

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority

July 25, 2024

10:00 AM

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Hearing Room 1

400 North Street, Harrisburg

Dial-In: +1 267-332-8737

Phone Conference ID: 575 984 466#

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of the April 18, 2024, Meeting Minutes
- III. Financial Update: April - June 2024 Expenditures
- IV. Grants Management Consultant Approval
- V. Capital Projects Fund – Broadband Infrastructure Program Update
- VI. Capital Projects Fund – Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program Update
- VII. Capital Projects Fund – Digital Connectivity Technology Program Vendor Approval
- VIII. Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program Update
- IX. Subcommittee Update
- X. Public Comment
- XI. Adjournment

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

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (PBDA)

Board Meeting Minutes

July 25, 2024

Keystone Building

PUC Hearing Room #1

400 North Street, Harrisburg

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Attendance

Board members:

- Secretary Uri Monson, Office of the Budget, Chairman
- Senator John Kane, Assistant Secretary
- Representative Rob Matzie
- Representative Carl Metzgar
- Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill, Secretary
- Dr. Kyle Kopko, Center for Rural Pennsylvania

Designees:

- Mike Hanna on behalf of 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
- Mark Critz on behalf of Secretary Russell Redding, Department of Agriculture
- Joel Cheskis on behalf of Chairman Steve DeFrank, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
- 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
- Jesse Suders, PBDA Infrastructure Program Manager
- Julia Brinjac, PBDA Digital Equity Program Manager
- Kyle Snyder, PBDA Broadband Planning Specialist
- Dr. Stephanie Perry, PBDA Digital Equity and Workforce Specialist
- Greg Alliger, PBDA Broadband Project Manager
- Britt Muniz, PBDA Counsel
- Dawn Zervanos, DCED Legal Office Administrator
- Mary Markle, PBDA Executive Assistant

In-Person Guests:

- Todd Eachus, BCAP
- Jennifer Algoe-Keaton, BCAP
- Brian Barno, BCAP
- Beth Rosentel, BIPR
- Steve Barber, Michael Baker International (MBI)

- Tracy Vernon, Michael Baker International (MBI)
- Catherine Conner, Milliron Goodman
- Krish Patel, PUC Intern
- Natalie Guerra, PUC Intern
- Jay Pizoli, LYP
- Sophie Markle, Susquehanna University

Virtual Guests:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| • David Feidt, McNeese,
Wallace & Nurick
(MWN) | • Craig Corbin | • Jeff Jones, Sand Cherry
Associates |
| • Michael Musser, MWN | • Beth Crow, MBI | • Robert Wharton, Sand
Cherry Associates |
| • Nate Regotti, MWN | • Carl Yastremski,
Frontier | • John Fabrizio, |
| • Kevin Sunday, MWN | • Jennifer Cloonan,
Frontier | • Chris Field, University
of Pittsburgh |
| • Jim Skjeveland, Rolka
Loube | • Kristen Ritchey,
Comcast | • Marty Fotta, UNC of
NEPA |
| • Dora Pleasant, IEM | • Jason Fajersky, Ripple
Fiber | • Cheryl Morgan, SCFLS |
| • Jessica Whitmore, Daza
Development | • Christian Muniz, Delta
One | • Marty Qually, Adams
County |
| • Anthony Hennen, The
Center Square | • Chuck Napier, JLA
Advisors | • Kate Rivera, Kate
Rivera Solutions |
| • Karen White, MBI | • Jennifer Kurien, Tidal
Basin Group | • James Radick,
Highmark Health |
| • Carrie Cleary, Pa
Libraries | • Steve Warhola, PA
Senate | • JoAnn Fabrizio, J Fab
Consulting |
| • Tracy Stromquist, IEM | • Juliet Fink-Yates, City
of Philadelphia | • Elio Zamora, MBI |
| • Jeremy Jurick, AGOC | • John Calhoun, Sand
Cherry Associates | • Alex Rahn, AX
Advocacy |
| • Alexis LaPointe, Kinber
Associates | • Carolyn Rumbarger,
Sand Cherry Associates | • Caroline McCaig, Office
of the Governor |
| • Rachel Haverstick,
Kinber Associates | | • Chelsea Ordonez, Ichor
Strategies |
| • Jeanne Shearer,
Windstream | | • Ernie Holtrey |
| • Tammy Breski, IEM | | • Savannah |
| • Jim Mercante, Chester
County | | |

I. Call to Order

Chairman Monson called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. and asked Mary Markle to conduct housekeeping. Ms. Markle conducted a roll call of the Board members and confirmed quorum.

