

**Workforce & Supply Chain Sub-Committee**  
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**Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority  
Workforce & Supply Chain Sub-Committee Meeting  
Thursday, January 5, 2023  
10:00 AM- 11:00 AM**

Virtual Meeting  
Dial-In: +1 267-332-8737  
Phone conference ID: 982 491 072

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of November 9, 2022 meeting minutes
- III. Authority updates:
  - a. FCC map challenge feedback
  - b. CPF grant guidelines
- IV. Workforce development framework
- V. Recurring meetings- 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 11am
- VI. Subcommittee member updates
- VII. Public Comment
- VIII. Adjournment

**Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority**  
Workforce & Supply Chain Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, November 9, 2022  
Virtual - Microsoft Teams Meeting

Sub-Committee members in attendance:

- Kris Anderson, International Brotherhood of Electric Workers
- Russ McDaid, Pennsylvania eCommerce Association
- Shannon Munro, Pennsylvania College of Technology
- John Polver, PA Association of Career & Technical Administrators
- Steve Brame, PA Rural Electric Association
- Carl Marrara, PA Manufacturers' Association
- Stephanie Perry, PA Department of Labor & Industry
- Gary Bolton, Fiber Broadband Association
- Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill, Board Liaison

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

- Brandon Carson
- Erin Wachter
- Kalie Snyder
- Lori Butler
- Pam Frontino

Guests in attendance:

- Nicole Ugarte, National Telecommunications and Information Administration

**I. Call to Order**

Brandon Carson called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

Kalie Snyder conducted a roll call of the sub-committee members.

**II. Chair Selection**

Brandon welcomed the members and thanked them for their participation. He briefly touched on the role of co-chairs' work on behalf of the sub-committees. Brandon shared with the group that Gary Bolton has expressed interest in the sub-committee chair position. Brandon inquired if any additional sub-committee members were interested in serving as a co-chair and opened the topic for discussion. Russ McDaid expressed his support for Gary Bolton to chair the sub-committee and his faith in Gary's ability to be the sole leader of the group. Shannon Munro moved to vote Gary Bolton as chair. Russ

McDaid seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Gary Bolton thanked the sub-committee and the Authority for the opportunity.

### **III. Approval of September 26, 2022, Meeting Minutes & October 19, 2022**

Gary Bolton made a motion to approve minutes from the September 26, 2022 sub-committee meeting and the minutes from the October 19, 2022 sub-committee meeting. Russ McDaid moved, and Shannon Monroe seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **IV. Authority Updates**

#### **a. Status of Draft Plan**

Erin Wachter thanked the sub-committee for reviewing and contributing to the draft state broadband plan. Erin shared the latest additions to the plan draft. The Authority had just received the draft plan back from DCED's marketing department, which was editing and formatting the plan for release ahead of the board meeting on November 17, 2022. During that meeting the Authority will seek approval of the draft plan in its final format. Erin noted that the Workforce and Supply chain had the most underdeveloped elements of the draft plan, but the sub-committee's feedback will be valuable in helping to inform what is in the finalized version. Brandon mentioned the final plan will be shared with the sub-committees after its approval.

#### **b. Update on Proposed Partnership with Penn State Extension**

Brandon provided an update on the Penn State Extension contract. He mentioned the Board's special meeting to vote on Extension's involvement and explained the master agreement with Penn State University and the amended language. He also shared that Extension staff will be engaging across sub-committees throughout the process. Extension's role will be multifaceted, assisting the Authority with mapping and the bulk fiber and service availability challenge of the FCC maps.

Brandon opened the topic for discussion. Gary Bolton suggested that Chris Ali would be a great addition to the PSU team, and that Chris Ali's experience includes travel through rural areas across the country to gain insight into the challenges in those areas. Brandon noted that there will be opportunities to collaborate going forward. Next, Molly de Aguiar asked what skills and experience the Authority is looking for from consultants for the BEAD RFP. Brandon answered two elements would play a key role in the selection process, experience and technological expertise.

#### **c. DE and BEAD Planning**

Brandon reminded the sub-committee of the Authority's requirement to complete a 5-Year Action Plan and statewide Digital Equity Plan, as outlined in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The Authority received notice that it has received \$5 million in planning funds. Brandon touched on the timeline for the Digital Equity program and discussed the next step to meet the criteria based on the timeline for the RFP process and the need for partnerships.

## **V. NTIA Workforce Guide Overview**

Nicole Ugarte (NTIA) presented an overview of the BEAD Workforce Planning Guide. Nicole noted that one of the most challenging components of the planning process is related to workforce and supply chain. She explained that her role in the process is to help the Authority stay informed. Nicole expressed interest in working with the Sub-Committee if any of the group members have questions or concerns. She opened the floor for questions.

## **VI. Wireless Infrastructure Association (WIA) Presentation**

WIA's Tim House presented a high-level overview of their association's efforts on workforce development. His presentation focused on the workforce development history and the different fields of operations and emphasized the process to address the under-represented groups in the system through apprentices. These programs help create job expansion and address skills gaps. The WIA team has collaborated with the Department of Education and Labor and Industry to provide a path for opportunities within the Broadband field. Tim also talked about his mission to inspire youth to pursue a career within the broadband stratosphere. Deb Bennett, the Director of Apprenticeships for TIRAP, discussed program highlights and standard best practices that are nationally recognized. Deb remarked on TIRAP's efforts for employers to adopt the program, as soon as TIRAP promotes national sponsorship. Deb touched on the different job classifications and the scope of work, as well as the recently approved Broadband Technician position, approved by the Department of Labor. Brent House presented WIA's 5G Readiness Program. Youngstown State University has designed the course curriculum and credentials. Courses include Introduction to Wireless Broadband Infrastructure, 5G Ecosystem Overview, In-building Wireless Solutions, and 5G and Broadband Deployment. Also notable, Ohio Tech's program reimburses employers for training costs.

Shannon Munro asked about the timeframe of the programs. Deb remarked the students must be competent and criteria must be met. Shannon asked if there is assessment. Deb said there are a variety of ways to determine competency. Shannon inquired, "Are employers using the program as a recruitment tool?" Deb commented that students are placed into positions after taking the courses.

## **VII. Public Comment**

There were none.

### **VIII. Adjournment**

Brandon remarked on the frequency of meetings. Gary Bolton commented on his availability and asked for a motion to adjourn. Shannon Munro moved, Russ McDaid seconded. Gary Bolton concluded the meeting at 4:00 PM.