

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority

Board Meeting Minutes

November 30, 2023

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Board members and voting designees in attendance:

- Secretary Uri Monson, Office of the Budget, Chairman
- Mark Critz on behalf of Secretary Russell Redding, Department of Agriculture
- Secretary Rick Siger, Department of Community and Economic Development
- Secretary Khalid Mumin, Department of Education
- Cathy Hall, Special Assistant, Office of Secretary Mumin
- Matt Bembenick on behalf of Secretary Reggie McNeil, Department of General Services
- Senator John Kane, Assistant Secretary
- Representative Rob Matzie
- Representative Carl Walker Metzgar
- Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill, Secretary
- Steve DeFrank, PUC Chairman
- Dr. Kyle Kopko, Center for Rural PA

Designees in attendance:

- Joel Cheskis, Public Utilities Commission, Office of Chairman DeFrank
- Chloe Mandara, Legislative Director, Office of Senator Phillips-Hill
- Rich Pronesti, Senior Committee Executive Director, PA House of Representatives
- Matt Franchak, Policy Director, Office of Senator John Kane
- Phil Kirchner, Executive Director, PA House Consumer Protection
- Dr. Laura Dimino, Center for Rural Pennsylvania

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

- Brandon Carson, PBDA Executive Director
- Brandon Peters, PBDA Deputy Executive Director
- Paul Opiyo, DCED Director of Policy and Planning
- Leigh Walter, Director Legislative Affairs
- Kalie Snyder, PBDA Outreach & Engagement Manager
- Pam Frontino, PBDA Grants Manager
- Jesse Suders, PBDA Infrastructure Program
- Julia Brinjac, PBDA Digital Equity Program Manager
- Kyle Snyder, PBDA Broadband Planning Specialist
- Stephanie Perry, PBDA Digital Equity and Workforce Specialist
- Greg Alliger, PBDA Broadband Project Manager
- Britt Muniz, PBDA Counsel
- Mary Markle, PBDA Executive Assistant
- Colin Parry, Policy Office
- Theresa Wills, Office of Legislative Affairs

Guests in attendance:

- Russell McDaid, PA e-Commerce
- Autumn Anderson, Governor's Office of Critical Investments
- Carrie Cleary, Pennsylvania Libraries
- Beth Crow, MBI
- Joe Gerdes, PA Township Supervisors
- Lydia Hack
- Kris Mamula
- Commissioner Qually, Adams County
- Nicole Ugarte, NTIA
- Todd Eachus, BCAP
- Jeremy Jurick, AGOC
- Emme Reiser, Pa. Realtors
- John McGrath, Rolka Loube
- Sheridan Barrett PAOCA
- Jennifer Algoe Keaton, BCAP
- Brian Barno, BCAP
- Michael McDonnell, Liro
- Brett Bigica, Saxton Stump
- Kevin Cassidy, Ichor
- Sherri Clayton Williams, Adams County
- Turk
- Jon Kabel, Keystone REN
- Curt Kosko, Live Oak Fiber
- Brady Rodgers, Adams Alliance
- Charles Duncan, Comcast
- Steve Samara, Pa Telephone Association
- Pedro
- Jennifer Blatz, Persad Center
- Ashley Pollard, City of Philadelphia
- Matt Fine, One Strategies
- Rachael Haverstick, Kinber
- Roy Hoover
- Nikki Jones, Malady-Wooten
- Zach Reber, Governor's Office of the Budget
- Sharon Greelish Cody, Kinber
- Thomas Musgrove, Allpoints
- Andrew Scampone, HRG-INC
- Tonya Clemon, City of Philadelphia
- Steve Warhola, PA Senate
- Juliet Fink-Yates, City of Philadelphia
- Kate Rivera, Kate Rivera Solutions
- Brandon Brenize, Adams County
- Philip Jones, Philadelphia FRB
- Aadil Ginwala, University of Pittsburgh
- Michael Simmonds, IBEW
- John Conley, Agile Networks
- Barb Burba-Filoreto, PWA
- Jim Skjeveland, Rolka Loube
- Kristen Ritchey, Comcast
- Brandon Brenize, Adams Coun

I. Call to Order

Chairman Monson called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM.
Kalie Snyder conducted a roll call of the Board members and confirmed quorum.

II. Approval of October 19, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Chairman Monson asked for questions and comments on the minutes as presented to the Board. Seeing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented to the Board. Motion was made by Senator Kane and seconded by Mark Critz. Chairman Monson asked for all Board members to approve or deny the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

III. BEAD Initial Proposal - Volume II

Chairman Monson invited Nicole Ugarte from National Telecommunication Information Association, (NTIA) to address the Board.