II. Approval of April 18, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Chairman Monson asked for questions and comments on the April 18, 2024, minutes as presented to the Board. Seeing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Motion was made by Dr. Kopko and seconded by Ms. Burba-Filoreto. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Financial Update: April-June 2024 Expenditures

Chairman Monson invited Brandon Carson to provide an overview of second quarter expenditures. Mr. Carson noted that the commitments for the Capital Projects Funds have increased as recent grant awards have moved into contracting. The \$45 million in funds for the Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program as well as the \$20 million for the Digital Connectivity Technology Program are still available. Mr. Carson added that following approval of Initial Proposal Volume II, the NTIA amended the contract of the initial award of \$5 million in planning funds and has added the balance of the \$1.161 billion in BEAD funds. The \$1.6 million Digital Equity (DE), Planning grant to complete the statewide Digital Equity Plan has ended and most of those funds have been expended. The PBDA also applied for \$25 million through the NTIA's DE Capacity Grant, which will be used to implement the state plan.

Mr. Carson concluded that the financials associated with each of PBDA's programs are on track.

IV. Grants Management Consultant Approval

Mr. Carson stated that, to augment the capacity of the PBDA staff in its effort to administer over a billion dollars in the next several years, the board agreed to the PBDA engaging a grants management consultant. The PBDA received seven responses to the request for proposal to competitively procure a firm to assist with that effort. Those responses were reviewed by a committee, and it was concluded that Michael Baker International will be selected as the consultant, with the recommendation of a one-year contract and four one-year options to renew.

Chairman Monson asked for questions regarding the contract with Michael Baker International and for a motion to approve. Motion was made by Dr. Kopko and seconded by Senator Kane.

Chairman Monson asked Mary Markle to conduct a roll call vote.

Board Member	Voting Designee	Vote
Chairman Monson		Yes
Secretary Redding	Mark Critz	Yes
Secretary Siger	Mike Hanna	Yes
Secretary Mumin		Absent
Secretary McNeil	Barb Burba-Filoreto	Yes
Senator Kane		Yes
Representative Matzie		Yes
Representative Metzgar		Yes
Senator Phillips-Hill		Yes
PUC Chairman DeFrank	Joel Cheskis	Yes
Dr. Kopko		Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

V. Capital Projects Fund – Broadband Infrastructure Program Update

Brandon Carson stated that debriefing webinars were held for all applicants as well as individual debriefs as requested. These sessions were aimed at providing feedback so applicants could develop stronger applications as they apply for BEAD funding.

Contracting for the awardees is well underway with seven contracts being fully executed and the others under negotiation. There will be a standing update on these projects at future Board meetings.

Mr. Cheskis asked how the feedback was received. Mr. Carson replied that unsuccessful applicants were certainly frustrated, but that the PBDA provided the best feedback they could to posture applicants for BEAD.

VI. Capital Projects Fund – Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program Update

Digital Equity Project Manager, Julia Brinjac, stated that 599 applications were received with a total of \$860 million requested across 65 counties. While the hope was to award projects at today’s meeting, due to the volume of applications, the PBDA will require more time to review and ensure project viability for those selected. Ms. Brinjac added that the PBDA anticipates being in a position to award at a special Board meeting in August.

VII. Capital Projects Fund – Digital Connectivity Technology Program Vendor Approval

Ms. Brinjac reminded the Board that the Digital Connectivity Technology Program will award \$20 million in devices. The application window opened in June and will close on August 19th. The PBDA has received 130 applications. Ms. Brinjac then offered an update on the selection of a vendor to provide the devices for the Program. PBDA proposed contracting with HP to purchase the HP EliteBook. In addition to the laptops, which will be equipped with Windows 11 Pro, the awardees will receive a 4-year manufacturer warranty, 4-year accidental damage coverage, and technical assistance. PBDA will purchase 14,372 laptops at \$1391.50 per unit, which reflects a substantial discount.

Chairman Monson asked for comment and a motion to approve the recommendation for PBDA to enter into a contract with HP. Motion was made by Dr. Kopko and seconded by Senator Kane.

