

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority

November 21, 2024

2:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

Dial-In: +1 267-332-8737

Phone Conference ID: #954 777 463#

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of the October 10, 2024, Meeting Minutes
- III. Capital Projects Fund – Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Update
- IV. Capital Projects Fund – Digital Connectivity Technology Program Approvals
- V. Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program Update
- VI. Broadband Ready Communities Program Update
- VII. Public Comment
- VIII. Adjournment

**This meeting will be recorded, and your participation is your consent to being recorded.*

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (PBDA)

Board Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting

November 21, 2024

Microsoft Teams

Attendance

Board members:

- Secretary Uri Monson, Office of the Budget, Chairman
- Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill, Secretary
- Senator John Kane, Assistant Secretary
- Mark Critz on behalf of Secretary Russell Redding, Department of Agriculture
- Representative Rob Matzie
- Nicole Weaver on behalf of Representative Carl Metzgar
- Dr. Laura Dimino on behalf of Dr. Kyle Kopko, Center for Rural Pennsylvania
- Secretary Rick Siger, Department of Community & Economic Development
- Cathy Hall on behalf of Secretary Khalid Mumin, Department of Education
- Barb Burba-Filoreto on behalf of Secretary Reggie McNeil, Department of General Services
- Chairman Steve DeFrank, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

Designees:

- Chloe Mandara, Legislative Director, Office of Senator Phillips-Hill
- Matt Franchak, Policy Director, Office of Senator John Kane
- Rich Pronesti, PA House Consumer Protection, Technology and Utilities Committee

Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) staff:

- Brandon Carson, PBDA Executive Director
- Brandon Peters, PBDA Deputy Director
- Kalie Snyder, PBDA Outreach & Engagement Manager
- Pam Frontino, PBDA Grants Manager
- Charles Napier, PBDA Director of Infrastructure
- Greg Alliger, PBDA Broadband Project Manager
- Julia Brinjac, PBDA Director of Digital Equity
- Mary Markle, PBDA Executive Assistant
- Felicia Duger, Deputy Digital Director
- Tim Arthun, Policy & Program Specialist
- Lori Irwin, Chief Counsel
- Penny Ickes, Director, Communications

Virtual Guests

80 additional guests participated virtually.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Monson called the meeting to order at 2:03pm and asked Kalie Snyder to provide housekeeping and conduct roll call. Ms. Snyder conducted roll call and confirmed quorum.

II. Approval of the October 10, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Chairman Monson asked for questions and comments on the October 10, 2024 minutes as presented to the Board. Seeing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Motion was made by Senator Kane and seconded by Dr. Dimino. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Capital Projects Fund – Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Update

Brandon Carson advised that as projects move through the contract phase, the Norwin Public library has elected to not accept the grant offered to them. With funding now available to be reallocated the PBDA is recommending that \$415,460.00 be approved for the Tyrone Snyder Public Library in Blair County.

Chairman Monson called for a motion to approve the funding for Tyrone Snyder Public Library. Mark Critz motioned, which was seconded by Barb Burba-Filoreto. Kalie Snyder conducted a roll call vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Member	Voting Designee	Vote
Chairman Monson		Yes
Secretary Redding	Mark Critz	Yes
Secretary Siger		Yes
Secretary Mumin	Cathy Hall	Yes
Secretary McNeil	Barb Burba-Filoreto	Yes
Senator Kane		Yes
Representative Matzie		Yes
Representative Metzgar	Nicole Weaver	Yes
Senator Phillips-Hill		Yes
PUC Chairman DeFrank		Yes
Dr. Kopko	Dr. Laura Dimino	Yes

IV. Capital Projects Fund – Digital Connectivity Technology Program Approvals

Julia Brinjac offered an update and presented the list for approval. She recounted that the program offers \$20 million in devices to eligible entities and reviewed requirements, details of the grant, the devices being offered and the responsibilities of the subgrantees. Ms. Brinjac then referred to the list of the 117 recommended subgrantees to receive, in total, 9,122 laptops. She noted that they represent diverse program types covering 42 counties. Ms. Brinjac added that the PBDA plans to offer a second-round application in the Spring of 2025.

Chairman Monson asked the Board for comments and questions. PUC Chairman, Steve DeFrank asked if there were many applications form Intermediate Units. Ms. Brinjac replied that IUs did submit applications and would encourage them to do so in the second round.

A motion was made by PUC Chairman DeFrank and a second was made by Representative Matzie. Kalie Snyder conducted a roll vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Member	Voting Designee	Vote
Chairman Monson		Yes
Secretary Redding	Mark Critz	Yes
Secretary Siger		Yes
Secretary Mumin	Cathy Hall	Yes
Secretary McNeil	Barb Burba-Filoreto	Yes
Senator Kane		Yes
Representative Matzie		Yes
Representative Metzgar	Nicole Weaver	Yes
Senator Phillips-Hill		Yes
PUC Chairman DeFrank		Yes
Dr. Kopko	Dr. Laura Dimino	Yes

V. Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program Update

Chairman Monson invited Nicole Ugarte from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to offer remarks. Ms. Ugarte shared that the NTIA has approved Pennsylvania’s Challenge Process which allows PBDA to move to next step of subgrantee selection. She explained that subgrantee selection will include public comment as well as a review by the Board and NTIA assuring that the process is open and fair with the ultimate goal of providing internet for all.

Chuck Napier then reviewed the BEAD timeline noting the posting of the guidelines in September. The maps presented illustrated Broadband Serviceable Areas (BSAs) containing Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs) that are eligible for BEAD funds. Mr. Napier also shared details of the BEAD timeline from the application period to the Notice of Awards.

Dr. Laura Dimino asked if the second application period is only for locations that weren’t addressed in round one. Mr. Napier affirmed that the second round is for remaining BSLs.

VI. Broadband Ready Communities Program (BBRC) Update

Kalie Snyder stated that the BBRC Program is offered as an opportunity for municipalities to demonstrate their readiness for broadband infrastructure expansion. She noted that participation was initially lower than expected. The PBDA revisited the application requirements, made revisions, and relaunched the program in November. Changes included a reduction in the number of worksheet questions, changing certain requirements to recommendations and the elimination of the county grading scale. The BBRC application period has been extended to March 31, 2025. Ms. Snyder noted an increase in applications since the relaunch.

VII. Public Comment

Chairman Monson asked Kalie Snyder to facilitate the public comment session. Matt Hrebicik from the Bucks County Library asked if, as a current recipient of the technology grant, they are also eligible to apply during a second round. Mr. Carson stated that the guidelines for a second round are being evaluated.

VIII. Adjournment

Chairman Monson noted that the next regular meeting will be held on January 16, 2025. He thanked the Board and the PBDA staff and called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Secretary Siger made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Senator Phillips-Hill. The meeting adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill
Secretary