

Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority
Outreach & Education Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2024
Virtual - Microsoft Teams Meeting

Sub-Committee members in attendance

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

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

- Kalie Snyder, PBDA Outreach and Education Manager
- Greg Alliger, PBDA Infrastructure Project Manager
- Mary Markle, PBDA Executive Assistant

Guests in attendance

- Florence Mauchant, Neverlatetech
- Barrett Sheridan, Office of Consumer Advocate
- Kimberly Walker, Lackawanna County
- Michael McDonnell, Liro
- Veronica Morgan Lee
- Jayden Demmy, Greenlee Partners
- Jim Mercante, Chester County
- Jennifer Algoe-Keaton, BCAPA
- Branden Hanley, Arista
- Casey Fellingner, Milliron Goodman
- Elisa Calderon, Ichor Strategies
- Savannah
- Sheri Jenkinson
- Jeanne Shearer, Windstream

I. Call to order

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

II. Approval of the November 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Chair Hammond asked for comments or questions regarding the November 16, 2023 minutes and hearing none called for a motion to approve the minutes as presented to the committee. Motion was made by Bailey Thumm and seconded by Amy Sturges. Motion passed.

III. Statewide Digital Equity Plan (DE Plan) Update

Kalie Snyder informed that following approval from the PBDA Board, the DE Plan was submitted to the NTIA on January 23rd. NTIA provided some curing items, and the plan was resubmitted for final review. Final approval is expected by the end of February. The committee will be advised of approval. Kalie thanked the committee for assistance in getting out surveys and information regarding public comment sessions. A draft of the plan is on the website.

Dan asked if there was any need to push out the draft. Kalie said there is not at this time.

IV. Capital Projects Fund – Broadband Infrastructure Program

Greg Alliger reminded all that the August application close date was followed by a challenge period, rebuttal period as well as adjudication, scoring and curing of applications. The infrastructure team is now working with applicants whose project scopes need to be adjusted due to enforceable commitments. The Board will review award decisions and awards will be announced after the April 18th Board meeting.

V. New PBDA Website

Kalie Snyder explained some of the significant changes in new website, which now emphasizes user friendly navigation with the addition of a navigation bar. She highlighted several pages including “About”, “Funding”, “Maps and Data” as well as the “Contact Us and Feedback” pages. She added that the site should be launched in March.

Chair Hammond complimented Kalie on the website. Chair Alwine asked if the committee could assist with pushing out the site. Kalie replied that once it is live, committee will be encouraged to share the site.

VI. New Business

a. Milestone’s Timeline

Chair Alwine expressed that distinguishing the different grants and keeping up with the dates and deadlines of the funding opportunities is challenging. Therefore, the creation of a milestone timeline had been discussed. Kalie said the timeline is still being worked on.

VII. Public Comment

At Chair Alwine’s request, Kalie conducted public comment.

Barrett Sheridan, Office of Consumer Advocate asked if the most recent draft of the DE Plan addresses the possible end of the Affordable Connectivity Program. (ACP).

Kalie replied that while there is nothing in the DE plan that directly addresses the ACP, she assured that it is a concern for the PBDA and they have been working with the national digital inclusion alliance to address this. She noted that a requirement for providers to offer low-cost options is included in the DE Plan.

Having missed the public comment period, Florence Mauchaunt from Nevertchlate, asked about participation in future discussions. Kalie and Florence will connect offline to discuss how Nevertchlate might become involved.

Hearing no further comments, Kalie turned the meeting back over to Chair Alwine who asked if the low-cost offer is a requirement for only for those providers receiving a PBDA grant. Kalie confirmed.

Kalie stated that the next meeting will April 24, 2024 at 1:00pm

VIII. Chair Alwine asked for a motion to adjourn. Amy Sturges motioned, Mark Critz seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:25PM.