



From: Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Date: February 18, 2015  
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of February 18, 2015**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Jeffrey Shell  
Governor Matthew Armstrong  
Governor Leon Aron  
Governor Ryan Crocker (via telephone)  
Governor Michael Kempner  
Governor Karen Kornbluh  
Governor Kenneth Weinstein

Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel was not in attendance.

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

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

The Chairman called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

Chairman Shell acknowledged and welcomed Karen Kornbluh to her first official meeting as a member of the Board of Governors. He then invited Governor Kornbluh to give brief remarks. He noted that, as a result of Governor Kornbluh's appointment, Michael Meehan is no longer on the Board.

Chairman Shell announced that Andy Lack's appointment had been finalized, and that Mr. Lack was sworn-in office on January 20, 2015 as Chief Executive Officer and Director of BBG. He said that the Board will hear later from Mr. Lack as he gives his first report to the Board. The Chairman also said that, in the future, he will only give a brief introduction and then turn the meeting over to Mr. Lack who will run the meeting.

The Chairman stated that there will be no panel discussion at the end of this meeting in order for the Board and Mr. Lack to visit Voice of America's (VOA) newsroom, but that a panel discussion is planned for the next BBG meeting in April.

## Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting

Chairman Shell reported on the threats that BBG journalists have faced, especially in Azerbaijan, since the last Board meeting. He noted that the BBG networks operate in media environments where authoritarian countries, struggling to control both information and their citizens, seek to censor objective voices and crack down on civil society, including independent press. He highlighted the following incidents: (1) On December 26, Azerbaijani police raided and closed Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) bureau in Baku, and that the bureau remains closed today while several staff members had left Azerbaijan; (2) Khadija Ismayilova, an investigative journalist and RFE/RL contributor, remains in jail and that new charges brought against Ms. Ismayilova on February 13 could result, if convicted, in a maximum imprisonment of 12 years, and on behalf of the Board, the Chairman called on Azeri authorities to permit the bureau to reopen, release Ms. Ismayilova, and halt the harassment of RFE/RL journalists and their families; (3) RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service continues to suffer intimidation and harassment in Ukraine; (4) several Radio/TV Martí reporters' equipment had been confiscated by authorities; (5) the family of a Uyghur Service reporter of Radio Free Asia continues to be harassed and imprisoned in China; and (6) Bashar Fahmi, a correspondent of Alhurra, has not been seen or heard from since his disappearance over two years ago during a reporting trip in Aleppo, Syria, and on behalf of the Board, the Chairman called on anybody who has information on Mr. Fahmi's whereabouts to step forward.

Moving to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, and that the Board may conduct business based on majority vote, a quorum being present. He noted that the Board members had received by email materials for the consent agenda, and that he had not received comments from any Governors.

Chairman Shell described the three items for Board consideration as part of the consent agenda: (1) Minutes of December 18, 2014 meeting; (2) Resolution honoring Governor Michael Meehan; and (3) Resolution on revised BBG meeting dates in 2015. There being no comments, Governor Weinstein made a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Governor Aron seconded. The Board passed the consent agenda unanimously. The Chairman noted that, after consulting with Mr. Lack on the meeting locations, the Board will meet in Prague, Czech Republic in 2015 and in Miami, Florida in 2016, alternating between Miami and Prague each year.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman announced that Ann Noonan, Co-founder and Executive Director of Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting and Karl Altau, Joint Baltic American National Committee, had registered to address the Board; however, both were unable to attend the meeting due to inclement weather.

The Board took a short recess and reconvened for a review of the Voice of America (VOA) led by VOA Director David Ensor.

Following the VOA review, Chairman Shell announced that the next Board meeting will be held at BBG headquarters in Washington, D.C., on April 29, 2015. The meeting will include a review of the Office of Cuba broadcasting.

## Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting

At the Chairman's invitation, CEO and Director Andy Lack gave his report. Among other things, Mr. Lack stated that he believes it is extremely important to get out in the field to see the BBG's mission in action in order to truly understand the degree of the mission's significance. Mr. Lack said that he hopes to announce at the next meeting, the timetable and a plan for new translation services and solutions so that international news is more quickly translated into English and then placed on the VOA website. He stated that he intends to address broadcast clearance issues and will be in negotiations to address them. He suggested that since San Francisco is the epicenter of innovation and technology in the U.S., if not the world, and it would make the BBG much stronger if it were geographically positioned there, as opposed to Los Angeles.

