of her responsibilities at eTech will be the Blended Learning Practice. As a result of this a small organizational change will be made. Victoria Boczkowski, the Conference Director will now report directly to Interim Executive Director Davidson. This will allow Ms. Luchs to devote more of her time to her blending learning responsibilities. Randy Crader the Legislative Liaison is no longer with eTech. He transferred to the Governor's office last week.

Commissioner Osborn asked about who held these positions before and the employment status of Ms. Bryson and Ms. Luchs. Interim Executive Director Davidson explained that there was no full-time CLO, and the previous CIO Matt Howard resigned in May. He reiterated that Ms. Bryson was promoted from within eTech and that both of these individuals are full-time employees of eTech.

Commissioner Sams asked Ms. Luchs for insight about how the DLTF recommendations will fit into eTech's objectives. Ms. Luchs said that the DLTF had five recommendations and eTech plays a role in all of them to some extent. She said the recommendations related to infrastructure, defining blended learning, teacher professional development, research and innovation incentives.

4. Interim Executive Director Davidson said he had an opportunity to meet Station Managers of Public Broadcasting. This meeting took place yesterday at COSI. It was a very interesting discussion and he hopes this dialogue continues. He met with Ed Tech Directors in the afternoon yesterday as well. Those meetings were very productive. They discussed the roll of Ed Techs and he said he learned a great deal from this meeting.
5. Relating to the Scorecards, Interim Executive Director Davidson said a decision was made to only update and provide them if there are exceptions or major updates that will impact the outcome of a project. They have found that they are very time consuming, burdensome and expensive to reproduce.

Commissioner Sams asked about the video conferencing being performed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). He wanted to know if there was an update in this area. Commission Chair Designee Conley said that he and others have a meeting scheduled next week with the CIO of ODJFS to discuss the global view of video conferencing. They want to discuss this beyond K-12 and look at ways to aggregate and save money. Commissioner Designee Childs asked for someone from the K-12 community to be included in this meeting. Commission Chair Designee Conley thanked Scott Gaughan, Director of Networking and Planning Services, for putting together a document and meeting with him. He said he was not aware that eTech had newer equipment.

C. eTech Ohio FY 2012 Financial Update

Krista Shaw, Chief Operating Officer provided a financial update. Ms. Shaw distributed documents and said that the only difference from the last meeting is that the final payroll has been posted and any expenditures remaining will be open encumbrances. They hope to have those completed within the next 45 days.

Ms. Shaw said the OAKS state accounting system was online July 2nd, and that allowed them to begin processing for Fiscal Year 2013 (FY 13). The subsidies for FY 13 are available in Hall Pass as well. It is her understanding that eTech is in the process of reviewing the guidelines for the multi-media subsidies for FY 13. eTech is working with ODE to ensure that they are in agreement with the programmatic structure that will be developed.

The Office of Budget and Management released guidance information for the Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2014/2015. The biggest change is that the deadline for budget requests is being moved to September 17, 2012, when in the past it was due November 1st. The guidance asks that the General Revenue Fund (GRF) requests be based on a 10% reduction of the agency's FY 13 appropriation and also asks for a request to be based on the agency's FY 13 appropriation.

Commission Chair Designee Conley asked how often the subsidies can be distributed. Ms. Shaw said they can be distributed quarterly. Commissioner Hawkins asked about the restrictions on carryover on non-GRF funds. Ms. Shaw replied that there are no restrictions and any cash balance carries over. She said the Rotary Fund for the conference at \$3M is the biggest cash balance fund. This was in reply to Commission Chair Designee Conley.

Commissioner Osborn asked where eTech was with filling staff positions and key vacancies. Commission Chair Designee Conley said they have submitted salary adjustments to the Governor's office. They have not received an approval back on that request. Ms. Shaw said they have not submitted a formal request to hire any staff. Interim Executive Director Davidson said they have not received approval to hire any additional staff. Commission Chair Designee Conley asked Ms. Luchs to provide guidance at the next meeting on what her thoughts were relating to staff needs in the area of blended learning.

D. Conference Update

Victoria Boczkowski, Conference Director provided an update regarding the annual eTech Technology Conference. She said that super early bird registration has opened and that they have 160 registrants as of yesterday. That is \$23K in projected revenue. Of those registrations, 140 are for the full 3-day conference and in teams. They also have 73 vendors committed at 16,200 square feet as well. They are trending better than they were last year at this time.

Ms. Boczkowski began to discuss vendor outreach. She said that they attended the Esteem event last month. They provided promotional material to this organization.

She also shared that they are working with their partners, INFOhio, OhioLINK, ODE, Ohio Resource Council etc. to partner with as many resources as possible relating to eTech's Distance Learning conference theme. They are moving forward with program planning and branding concepts as well. Interim Executive Director Davidson said that the TV Station Managers are very interested in becoming conference participants this year. Commission Chair Designee Conley said he will ask that Ms. Boczkowski provide a conference update at each meeting.

