

Outreach & Education Sub-Committee
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**Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority
Outreach & Education Sub-Committee Meeting
Thursday October 24, 2024
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM**

Virtual Meeting
Dial-In: +1 267-332-8737
Phone Conference ID: 369 407 287#

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of August 28, 2024, Meeting Minutes
- III. New Members
- IV. CPF: Multipurpose Facilities Program Approvals
- V. Broadband Ready Communities Relaunch
- VI. PA Broadband Map Feature Updates
- VII. Public Comment
- VIII. Adjournment

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority
Outreach & Education Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
August 28, 2024
Virtual - Microsoft Teams Meeting

Sub-Committee members in attendance

- Dan Alwine, Subcommittee Chair, Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce
- Joe Gerdes, PA Association of Township Supervisors
- Amy Sturges, PA Municipal League
- Bailey Fisher, PA Farm Bureau
- Mark Critz, PA Department of Agriculture, Board Liaison

Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) staff in attendance

- Kalie Snyder, PBDA Outreach and Engagement Manager
- Greg Alliger, Infrastructure Project Manager
- Mary Markle, PBDA Executive Assistant

Guests in attendance

- Tammy Stenson, McMillen Engineering, Inc.
- Jennifer Algoe Keaton, BCAP
- Barrett Sheridan, PA OCA
- Holly Laird, Armstrong Conservation District
- Quintina Thomas, Whole Unity Inc.
- Harlan Lawson, GMS Funding Solutions
- Paige Oliver, Ichor Strategies
- Tim Beiler, Upward Broadband
- Giovanna Ortiz Brackbill, PA Utility Law Project
- Sara Stringfellow, GMS Funding Solutions
- Katie Hetherington Cunfer, SiteLogicIQ
- Juliet Fink-Yates, City of Philadelphia
- Rachael Haverstick, Kinber
- Denise Puglio Stout
- Amber Snyder
- Yvonne
- JP

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:36pm. Mary Markle conducted roll call and provided housekeeping items. Quorum was not met.

II. Approval of the April 24, 2024, and June 27, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Roll will be taken again before the end of the meeting. If quorum is met, minutes will be voted on at that time. Without quorum, meeting minutes will be tabled until the next meeting. (See below)

III. Capital Projects Fund (CPF) Programs Update

- a. Broadband infrastructure Program (BIP)
- b. Multipurpose Facilities Program
- c. Digital Connectivity Program

Regarding BIP, Ms. Snyder informed that the PBDA is finalizing contracting with awardees. She noted that Greg Alliger will be joining the meeting and will provide more information.

Ms. Snyder reminded that the PBDA received 599 applications for the Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Grant Program and that a list of recommend projects will be presented at an upcoming Board meeting in September.

She also confirmed that the Digital Connectivity Technology Grant Program application window closed on August 19th. The PBDA received 135 applications, all of which are under review.

IV. Digital Equity Capacity Grant Update

Ms. Snyder reminded that the PBDA had previously received Digital Equity funds for planning and the Capacity funds are to be used for implementation. She stated that, in May the PBDA applied for the Capacity Grant first tranche of funding, which is approximately \$25 million. She added that the PBDA is working with the NTIA on curing the application and anticipates notice of award in October.

V. Digital Equity Competitive Grant

A notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) was released by the NTIA offering \$1.25 billion for digital equity work to eligible applicants. Targeted award amounts are \$8-15 million. Other Commonwealth agencies are permitted to apply, and several have. As an administrator of the DE Capacity grant, the PBDA is not permitted to apply. She referred those with questions or wanting additional information to the NTIA website.

Chair Alwine asked for clarification of state vs. federal funds. Ms. Snyder explained that the CPF funds are federal funds deployed by the PBDA.

Mark Critz asked if the PBDA is promoting the NTIA grant. Ms. Snyder replied that the PBDA is spreading the word about the grant. She noted that the PBDA is not advising applicants.

VI. PBDA Newsletter Cadence

Ms. Snyder stated that with its quarterly cadence, the PBDA newsletter is too content heavy and asked the committee for feedback on the cadence.

Amy Sturges recommended pivoting to monthly which was reiterated by Bailey Fisher who added that the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau has a similar cadence with its newsletter. They started focusing on prioritizing and streamlining the information as well as incorporating hyperlinks.

VII. Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program (BEAD)

- a. Guidelines
- b. Webinars
- c. Office Hours

Ms. Snyder stated that the PBDA is finishing up the development of the BEAD guidelines and anticipates approval from the Board at a special meeting, likely to be held in September. The guidelines follow closely, Volume II of the Initial Proposal. The approved guidelines will be posted 30 days prior to the opening of the application window, as required. The PBDA will offer pre-recorded Webinars providing an overview of the program and application guidance. In addition, the PBDA will hold office hours and will create a program page for the PBDA website.

Chair Alwine asked if the Capitol Projects Fund will continue to exist. Ms. Snyder responded that no second application periods will be made available for the BIP or Multi-Purpose Community Facilities programs. She added that there may be an opportunity for a second round of the Digital Connectivity Technology Program.

Mr. Alwine asked for a date for the Special Board meeting. Ms. Snyder replied that a date has not yet been set.

At this time Ms. Snyder noted that Bailey Fisher joined the meeting and quorum was met. Chair Alwine then called for a motion to approve the minutes from the April and June meetings as presented to the committee. Bailey Fisher made the motion to approve which was seconded by Amy Sturges. Motion passed unanimously.

Greg Alliger joined the meeting and stated that in addition to contracts waiting to be fully executed for BIP, there are projects that are contracted and, in the planning, and permitting stage where they are likely to remain for the Fall. He expects construction could begin at the end of this year or the beginning of next.

VIII. New Business

Ms. Snyder stated that she is now the program lead for the Broadband Ready Communities program (BBRC) and a revision of the plan is forthcoming.

IX. Public Comment

Chair Alwine asked Mary to conduct public comment.

Quintina from Whole Unity Inc., Indiana, PA, asked for clarification on the date and purpose of the Special Board Meeting. She also asked how many applications were submitted for the

Facilities Grant. Ms. Snyder replied that the details of the meeting are not confirmed but they will be posted to the website. She added that 599 applications were submitted.

Giovana Ortiz Brackville from PA Utility Law project, asked to be added to email distribution list and be sent the newsletter. Kalie added her email address and the PBDA website link to the chat.

X. Adjournment

Chair Alwine informed that the next subcommittee meeting will be October 24th at 2:30pm. He added that Mary and Kalie will reach out to committee members in advance to ensure quorum for that meeting.

Chair Alwine called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joe Gerdes motioned which was seconded by Bailey Fisher. Meeting adjourned at 3:09pm.

DRAFT