

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority
Outreach & Education Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2023
Virtual - Microsoft Teams Meeting

Sub-Committee members in attendance

- Chair, Sarah Hammond
- Mark Critz
- Bailey Thumm
- Dan Alwine
- Amy Sturges

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

- Kalie Snyder
- Pam Frontino
- Julia Brinjac
- Brandon Peters
- Stephanie Perry

Guests in attendance

- Kathy Eisele
- Barrett Sheridan
- Matt Branagan
- Jared Millard
- J. Mizerak
- Elisa Calderon
- Andrew Scampone
- Chuck Napier (GU)
- Jim Mercante, Chester County Digital Equity Coalition
- Florence Mauchaut

I. Call to order

Meeting was called to order at 3:02pm. Kalie Snyder conducted roll call and spoke to housekeeping items.

II. Approval of October 11, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Chair Hammond called for the approval of the October 11, 2023 meeting minutes as presented to the committee. Motion to approve was made by Amy Sturges and seconded by Bailey Thumm.

III. PBDA Quarterly Newsletter

Chair Hammond invited Kalie to introduce the PBDA Quarterly Newsletter. Kalie said the first edition was sent and she anticipates it being a very useful tool for staying up to date with the PBDA regarding events, grant programs, public comment periods, and for providing educational resources. Kalie asked that she be contacted by anyone who would like to be added to the distribution list for the newsletter.

Dan Alwine asked if there's a way to access the newsletter other than directly reaching out to Kalie. Kalie responded that the plan is to have the newsletter on the website with an option to subscribe.

IV. Future Meeting Schedule

Sarah asked the committee for their thoughts and comments about moving to a bi-monthly meeting schedule.

There were no comments or questions from the committee.

V. Co-Chair Discussion

Chair Hammond mentioned that it was advantageous for the committee to have co-chairs, therefore when Dan Alwine said he was interested in co-chairing she was pleased to accept. The committee voted and unanimously approved Dan Alwine as co-chair.

VI. Initial Proposal Vol. II Update

Grants Manager, Pam Frontino offered an update on Volume II of the Initial Proposal, noting that the public comment period closed on Tuesday November 14th. She thanked all who submitted comments as well as those who encouraged others to submit. She said that the PBDA is working to incorporate viable comments into Volume II and that the next step will be to present volume II to the Board for approval. If approved, it will be submitted to the NTIA on 12.27. Pam said the intention is to submit the plan before the 12.27 which could result in an earlier date for receipt of funding. She added that 100 responses were received with multiple comments within most responses.

VII. Statewide Digital Equity (DE) Plan & Facilitated Public Comment

Julia Brinjac provided an update on the Digital Equity plan, first noting that a draft of the plan is complete and being formatted for public comment, which will begin November 27th and close on January 7th. During that time there will also be seven in-person public comment sessions. She added that the DE Plan focuses on 8 vulnerable populations many of whom do not have access to the internet, therefore it is important to go deliver information in person. Two virtual sessions will also be conducted, one in Allegheny and one will be statewide. Dates are not yet set but the hope is to have them before the end of the year.

Julia added that Kalie is in the process of having the Executive Summary as well as the headers of the Asset Inventory translated into 7 languages. Julia said that at 120 pages, sans appendices, it is a robust document.

Kalie asked for help from the committee to crowd build for these events and she will provide more information to the committee to assist with that.

Chair Hammond asked if there would be updated flyers that could be distributed to advertise these events.

Kalie said she will share event information designed for distribution.

VIII. New Business

Chair Hammond asked for new business from the committee.

Hearing none, she called on Kalie to conduct public comment

IX. Public Comment

Kalie conducted public comment.

Jim Mercante asked if the PBDA could look at the public comment submission form, noting some challenges with it. Kalie responded that she is looking into revamping that form.

X. Adjournment

Before adjourning, Sarah expressed thanks to all who joined the meeting, the committee for the year's work and Kalie for keeping the committee going.

Chair Hammond called for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Dan Alwine and seconded by Bailey Thumm. Meeting adjourned