

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority

Board Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2023

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Board members and voting designees in attendance:

- Secretary Uri Monson, Office of the Budget, Chairman
- Mark Critz on behalf of Acting Secretary Russell Redding, Department of Agriculture
- Mike Hanna on behalf of Acting Secretary Rick Siger, Department of Community and Economic Development
- Dr. David Volkman on behalf of Acting Secretary Khalid Mumin, Department of Education
- Matt Bembenick on behalf of Acting Secretary Reggie McNeil, Department of General Services
- Senator John Kane, Assistant Secretary
- Representative Rob Matzie
- Representative Carl Walker Metzgar
- Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill, Secretary
- Chairwoman Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, PUC
- Dr. Kyle Kopko, Center for Rural PA

Designees in attendance:

- Phil Kirchner
- Chloe Mandara
- David Screven
- Zach Reber
- Dr. Laura Dimino
- Matt Franchak
- Rich Pronesti
- Joe Witmer
- Steve Warhola

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

- Brandon Carson
- Erin Wachter
- Paul Opiyo
- Kalie Snyder
- Leigh Walter
- Lori Irwin
- Rob Teplitz
- Pam Frontino
- Kyle Snyder
- Julia Brinjac
- Greg Alliger
- Allison Brubaker
- Britt Muniz
- Britte Earp

- Sarah Souder
- Greg Welker

Guests in attendance:

- Brian Regli, Governor's Office
- Russ McDaid, PA eCommerce Association
- Julie Tritt-Schell, PA E-Rate Coordinator
- Jim Warta, Consolidated Communications
- Mark VanOuse, Zito Media
- Dr. Greg Koons, PAIU
- Brian Barno, Broadband Communications Association of PA
- Todd Eachus, Broadband Communications Association of PA
- Jim D'Innocenzo, Comcast
- Jim Mercante, Chester County Digital Equity Coalition
- Jeanne Shearer, Windstream/Kinetic
- Jennifer Cloonan, Frontier Communications
- Steve Samara, PA Telephone Association
- Casey Fellingner, Milliron Goodman
- Elana Frazier, Ichor Strategies
- Pedro Romero, Verizon
- Lindsey Ringquist, Adams County
- Elizabeth Lose, Centre County
- Justin Zagorski, ECC Technology
- Amanda Frazier, ICCN
- Bill Perkins, ICCN
- Alexandra Taylor, Hillman Foundation
- Corey Block, Westmoreland County
- Andrew French, Fayette County Redevelopment Authority
- Kristi Amato, Clarion County
- Bailey Thumm, PA Farm Bureau
- Jan VaDeCarr, Greenlight Networks
- Jodie Stuck, Malady-Wooten
- Tom Beresnyak, Penn State Extension
- Harry Crissy, Penn State Extension
- Jim Ladlee, Penn State Extension
- Morgan Webb, CCS Energy
- Carrie Cleary, PA Department of Education
- Ashley Pollard, City of Philadelphia
- Juliet Fink-Yates, City of Philadelphia
- Nicole Ugarte, NTIA
- Janice Sahady Crile, Temple University
- Sandra McNally, Temple University
- Heidi Norman, City of Pittsburgh
- Jason Giuliano, CalChip Connect
- Al Abramovic, Venango County
- Kate Rivera, Technology Learning Collaborative
- Sam Garfinkel, Michael Baker International

- Kristen Ritchey, Comcast
- Steve Putt, AECComm
- Eric Bathras, AECComm
- Aaron Young, CTC Enterprises
- Melissa Gate, CCAP
- Alex Christy, PA Senate
- Chris Salemme, Salemme Strategies
- Kevin Sunday, PA Chamber
- Tom Landis, Community Media
- Shuayb Greenaway, Region Authority Corporation
- George William, PA House Of Representatives
- Dave Kerr, At&t
- Chris Miller, Susquehanna Broadband
- Catharine Conner, Milliron Goodman
- Barb Burba-Filoreto, PA Wireless Association
- Brandon Brenize, Adams County
- Carol Duffy, McKean County
- Sascha Meinrath, Penn State University
- Cody Wian, Mifflin County Wireless
- Dwayne Zimmerman, Crowsnest Broadband
- Jessica Sahl, Chester County Intermediate Unit
- Dan Huebner, Civis Analytics
- Dominic Thecka, AdTran
- Jennifer Keaton
- Daniel Carpenter
- Remy Pesimo
- Tom Kreiner
- Steven Mansour
- Beth Rosentel
- Lori Noonan
- Shirley Anders
- Rich
- April
- Ben White
- Suzan Paiva
- Alice Gray
- Matt
- Joe L
- Christine Meinhart-Fritz
- Karen Horchak
- Liz
- Shirley Anders
- Carmen
- John Conners

I. Call to Order

Chairman Monson called the meeting to order at 1:40 PM.
Kalie Snyder conducted a roll call of the board members and confirmed quorum.