Nicole began by acknowledging that NTIA's stringent requirements and leverage it granted to states was intentional so that a feasible plan for high-speed "internet for all" could be developed.

She acknowledged the Board, stakeholders, and the PBDA for the attention given to Volume II. She believes Pennsylvania is a leader in engaging the public and tackling conflicts. She said there is no option of an extension for submission beyond the December 27th deadline and explained that getting the proposal in earlier, allows the NTIA to review and disperse the funds earlier.

Brandon Peters reiterated the consideration of public comments noting that PBDA reviewed every comment. He mentioned that PBDA held a webinar on how to provide public comment. He added that there were also two listening sessions with representation from digital equity, workforce development as well as local government and industry. Stakeholders shared what they liked and where the PBDA could make improvements. He added that these sessions gave the PBDA a head start on identifying comment trends.

Brandon also mentioned that 96 comments were received, the majority of which were pertinent and helpful. The PBDA team immediately evaluated comments to determine what could be incorporated into Volume II.

Chairman Monson commended the PBDA team for its work and called for a motion to approve Volume II. Dr. Kopko made the motion which was seconded by Senator Kane. Chairman Monson called for comment.

Mark Critz commended staff for their work and outreach to the Board. Steve DeFrank introduced himself and said he was pleased to be casting his vote for Volume II.

Chairman Monson asked Kalie to conduct a roll call vote.

Chairman Monson - Yes
Mark Critz - Yes
Secretary Siger - Yes
Secretary Mumin - Yes
Matt Bembenick - Yes
Senator Kane - Yes
Representative Matzie - Yes
Representative Metzgar - Yes
Senator Phillips-Hill - Yes
Chairman Steve DeFrank - Yes
Dr. Kyle Kopko - Yes

Motion Passed unanimously.

IV. Capital Projects Fund (CPF) - Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Improvement Program Guidelines

Brandon Carson reviewed the allocation amounts received in ARPA funds: \$200 million for the Broadband Infrastructure Program, \$45 million for the Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Improvement Program, and \$20 million for the device access program. He added that the PBDA staff has been working on guidelines for both programs and invited Pam Frontino to present an overview of the Facilities Program.

Pam began by noting the program focus, which is to enhance community spaces to facilitate digital inclusion. She reviewed U.S. Treasury requirements which specify that eligible spaces must be open to the public and function to directly support work, education, and health related engagement

She reviewed funding amounts with \$250,000 being the minimum and \$2 million being the maximum award amounts. She noted that no matching funds are required, adding that the PBDA reached out to stakeholders as well as community and local governments to help determine the guidelines.

Pam pointed out that page three of section three in the guidelines lays out the proposal requirements which include engagement plans and workforce development and program sustainability. She reviewed eligibility as it relates to assets, projects, and costs. She referred the Board to section one, page one of the guidelines.

The Guidelines will be posted for 30 days, applications will be accepted beginning in January, and the application timeframe will remain open for three months.

Chairman Monson thanked Pam and asked for questions from the Board.

Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the guidelines. Motion was made by Mark Critz and seconded by Dr. Kopko.

Chairman Monson asked Kalie to conduct a roll call vote.

Chairman Monson - Yes
Mark Critz - Yes
Secretary Siger - Yes
Cathy Hall for Secretary Mumin - Yes
Matt Bembenick - Yes
Senator Kane - Yes
Representative Matzie - Yes
Representative Metzgar - Yes
Senator Phillips-Hill - Yes
Chairman DeFrank - Yes
Dr. Kopko - Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

V. 2024 Board Meeting Schedule

Chairman Monson noted that the 2024 Board Meeting dates were previously circulated as part of the meeting packet and suggested that the Board advise the PBDA staff of any conflicts. Brandon Carson added that the meetings will remain quarterly with special meetings being called as needed.

VI. Public Comment

Chairman Monson asked Kalie Snyder to conduct the public comment portion of the meeting.

Todd Eachus, Broadband Communication Association of Pennsylvania, expressed concern that Volume II is a flawed document with elements that give him grave concern about achieving internet for all. He stated that Pennsylvania went beyond the NTIA recommendations and requirements, particularly in the area of pricing and affordability, which could lead to negative consequences.

Hearing no further comment, public comment concluded

VII. Adjournment

Chairman Monson called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was made by Secretary Siger and seconded by Mark Critz. Meeting adjourned at 10:35am.

Respectfully submitted,

Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill
Secretary