

PBDA Technical Sub-Committee
Meeting Packet Table of Contents

1. Meeting Agenda Pg. 2
2. June 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes Pg. 3

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority
Technical Sub-Committee Meeting
June 14, 2023
10:00 AM- 11:00 AM

Virtual Meeting
Dial in: (267)332-8737
Phone conference ID: 998 335 073 #

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of meeting minutes from June 8, 2023
- III. “Broadband Ready Communities” checklist update (PBDA- Greg)
- IV. USIC presentation
- V. Authority updates
 - a. Staff updates
 - b. Other
- VI. Sub-committee member updates/comments
- VII. Public comments
- VIII. Adjournment

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority
Technical Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 8, 2023
Virtual: Microsoft Teams

Sub-committee members in attendance:

- Todd Eachus, Broadband Communications Association of PA
- Frank Baier, PA Office of Administration
- Terry Fitzpatrick, Energy Association of Pennsylvania
- Jim Gardler, Communications Workers of America
- Steve Samara, PA Telephone Association

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

- Pam Frontino
- Brandon Peters
- Kyle Snyder
- Mary Markle

Guests in attendance

- Chris Taylor, Michael Baker International
- Evan Rubin, Michael Baker International

Pam Frontino states that meeting is being recorded.

I. Call to Order

Todd Eachus called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.

II. Approval of minutes from May 18, 2023

Todd Eachus calls for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 18th meeting. Motion made by Frank Baier and seconded by – Steve Samara.

III. Michael baker International – overview and workplan

Chris Taylor, MBI Project Manager provided an overview as well as an introduction of Evan Rubin, GIS analyst.

Chris reviewed 3 tasks:

- Task 1 – Project Management & Engagement. Community conversations and stakeholder meetings roundtables will take place during the last few weeks of June and throughout July. MBI will take that data gathered from these engagements and incorporate them into the report. Evan noted that the GIS stakeholder event will take place the first week of July.

- Task 2 - Developing report for 5-year-action plan, which is currently 50%-60% complete. MBI will use information from FCC maps to develop an asset inventory, to show a timeline for expanding to every unserved area in the state, as well as a cost method.
- Task 3 - Digital Equity – During conversations mentioned in task 1, data will be gathered to address to gather data that will feed into the digital equity. Chris also reviewed the specific dates displayed in timeline, with July 15th being the “pencils down” date, with the final draft submitted July 25th. Digital Equity draft is currently scheduled for August 1st but the authority is looking for an extension from the NTIA.

Evan Rubin presented and reviewed three items including:

- Broadband Inventory GIS Application which speaks to how data can be used. This report will contain a clear catalogue of all the data in a GIS format.
- Digital Equity Atlas (ESRI Experience Builder), similar to the above, this would be a searchable database that the authority can use to track state-local plans, i.e., digital divide index score, will be on the Atlas and well and will include infrastructure and as socioeconomic metrics. Evan noted that these applications will be interactive
- Cost estimation tool. Evan noted that this tool is network analysis that will determine the distance between connecting locations of unserved to the nearest fiber point. Chris added that they’ll be able to do a macro-analysis at the state level.

Chris asked for input from the committee.

Todd noted that a June 30th draft will not include input from the July 6th ISP roundtable. How will that information get to the board. Chris replied that it will be a working document, and that info will be added and flagged.

Todd requested clarification of cost-estimator citing concerns regarding wage rate assumptions, poling costs, etc. Chris said that they will not estimate make-ready costs and explained that they are using information from requests for proposals that ISP’s have answered, and MBI can take that and estimate cost per living unit, per mile and emphasized that it is an estimate. He added make-ready costs will be discussed in obstacles and barriers.

Frank Baier expressed appreciation for clarification of the draft being a “working document” that allow for input from the ISP roundtables and other events.

Evan discusses the needs for ISP roundtable and is looking for volunteers to lead the discussion, facilitate and to assist in any way. Also asked for co-op information and to have that info passed along to Chris.

IV. Broadband Ready Communities – continuation of previous discussion

Eachus explained this area as an obstacle and added that the committee has talked about formulating a viable plan noting that local government down to municipalities, such as townships,

and boroughs are given significant power and holding in trust the right of way management for the benefit of the public. Therefore, with over 2500 municipalities in the Commonwealth, there is a patchwork of different regulations and different treatments of access to the right of way. He added that a plan needs to include some level of certainty around the timeline for approval.

He went on to list obstacles including local permit approval, engineering the fees, legal fees, as well as infrastructure developments interfering with broadband projects. He emphasized the importance of the balance between respecting the authority of municipalities while also ensuring that they are a broadband friendly community.

Kyle Snyder, addressed coordination stating that the Authority has had discussions with PennDot regarding Dig Once coordination. He stated that the federal register rule came out and guidance will be forthcoming. Kyle added that we are on the radar of the statewide transportation improvement plan and coordinating with local DOT districts.

After further examples of barriers from Todd and more discussion of barriers, Pam Frontino suggested compiling a list from subcommittee members for MBI. Pam will work with B. Peters to make assignments.

V. Authority updates

a. Staff updates

Pam Frontino introduced Mary Markle, Executive Assistant for PBDA

b. Map updates

Brandon. Peters: Pushing out to our contacts that the CPF map is up on the website

c. Other

Pam Frontino states that the authority is working with L&I to put together a webinar for provider applicants on June 20th at 2pm, regarding prevailing wage for BIP and BEAD. Also noted that Greg Alliger updated the FAQ page., Pam shared link to that

Jim Gardler asked if a rate for technician has been arrived at. Todd adds that L&I is using the electrician rate for each county as a benchmark.

Brandon Peters added one of the FAQ's pertains to prevailing wage and there is a plan to create a working group with L&I to identify job classifications.

Todd emphasized that prevailing wage is a "go/no go" for smaller operators because the 25% match is significantly influenced by the pay wage.

VI. Sub-committee member updates/comments

Todd asked for updates from committee members. There were none.

VII. Public comments

Todd called for public comment.

Pedro Romero from Verizon, asked MBI about cost estimator and requested clarification and concern for formatting to allow for more flexibility in the application portal

Chris Taylor responded that the cost estimator is strictly at a macro, not micro level.

Didn't catch name of Shuane with region authority (Regent) something – He was cutting out. I believe he asked what data sets will be used to identify the unserved and underserved. Evan responded that the main of set of data will come from NTIA.

April Bromfield, Verizon asked if the prevailing wage act will be applicable to all CPF projects and will ill that be discussed in the L&I webinar.

Pam responded that the format of the webinar is to assist the process of makinh determinations for the occupations involved and to formulate budgets based on that.

VIII. Adjournment

Todd called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Frank Baier made the motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by ???. Motion passed, meeting adjourned at ?