Chairman Monson asked Mary Markle to conduct a roll call vote.

Board Member	Voting Designee	Vote
Chairman Monson		Yes
Secretary Redding	Mark Critz	Yes
Secretary Siger	Mike Hanna	Yes
Secretary Mumin	Cathy Hall	Yes
Secretary McNeil	Barb Burba-Filoreto	Yes
Senator Kane		Yes
Representative Matzie		Yes
Representative Metzgar		Yes
Senator Phillips-Hill		Yes
PUC Chairman Steve DeFrank	Joel Cheskis	Yes
Dr. Kopko		Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

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

Chairman Monson asked Data and Mapping Specialist, Kyle Snyder to update on the BEAD Challenge Process and defined project areas.

Mr. Snyder offered that all three stages of the BEAD challenge process are complete and stated that 157 entities submitted challenges for 90,271 locations covering all 67 counties in the Commonwealth. The PBDA is awaiting approval from the NTIA on the data it submitted. Once approved that data will be used to create the final list of eligible locations for the BEAD program.

Mr. Snyder also offered an update on the PBDA’s creation of Broadband Serviceable Areas (BSAs) which are areas that contain eligible Broadband Serviceable locations (BSLs). These are pre-defined areas for which applicants can request BEAD funding. BSAs were created using United States Census Bureau Census Block Groups. Mr. Snyder explained the specifics of the BSAs and BSLs. Mr. Snyder displayed the map showing an example of BSAs and reviewed the next steps and timeline for BEAD.

Mr. Carson acknowledged that the BEAD timeline is aggressive with the PBDA having just one year from the approval of Volume II to provide the NTIA with a list of all subgrantees, details as to where every BEAD dollar will go, and how all unserved and underserved locations will be addressed.

Mr. Cheskis asked for clarification on the 2026 deadline and Mr. Carson responded that the December 2026 deadline relates to the requirement that CPF awardees reach substantial completion along with the Multipurpose Facilities and Digital Connectivity Technology Programs.

IX. Subcommittee Update

Chairman Monson asked Kalie Snyder to provide an update on the PBDA subcommittees. Ms. Snyder began by announcing the appointment of Mike Davis to the Data and Mapping Subcommittee (DBS) by Senator Kane. Mr. Davis is a district Vice President for the Communication Workers of America (CWA). Ms. Snyder thanked Mr. Davis for agreeing to lend his expertise to the DBS. Ms. Snyder added that the DBS provided feedback for the BEAD Challenge Process and project area map. The next meeting for the DBS will be September 11, 2024.

Ms. Snyder shared that DJ Ryan was recommended to the Technical Subcommittee (TS) by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC). Mr. Ryan is SPC's director of Strategic Initiatives and Policy. She thanked Mr. Ryan for joining the TS. The TS reviewed the process and results of the BEAD project areas and offered feedback on barriers to implementation and on the cost estimates for BEAD applications. The next meeting for TS is September 12, 2024.

The Workforce and Supply Chain Subcommittee (WSCS) members and PBDA staff participated in an onsite tour of the IBEW Union Local 126 at Collegeville location. The Subcommittee's next meeting will be in September.

The Outreach and Education Subcommittee assisted in the promotion and distribution of information for the NTIA Competitive Grant Program, the Digital Connectivity Program as well as the BEAD Challenge Process. The Subcommittee developed fact sheets to be distributed to their networks to promote and inform on the work of the PBDA. The Subcommittee was also asked for input on the post-webinar BEAD office hours. The Subcommittee's next meeting is August 28th. Ms. Snyder added that more Subcommittee information can be found on the PBDA's website.

X. Public Comment

Chairman Monson asked Ms. Snyder to commence the public comment portion of the meeting. Ms. Snyder stated that the meeting was being recorded and asked for comments and questions.

Jim Mercante from Chester County noted the obstacle of affordability and asked if the PBDA plans to track the numbers on affordability as has been done in West Virginia.

XI. Adjournment

Before adjournment, Chairman Monson noted that the next regular Board meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2024, with a special meeting planned for August to consider BEAD guidelines and to address the Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program. Once confirmed, notice of the August meeting will be made public.

Chairman Monson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was made by Dr. Kopko and was seconded by Ms. Burba-Filoreto. The meeting was adjourned at 10:37a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill
Secretary