II. Approval of March 10, 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 made by Senator Kane. Motion was seconded by Mark Critz. Chairman Monson asked for all Board members to approve or deny the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Capital Projects Fund – Broadband Infrastructure Program Guidelines

Chairman Monson asked Deputy Director Erin Wachter to provide an overview of the purpose of the program and high-level overview of the guidelines for the program.

Erin gave a presentation that reviewed the following items: program timeline, eligible applicants and projects, minimum speed requirements, minimum/maximum grant amount, matching requirements, low-cost option requirements, wage and workforce development considerations, and assurance of universal coverage. She also highlighted that some of these items are required by U.S. Treasury while others were afforded flexibility as the Authority built the guidelines.

Chairman Monson asked for a motion to approve the guidelines as presented to the Board. Motion made by Senator Kane. Motion was seconded by Representative Matzie. Chairman Monson called for comments from the Board regarding the guidelines.

Senator Phillips-Hill provided remarks on her work in the broadband space and how important the mission of universal broadband is. The Senator commented on criteria proposed within the guidelines that will impose additional barriers and hurdles to deployment. She also views this criterion as a violation of Act 96 and highlighted that it is not a requirement under state or federal law. She closed by stating that she would not support the guidelines as presented today.

Representative Matzie provided remarks in support of the guidelines and that it is in line with federal and state guidance. He also commented on the importance of responsibly allocating tax dollars and ensuring taxpayers earn living wages based on their experience and training. He also recognizes the importance of expediency but that we should not sacrifice efficiency and quality, they are not mutually exclusive. He closed by stating that he would be in support of the guidelines as presented today.

Senator Kane provided remarks on the unanimous passing of minutes from the last meeting and highlighted a portion which recognizes the importance of deploying funds in a fiduciary manner and that a skilled workforce is a priority. He closed by stating that he would be in support of the guidelines as presented today.

Mark Critz asked if the workforce requirement is a scored portion of the application and doesn't preclude someone from getting money. Erin Wachter confirmed that is accurate. Mark then asked that it would not be an immediate elimination if their project scored well otherwise, to which Erin and Chairman Monson confirmed that is accurate.

Chairman Monson asked Kalie Snyder to conduct a roll call vote for the guidelines. Kalie conduct roll call vote and confirmed the following responses:

Chairman Uri Monson – Yes
Mark Critz for Secretary Russell Redding – Yes
Mike Hanna for Acting Secretary Rick Siger – Yes
Dr. Volkman for Acting Secretary Khalid Mumin – Yes
Matt Bembenick for Acting Secretary Reggie McNeil – Yes
Senator John Kane – Yes
Representative Rob Matzie – Yes
Representative Carl Walker Metzgar – No
Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill – No
Dr. Kyle Kopko – Abstained

Chairman Monson provided remarks on the requirements of the Authority By-Laws and stated that the motion did not pass. He reminded everyone of the importance of getting the guidelines finalized and encourages a collaboration.

IV. Public Comment

Chairman Monson asked Kalie Snyder to conduct public comment. Kalie reminded the public of the format to provide comments and asked that they remain under 2 minutes.

Elana Frazier, Ichor , recognizing Senator Phillips-Hill's opposition to the guidelines asked if she had recommended any alternative solutions. Senator Phillips-Hill responded that she has offered alternatives, but that they had been rejected.

Carmen Dawson, Blacks in Technology Foundation, asked if there is an opportunity to resubmit FCC mapping speed test to ensure an inclusive approach to the data collected.

Matt, River Valley Internet, asked if there would be consideration to waivers of the match requirement or an in-kind match allowance.

Shuyab Greenaway, Region Authority Corporation, asked if the presentation could be shared from today. He also asked if Pennsylvania has pulled their own map together that includes libraries.

Jim Mercante, Chester County Digital Equity Coalition, offered remarks on the rural nature of Chester County. He stressed the importance of universal connectivity for every day needs like school and health needs. He wants the cost to not be the biggest factor but to ensure there is universal connectivity and advocates the state to consider middle mile open access.

Russ McDaid, PA eCommerce Association, asked if there is a scoring rubric for the CPF-BIP that incorporates workforce, and if not, he would encourage that. He also asked for additional information regarding the Digital Anchor Institution program.

Amanda Fraizer, ICCN, asked if Senator Phillips-Hill would provide additional context on the recommended provisions. Executive Director Brandon Carson responded that public comment is not an opportunity for question and answer and that all questions and comments will be logged for the record.

V. Adjournment

Chairman Monson recognized this being Erin Wachter's last meeting and thanked her for her work as Deputy Director of the Authority. Several other members shared a similar sentiment.

Chairman Monson called for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Senator Kane. Motion seconded by Chairwoman Brown Dutrieuille. Meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill
Secretary