

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority
Outreach & Education Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
August 9, 2023
Virtual - Microsoft Teams Meeting

Sub-Committee members in attendance

- Carrie Nace
- Sarah Hammond
- Joseph Gerdes
- Kevin Sunday
- Amy Sturges
- Mark Critz

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

- Kalie Snyder
- Judelissa Rosario

Guests in attendance

- Alex Rahn, Wanner Assoc.
- Wally Ann McClain, Tek Systems
- Alexia Brown, CSC, CSIU
- Lisa Johnson, Nextera Energy
- Chris Taylor, Michael baker International (MBI)
- Beth Crow, MBI
- Jim Mercante, Chester County Digital Equity Coalition
- Jeanne Shearer, Windstream
- Juliet Fink-Yates, City of Philadelphia
- Dave P
- Jennifer Algoe Keaton, BCAP
- Chris Taylor, MBI
- Paige Oliver, Ichor Strategies
- JJ Hrechun
- Casey Fellingner, Milliron Goodman

I. Call to order

Meeting was called to order at 3:01pm, and Kalie Snyder conducted roll call and housekeeping items

II. Approval of the June 14, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Chair Hammond asked for a motion to approve the June 14, 2023, minutes as presented to the committee. Carrie Nace made motion for the approval. Amy Sturges seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Capital Projects Fund (CPF) – Broadband Infrastructure

Chairperson Hammond asked Kalie Snyder to provide an update.

Kalie noted the close of the 1st grant program is today at 11:59pm. She reminded all that under this project, which was open for 2 months is under CPF and includes \$279,000,000 in funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Currently there are 150 applications in the cue. This initiates the next steps, including curing, technical scrub, challenge process as well as a process for local government input. She added that she will be reaching out to Joe Gerdes and Amy Sturges regarding the local government process

IV. Update on 5-Year Action Plan for BEAD

Chair Hammond asked Chris Taylor to present an update on the 5-year action plan.

Chris began by reviewing the July 25, 2023, to January 26, 2024, timeline noting the PBDA's and the Core Planning Team's review of the plan, the customer comment period, Board approval and submission to NTIA.

He also went over the maps depicting the unserved and underserved populations.

Lastly, he showed how community comments can be submitted and encouraged all on the call to take the survey and encourage others to do so as well.

Kalie asked for questions or comments from the committee.

V. Update Digital Equity State Plan

Beth Crow, MBI then reviewed the outreach events occurring from June 28th – September 5th. There were 21 Community conversations with 505 attendees, 3 roundtables with 249 attendees and the completion of 5734 surveys. She then displayed the map of those events.

Beth discussed the 16 focus groups with 8 covered populations that will take place in September. Covered populations include veterans, Individuals with disabilities or language barriers and individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group. These will differ from past events in that they will be for invited groups, and they will be more conversational, digging deep into challenges. Public comment sessions, however, will be open to the public

Chair Hammond asked for questions or comments from the committee.

VI. Broadband Connectivity and Digital Access Survey

Chair Sunday called on Kalie for an update.

Kalie encouraged the committee to continue to push out the survey and reiterated survey responses will be integral to the DE plan and the initial proposal. She reminded all that the survey is open through October. She also mentioned the availability of hard copies and listed the languages in which it is available.

VII. New Business

Chair Sunday asked for comments and suggested that the committee keep in mind that gatherings such as conferences, community days, etc., are opportunities for PBDA staff and subcommittee members to engage, distribute surveys, and to assist with the filling them out.

Chair Sunday asked if any members had new business to discuss. There was none. Kalie thanked to those who came to "Internet For All" in State College. Kevin also thanked the team for their work on that event.

VIII. Public Comment

Chair Sunday asked Kalie to conduct public comment.

Jim Mercante asked if there are there any summaries from the community conversations and roundtables that could be shared with the public?

Kalie offered to see if such a summary could be pulled together.

Jeanne Shearer mentioned that commenting on the 5-year plan was difficult due to the character limits and asked if PDF's might be acceptable for the DE.

Kalie responded that it has yet to be determined.

Juliet Fink-Yates asked about the non-English survey responses and if more community conversations offering languages other than English should be planned.

Kalie offered for her and Beth to speak with Juliet offline.

Beth went on to say that organizations serving non-English speaking populations have been identified and she would also like to discuss further.

IX. Adjournment

Chair Sunday made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Joe Gerdes. Meeting adjourned at 3:32PM.