Chairman Shell then expressed his full confidence in the Board and Mr. Lack's leadership, and that he expects great things to come.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of December 18, 2014. The Board adopted the minutes of the October 30, 2014 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring Michael Meehan. The Board adopted the resolution honoring Michael Meehan as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution on Revised BBG Meeting Dates in 2015. The Board adopted the resolution on revised BBG meeting dates in 2015 as set forth in Attachment 4.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: BBG CEO and Director Andy Lack; Executive Director Suzie Carroll; Acting Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Andre Mendes; IBB Director of Global Strategy Robert Bole; General Counsel and Board Secretary Paul Kollmer-Dorsey; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; Director of Public Affairs Letitia King; Dan Dzara, Assistant General Counsel (Technology and Operations Support); David Ensor, Director of the Voice of America; Kelu Chao, VOA Associate Director for Language Programming and Acting Chief of Staff; Scott Stearns, VOA Correspondent at State Department; Mark Prah, VOA Associate Director for Operations; Kevin Lynch, VOA Senior Editor for the Office of Language Programming; Sheila Gandji, VOA Director of Global English; Matthew Baise, VOA Director of Digital Strategy; Alberto Pimienta, VOA Spanish Service; Vincent Makori, VOA English to Africa Service; Setareh Sieg, VOA General Manager of Persian News Network; Tatiana Vorozhko, VOA Ukrainian Service; Dakhil Elias, VOA Kurdish Service; Kristy Hays, IBB Supervisory Management and Program Analyst; Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting; John Giambalvo, Interim Manager for RFE/RL; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Brian Conniff, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks; Dan Sreebny, Senior Advisor for BBG, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs; and Mary DeBree, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.

## Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting

Approved:

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Jeffrey Shell  
Chairman

Witnessed:

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Paul Kollmer-Dorsey  
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for February 18, 2015 Meeting
2. Minutes of the December 18, 2014 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring Michael Meehan
4. Resolution on Revised BBG Meeting Dates in 2015

## Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 1

### BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

#### February 2015 Meeting Agenda

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT THE COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

**Wednesday, February 18**

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**9:00 - 11:30 Broadcasting Board of Governors' Open Meeting (BBG-IBB Conference Room)**

Chairman's Remarks

A. Consent Agenda

- Minutes of December 18, 2014 Meeting
- Resolution Honoring Michael Meehan
- Resolution on Revised BBG Meeting Dates in 2015

B. CEO & Director's Report

C. Public Comment

**9:30 Break**

**9:45 - 11:30 BBG Open Meeting Continued**

D. Voice of America Review

E. Other Items for Consideration at Next Board Meeting

## Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 2

From: Broadcasting Board of Governors  
Date: December 18, 2014  
Subject: **Minutes of the BBG Meeting of December 18, 2014**

The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) met today in the Cohen Building (BBG headquarters) in Washington, D.C. The meeting was open for public attendance as seating capacity allowed and for public observation via streaming on the BBG website.

The meeting was attended by the following Board members:

Chairman Jeffrey Shell  
Governor Matthew Armstrong  
Governor Ryan Crocker  
Governor Michael Kempner  
Governor Kenneth Weinstein  
Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel

Governor Michael Meehan was not in attendance.

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

The agenda of the meeting is set forth in Attachment 1.

The Chairman called the meeting to order and noted that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act and streamed live over the Internet at the BBG website.

Chairman Shell acknowledged and welcomed new Board members Michael Kempner and Dr. Leon Aron, who was absent due to a prior commitment and was unable to be formally sworn-in office. He recognized attendance by Ms. Karen Kornbluh and noted that she had not yet been confirmed as a member of the Board. He briefly introduced Governors Kempner and Aron, and nominee Ms. Kornbluh.

The Chairman then offered a tribute to Governor Meehan for his four years of service on the Board and noted that the Board plans to formally thank Governor Meehan. At the Chairman's invitation, there followed comments from other Governors, expressing their gratitude for Governor Meehan's work and contributions.

Chairman Shell announced the presence of Andy Lack, designated Chief Executive Officer and Director of Broadcasting Board of Governors and noted that his appointment was almost finalized.

## Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting

Before moving to Board business, Chairman Shell brought attention to the threats that BBG journalists have faced since the last Board meeting. He noted that the BBG networks operate in media environments where authoritarian countries, struggling to control both information and their citizens, seek to censor objective voices and crack down on civil society, including independent press. He highlighted the following incidents: (1) Khadija Ismayilova, an investigative journalist for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Azerbaijani Service, was sent to pre-trial in Azerbaijan being unjustly punished for her reporting on government corruption and human rights abuses of the country, and on behalf of the Board, the Chairman called on Azeri authorities for her immediate release; (2) Omar Al Obaidi, a reporter for Alhurra-Iraq, and his cameraman were attacked, shot at, and escaped with minor injuries; (3) the brothers of Shohret Hoshur, a reporter for Radio Free Asia's Uyghur Service, were detained by Chinese authorities in an attempt to silence Mr. Hoshur's reporting on the unrest in China's Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region; and (4) Bashar Fahmi, a correspondent of Alhurra, has not been seen or heard from since his disappearance over two years ago during a reporting trip in Aleppo, Syria. The Chairman stated that the Board takes seriously the safety of BBG's journalists and hopes the attention both here in Washington and among international advocates can help improve the dire situations of the journalists and their families, and rectify these gross violations of human rights.

The Chairman welcomed Oleksandr Motsyk, Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States, and invited David Ensor, Director of Voice of America (VOA), to introduce the Ambassador. Upon Mr. Ensor's introduction, Ambassador Motsyk presented the Princess Olga Medal (an award given in Ukraine bestowed on women of outstanding personal merit) on behalf of the President of the Ukraine to Myroslava Gongadze, anchor of VOA Ukrainian Service's flagship TV program *Chas-Time*. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman thanked the Ambassador and congratulated Ms. Gongadze.

Chairman Shell then paused to pay tribute to Mark Helmke, who passed away on November 1, 2014. At the Chairman's invitation, Governor Armstrong gave remarks, touching on Mr. Helmke's work and his importance to the BBG.

Chairman Shell asked Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, to discuss recent developments concerning normalization of U.S.-Cuba relations. Mr. Garcia-Perez described the reactions from the island. He noted that Cuba is still violating human rights and emphasized the critical role of the Martis.

Moving to Board business, the Chairman stated that the presence of five or more Governors satisfies the Board's quorum requirement, permitting the Board to conduct business based on majority vote, a quorum being present. He said that the Board members had received by email materials for the consent agenda, and that he had not received comments from any Governors.

Chairman Shell described the three items on the consent agenda for the Board's consideration: (1) Minutes of October 30, 2014 meeting; (2) Resolution honoring VOA's Ukrainian Service 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary; and (3) Resolution Honoring RFE/RL's Radio Marshall 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. There being no comments, Under Secretary Stengel made a motion to adopt the consent agenda.

## Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting

Governor Armstrong seconded. The Board passed the consent agenda unanimously with an abstention by Governor Kempner.

In accordance with the Board's prior protocol for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings, the Chairman invited Ann Noonan, Co-founder and Executive Director of Committee for U.S. International Broadcasting; Carolyn Presutti, TV correspondent for VOA Central News; and Alan Heil, Public Diplomacy Council, to address the Board for three minutes each.

The Board took a short recess and reconvened for an overview of the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) led by the Interim Management Team: André Mendes, Director of Global Operations; Robert Bole, Director of Global Strategy; and Suzie Carroll, Director of Global Communications. At the conclusion of the IBB "Deep Dive," the Chairman noted that this completes the first round of "Deep Dives," and that VOA will start the next round in 2015.

Chairman Shell announced the Board's participation in a presentation of the David Burke Distinguished Journalism Awards which immediately follows the Board meeting. He stated that the next Board meeting will take place at BBG Headquarters in Washington, D.C., on February 18, 2015. The Chairman then adjourned the meeting.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors agreed to the following decision elements (all decisions were adopted by a unanimous vote unless otherwise indicated):

1. Adoption of Minutes of October 30, 2014. The Board adopted the minutes of the October 30, 2014 meeting of the plenary Board as set forth in Attachment 2.
2. Resolution Honoring Voice of America's (VOA) Ukrainian Service 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring VOA's Ukrainian Service 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as set forth in Attachment 3.
3. Resolution Honoring Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Radio Mashaal 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Board adopted the resolution honoring RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as set forth in Attachment 4.

