

Blue Mountain Translator District¹

Board of Directors Special Meeting Hearing Provisional Minutes January 15, 2019

<p>1. Call to Order and Roll Call Vote</p>	<p>President Wallender called the meeting to order at 12:42 PM.</p> <p>Directors: President Tim Wallender, Director April Simpson, Director Christina Wood.</p> <p>Staff: Secretary/Treasurer Alex McHaddad.</p> <p>Members of the Public: Mr. Richard Beck, Mr. Fred Leitch.</p>
<p>2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest</p>	<p>Asked and none declared.</p>
<p>3.a. Event Overview</p>	<p>President Wallender opened the Channel Outage Discussion.</p> <p>President Wallender described that [A FEW YEARS AGO], Skyline Tower had installed the existing delivery system on Mt. Fanny. Installation work was formally performed by a subcontractor, Radio Tower Crew, but they did not properly mount the microwave receive dish on Mt. Fanny. Technicians employed by Oregon Public Broadcasting, at the time contracted by BMTD to provide engineering services, were enlisted to repair the dish mount as subcontractors by Skyline Tower. A U-bolt that was put in place and attached to the antenna mast was not properly installed. As a result, hurricane-force winds on December 14 dismantled the receive dish.</p> <p>Secretary/Treasurer McHaddad recalled receiving the first notification of an outage of Portland channels on Friday, December 14, from a viewer in Elgin. The viewer was referred to Mr. Richard Beck, a community volunteer who occasionally assists certain community members with</p>

Blue Mountain Translator District²

troubleshooting TV viewing problems. BMTD had recently begun operating out of a new office in La Grande, and an antenna capable of viewing signals besides OPB's channel had not been installed, impairing staff ability to confirm a signal outage.

Public comments about a signal outage problem were delivered to BMTD via social media, email, and phone throughout the weekend. President Wallender and secretary/Treasurer McHaddad reviewed equipment at the Island City microwave site with the remote help of Skyline Tower to confirm that signals were correctly being delivered via the fiber optic link.

Oregon Public Broadcasting technicians had planned to visit the Mt. Fanny site at the beginning of the week, but were unable to review the site until Wednesday, December 19. On Wednesday, the channel outage was discussed at a meeting of the Board. Following this meeting, President Wallender and Secretary/Treasurer McHaddad returned to the Island City microwave site for additional troubleshooting with the help of Mr. Andrew McHaddad. During this exercise, correct operation of the fiber optic delivery system was reaffirmed. Oregon Public Broadcasting also finally informed BMTD that the microwave dish on Mt. Fanny had been removed from the tower as a result of the wind.

Throughout the week, BMTD and Skyline Tower had discussed the latter party contracting with RS Technology, BMTD's engineering services contractor, to perform maintenance work at the Mt. Fanny site. Mr. Rob Stilson, the contractor, attempted to visit the site via helicopter on December 21, but was turned back due to weather. Mr. Stilson was able to reach the site on December 22. Repair work on the tower was performed by Mr. Stilson, and President Wallender made additional equipment at Mr.

Blue Mountain Translator District³

	<p>Stilson's direction that was then airlifted back to Mt. Fanny. All channels except for KATU were restored by the end of December 22. KATU was restored on December 23 following a remote reset procedure by Mr. Stilson.</p> <p>Director Wood asked when the fallen dish was installed, and President Wallender recalled that the dish was installed in 2016. Director Wood proposed scheduling a maintenance visit to identify everything that could be broken and fixing it.</p> <p>Director Simpson asked whether BMTD had installed wind gauges at the Mt. Fanny site. The District has not done so, and partnering with EONI to install such equipment was discussed. Mr. Leitch recalled that when he was a Director, one of the District's receive dishes was dislocated only a few inches by wind and the signal was lost.</p>
3.b. Staff Comments	<p>My section begins around 20:20</p> <p>Secretary/Treasurer McHaddad recalled receiving the first notification of an outage of Portland channels on Friday, December 14, from a viewer in Elgin. The viewer was referred to Mr. Richard Beck, a community volunteer who occasionally assists certain community members with troubleshooting TV viewing problems.</p> <p>STM confirmed the Island City troubleshooting; resolved with President Wallender to wait for OPB's report.</p> <p>Following every update in morning and late afternoon, the office voicemail was changed to inform potential callers of troubleshooting progress; updates also posted to Facebook. Likely got 300 phone calls during that time; voicemail box was full.</p> <p>Dad arrived and offered his technical expertise. Worked on troubleshooting in Island City. Helpful for Skyline to have somebody familiar</p>

Blue Mountain Translator District⁴

	<p>with all technical terms and procedures was valuable.</p> <p>Most of work that week was dealing with the channel outage and public comments. Had to answer at least five calls in the morning before voicemail was successfully changed. Sam commented that no work whatsoever would have been completed if I had answered all phone calls. Had to improvise with limited resources. BMTD received negative feedback on Facebook, including a few people rating the District at 1 out of 5 stars and writing that staff never answer the phone.</p> <p>I did everything I could to economize my time by updating when this as possible as well as juggling regular work.</p> <p>Tag-team on Friday: Rob on the mountain, Tim at the shop, Alex in the office on call to pick up materials in town in case Tim needed additional materials. Unfortunately, Rob was turned back on Friday, and Alex had to leave on Saturday, but Tim ended up having everything he needed to get the work done on Saturday.</p> <p>Work in the office included accounting, legislative affairs, processing service charge letters, etc.</p> <p>Directors and ED discussed that in the future, having someone in the office to answer calls will be helpful. People enjoy the human interaction.</p> <p>Comments on social media were discussed. Several Facebook followers left comments suggesting that the office phone goes unanswered throughout the year, along with 1-Star ratings.</p>
3.c. Public Feedback	<p>Mr. Fred Leitch asked for information about the helicopter landing pad. The condition of the helipad and its ownership are unclear. The Secretary/Treasurer will ask USFS once the</p>

Blue Mountain Translator District⁵

	<p>government shutdown has ended.</p> <p>Mr. Richard Beck proposed wider coverage of the outage incident. Being able to broadcast reports like this on a District-owned channel would be valuable. The District needs to continue to invest in communication with the public.</p> <p>Director Wood discussed asking newspapers to publish a report on the outage, and to possibly take out an advertising space if local newspapers do not wish to publish the report.</p> <p>Mr. Beck discussed asking local TV stations to cover the channel outage story.</p>
3.d. Action Plan	<p>President Wallender discussed rebuilding plans for the heliport.</p> <p>Secretary/Treasurer McHaddad discussed suggestions from Mr. Andrew McHaddad. The first is to put together a complete map of all components of the District's operations, from Portland and Boise stations all the way to District transmitters. The delivery system from Portland is managed by Skyline Tower, and the signals from Boise are transmitted by Tegna, while BMTD's transmitters are operated separately from Skyline and Tegna. A redundant signal delivery system to deliver Skyline Tower content should be created. Creating a manual of operations that maps out the network at all points will be valuable, and Mr. Andrew McHaddad is interested in offering such a service if the District requests it.</p>
7. Adjournment	<p>President Wallender adjourned the meeting at 2:11 PM.</p>