Commissioner Sams commented that a number of the approximately 300 breakout sessions could be converted into online learning tools. Ms. Boczkowski said in the past the sessions were recorded and put on their website and iTunes U. They are exploring the option of YouTube clips this year. They plan to expand their technology assistance as well.

Commissioner Osborn asked about the Ed Tech Directors involvement. Ms. Boczkowski they have in the past and will continue to be. Commissioner Sams commented about synergy between the State School Board Association and the eTech annual conference. Ms. Boczkowski said they have presented at each other's conferences. They can look into follow-up 'strands' and secondary themes with that particular group.

The Commissioners discussed various groups they would like to see more of at the conference such as legislators and digital textbook manufacturers. They also said they may have an eTech meeting during the conference as a way to increase constituent interest with eTech.

IV. Equipment Outlay

Commissioner Osborn wanted to know if eTech was moving forward with the equipment outlay and if it was in the budget. Mr. Gaughan explained that there was some progress made at the end of the fiscal year. He continues to work with Dave Carwile, a representative from the Ohio Educational Television Stations. They have jointly created a needs survey for each of the stations. There are some concerns about the project moving forward as it relates to the equipment maintenance. This needs to be accounted for prior to making any purchasing decisions. Commission Chair Designee Conley said there would need to be a commitment from the stations to help support the maintenance efforts and potential personnel costs.

Commissioner Osborn went on to comment about eTech's strategic plan relating to the purpose and future of the organization. He wanted to know what the plans were as it related to future of eTech and making sure they are a viable contribution to the state of Ohio and Pre K through Higher Education. Commission Chair Designee Conley said they have had discussions with other state agencies about creating more collaboration in education. Commissioner Hawkins said his fear related to the transition if a decision was made to dissolve eTech. There are very valuable services that eTech provides.

Commissioner Childs said the administration would likely have a sense of their intent for eTech by winter of 2012 with a final decision when the budget bill is released. However, there have been no further discussions about the dissolution of eTech at this time as they know the importance of the services. Commission Chair Designee Conley said they have made it clear they are focused on collaboration with better service delivery.

V. INFOhio Advantage

Theresa Fredericka provided an overview of INFOhio. She began by laying out the impact of INFOhio and said it is one of the largest library and information networks in the United States. INFOhio is a learning tool for all of Ohio's K-12 students and educators and offers a large online collection of educational resources, which includes images, videos, popular magazines, newspapers, scholarly journals, encyclopedias, audio and e-books, as well as content in multiple languages.

She said 100% percent of Ohio's 1.8M K-12 students have free access to sixteen high-quality research databases. It would cost school districts \$24.15 per student to license these sixteen databases on their own and 75% of the school districts report that they could not afford them on their own.

Ms. Fredericka discussed the Discovery Portal which is a resource for students, staff, administrators and parents. All Discovery Portal resources are searchable 24/7. There are over 1,400 eBook and digital videos titles that are available. There are also electronic resources and the best of the web. The production of this was approximately \$160K and it would have cost over \$1.6M if the schools would have done it individually.

Ms. Fredericka also discussed the 21st Century Learning Commons. She said that this program is an online resource for all educators to explore. It is designed to: enhance 21st century learning, provide a technologically-advanced method to utilize INFOhio's electronic resources and foster a sense of global community through a variety of technology and learning methods. The 21st Century Learning Commons provides an array of resources to help educators understand how learning has changed, adapt teaching methods, and discover new ways to inspire students to think critically, solve problems, collaborate, innovate and create.

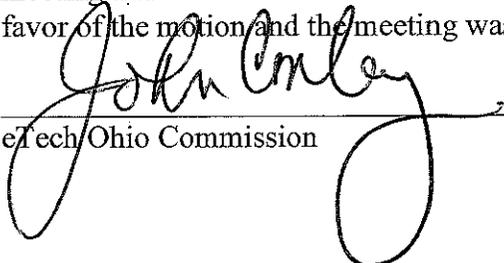
Ms. Fredericka also provided comments on professional development and research tools. The Commissioners began to discuss the school districts shortage of Librarians and Tech Coordinators. Ms. Fredericka said there were discussions about exploring a virtual librarian program.

VI. Miscellaneous

Commissioner Sams provided some closing comments to his fellow Commissioners relative to Epic 2020. He spoke about the number of 'web hits' and blog comments that this site has received most recently. He believes there is an education revolution. The state of Ohio is being passive and not actively integrating these free opportunities. Commissioner Sams would like to organize individuals to explore these ideas. Commission Chair Designee Conley said that there are collaborative efforts and the Ohio Board of Regents has senior staff engaged in this issue. He will keep Commissioner Sams up to speed with the progress.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business before eTech, Commissioner Sams made a motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Hawkins. All commissioners were in favor of the motion and the meeting was declared adjourned.


eTech/Ohio Commission

August 9, 2012

Date