Other Attendees:

The following persons were also present during all or part of the meeting: IBB Director of Global Communications and BBG Executive Director Suzie Carroll; IBB Director of Global Operations and Acting Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Andre Mendes; IBB Director of Global Strategy Robert Bole; General Counsel and Board Secretary Paul Kollmer-Dorsey; Director of Board Operations Oanh Tran; Director of Public Affairs Letitia King; Public Affairs Specialist Anastasia Kolobrodova; Writer-Editor (Multimedia) Laurie Moy; Director of Graphics Jennifer Lea Ramsey; Director of Research and Assessments Sonja Gloeckle; Mobile Products Manager William Sullivan; Media Strategist Paul Marszalek; Acting Director of the Office of Performance Review Jeffrey Trimble; IBB Chief of Staff Marie Lennon; Director of the Office of Civil Rights Delia Johnson; Director of the Office of Contracts Cherylynn Peters; Director of the Office of Workforce Support and Development David Milligan; Director of Strategy and

## Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting

Development Bruce Sherman; Acting Director of the Office of Security Frederick Lang; Deputy Engineering Resource and Acting Deputy CFO Connie Stephens; Deputy Engineering Services and Acting Director of the Office of Technology, Services and Innovation Terry Balazs; Regional Marketing Officer Oscar Barcelo; Special Advisor to the Director of Global Operations and Acting CFO Victor Morales; Deputy for Technology Support Services Veris Burton; President Management Fellow - Management and Policy Analyst Nicholas Fechter; David Ensor, Director of the Voice of America; Kelu Chao, VOA Associate Director for Language Programming and Acting Chief of Staff; Scott Stearns, VOA Correspondent at State Department; Myroslava Gongadze, VOA Ukrainian Service; Rebecca McMenamen, VOA Senior Advisor of Strategy; Carlos Garcia-Perez, Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting; John Giambalvo, Interim Manager for RFE/RL; Nenad Pejic, RFE/RL Interim Manager (via telephone); Christine Fetzko, RFE/RL Director of Corporate Strategy & Operations; Ben Herman, RFE/RL General Counsel; Libby Liu, President of Radio Free Asia (RFA); Bernadette Burns, RFA General Counsel; Brian Conniff, President of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks; Dan Sreebny, Senior Advisor for BBG, Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs; and BBG nominee Karen Kornbluh.

Approved:

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Jeffrey Shell  
Chairman

Witnessed:

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Paul Kollmer-Dorsey  
Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda for December 18, 2014 Meeting
2. Minutes of the October 30, 2014 Board Meeting
3. Resolution Honoring VOA's Ukrainian Service 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
4. Resolution Honoring RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 3

### RESOLUTION HONORING MICHAEL MEEHAN

February 18, 2015

WHEREAS, Michael Meehan, in his role as a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) from July 2010 to December 2014, has strongly supported accurate, objective journalism for audiences around the world in places whose media are not entirely free;

WHEREAS, Mr. Meehan's legacy includes improving the agency's agility and capacity to respond to an ever changing worldwide media environment;

WHEREAS, Mr. Meehan served tirelessly on numerous BBG Board committees, providing guidance, insight and leadership as the Board navigated systematic changes;

WHEREAS, Mr. Meehan's institutional knowledge and acumen during the Board transition were especially noteworthy;

WHEREAS, Mr. Meehan was a forceful proponent of Internet freedom and censorship circumvention technologies to help audiences gain access to important information;

WHEREAS, Mr. Meehan provided public support to agency communications efforts and was actively involved in outreach and cooperation across the public and private spheres; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Meehan drew on his extensive experience with Congress and the media to provide guidance at critical times.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Broadcasting Board of Governors honors Mr. Meehan's contribution to the agency and extends its deepest thanks for all that he has done.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an appropriate copy of this resolution be forwarded to Michael Meehan.

## Minutes of February 18, 2015 Meeting

ATTACHMENT 4

### REVISED BBG MEETING DATES IN 2015

(ALL MEETINGS ARE AT THE COHEN BUILDING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)

February 18 (Wednesday)

April 29 (Wednesday)

July 1 (Wednesday)<sup>1</sup>

October 8 (Thursday)<sup>2</sup>

December 17 (Thursday)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>July Board meeting will be held at the headquarters of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Prague, Czech Republic.

<sup>2</sup>October Board meeting will be held at the headquarters of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks in Springfield, VA

<sup>3</sup>December Board meeting will be held at the headquarters of Radio Free Asia in Washington, D.C.