

CONNECTME



State of Maine
ConnectME Authority
59 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0059
Connect.ME@maine.gov
www.Maine.gov/connectme/

Authority Members - Denise Garland - Susan Woods - Bruce Williamson - Fred Brittain

BOARD MEETING

Friday September 27, 2019 @ 2:00 p.m.

Maine Public Utilities Commission
BALLARD ROOM
101 Second Street
Hallowell, ME 04347

AGENDA

1. Introduction to ConnectME Authority Board Members & Staff
2. NETC Presentation
3. Strategic Plan
4. LD 1603 “An Act to Improve Cell Phone Service in Underserved Areas by Installing Wireless Base Stations at State-owned Facilities.”
5. Budget Discussion and Monthly Financials
6. Approval of June 28, 2019 and July 26, 2019 Minutes
7. Director Report
8. Other Business
9. Public Comments

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June 28, 2019

ConnectME Authority – Meeting Notes

1. Introductions: Authority Board Members: Denise Garland, Ralph Johnson, Jeff McNelly and Nick Marquis.

Authority Staff: Brooke Johnson and Peggy Schaffer.

Members of the public were asked to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of Grants: Peggy Schaffer explained the selection committee looked over all grants received and scored them based on the scoring criteria that was recently approved by the board. One handout is the recommendation for Infrastructure grants and the other handout is the recommendation for Community Planning grants. The selection committee recommended to fund the Infrastructure project for Bowdoinham, Alton, Cambridge and Alna totaling \$642,500 with potential connections of 867 locations. Denise Garland motions to approve the suggested 4 Infrastructure grants and Jeff McNelly seconds the motion. All were in favor. The selection committee recommended to fund the Community Planning grants for WKLCBA Phase 1, Swans Island Phase 2, Argyle Phase 1 and Franklin County Phase 2 totaling \$89,275. Denise Garland motions to approve the 4 planning grants as recommended and Nick Marquis seconds the motion. All were in favor.
3. Bond Discussion: Peggy Schaffer explained that the Governor had submitted a bond package and \$30 million was for Broadband. She explained that the bond failed in enactment in the House and did not get taken up in the Senate. The thought right now is that there might be a special session before September but if not, it will get carried over to next session.
4. Budget Discussion: Peggy Schaffer explained that ConnectME did get an additional assessment in the budget that will total \$1.9 million a year for two years and could continue if approved. Peggy Schaffer also explained that we usually present a budget for approval, but we need to delay that until the Fall due to many factors, one being the potential for bond money. Peggy Schaffer explained the transition process ConnectME is currently going through to move from OIT to DECD.
5. Review of Monthly Financial Report: Brooke Johnson explained the May financial activity. The ConnectME Authority received \$6,640.54 in assessment money and she noted that we are missing a chunk of our assessment money but has notified Solix to investigate it. ConnectME paid \$4,162.50 in grant payments. The ending balance for the month of May was \$1,523,421.32.

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6. Approval of April 26, 2019 Minutes: Denise Garland motions to approve the minutes for April 26, 2019 and Ralph Johnson seconds the motion. All were in favor.
7. Director Report: Peggy Schaffer briefly talked about her recent speaking engagements. Peggy Schaffer explained that we are trying to figure out this mapping problem and we have been in talks with VetroFiber & Sewall to see if we can work with them to help fix this issue. She also talked about the work that MLab does in regard to speed tests and she explained the study they did in Pennsylvania. We are currently working on the best way to have useful live maps on our website. Peggy Schaffer mentioned that we are putting together names for the vacant seats on the Board and we will be sending those resumes to the Governor soon.
8. Other Business: Ralph Johnson notified the audience that he resigned from the ConnectME Board and has taken a position in DC.
9. Public Comments: Ben Sanborn talked about Beth Osler who was recently a witness at one of the Congressional Committee hearings in DC with regards to broadband mapping and that she testified in support of the bill. Ben Sanborn spoke about the new bill Senator Collins just introduced yesterday called ABBA. The goal of this bill is to work with State organizations whose goals are to help support broadband. This legislation would give federal support of up to 50% for a project. Brian Lippold expresses his gratitude for the Board voting to approve the Franklin County, Swan's Island and WKLBCA projects and that the projects will help 43 communities.

Board meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

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July 26, 2019

ConnectME Authority – Meeting Notes

1. Introductions: Authority Board Members: Sue Woods & Michael Johnson.

Authority Staff: Brooke Johnson and Peggy Schaffer.

Members of the public were asked to introduce themselves.

2. Telehealth Initiative Discussion: Peggy Schaffer briefly explained that we have broad rules around what our policies are, but one is telehealth. Sue Woods requested we begin a conversation about what is happening in the State around telehealth and how ConnectME can help that role. Broadband and telehealth go hand and hand due to needing broadband to do telehealth. Peggy Schaffer introduced Dawn Gallagher from HealthTech Solutions who is here to speak about the FCC proposed Rulemaking titled: Promoting Telehealth for Low-Income Consumers and what this means for Maine. Some highlights from the presentation were, \$100 million for a 3-year pilot project, reimburses eligible health care providers up to 85% of the costs of providing connected care services/and or equipment and proposed limit to projects that focus on health conditions requiring several months or more to treat like behavioral health issues, opioid dependency, chronic conditions and high-risk pregnancies. Some of the goals of the pilot project are to improve health outcomes through connected care, reduce health care costs for patients, facilities and the health care system. Comments on this rule will be posted on the Federal register in mid-August and comments will be due 30 days after publication so sometime in September.
3. DECD Update: Peggy Schaffer briefly talked about the recent activities inside DECD including her role in the Strategic Planning Task Force who is charged with creating the State's 10-year Economic Development Plan. They meet weekly and the plan should be completed in November 2019. Peggy Schaffer also talked about how all agencies within DECD have been working together in many capacities to figure out what are common needs are to help the Department run more efficiently. Peggy Schaffer explained that we have all the new grant round contracts in the State system and are waiting for State approval.
4. Review of Monthly Financial Report: Brooke Johnson explained the June financial activity. The ConnectME Authority received \$286,649.08 in assessment money and she noted that the missing assessment concern has been resolved and ConnectME was right on target for the fiscal year. ConnectME paid \$15,705 in grant payments. The ending balance for the month of June was \$1,784,062.32.
5. Approval of April 26, 2019 Minutes: No quorum. Minutes approval moved to next meeting.

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6. Director Report: Peggy Schaffer described the type of calls we get and how we handle them. She also talked about the recent conversations we have been having with the most recent grant awardees and what the next steps are for them. Peggy Schaffer talked about her speaking engagement she had on Monday for the BDN in Bangor.
7. Other Business: n/a
8. Public Comments: Ben Sanborn wanted to let everyone know about the TAM event in Rockport coming up on September 10th. Nick Battista thanked Peggy Schaffer for her talk at the BDN. The Climate Change Council is being formed and he thinks that ConnectME should weigh in on that.

Board meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Maine ConnectME Fund
Statement of Revenue and Expenditures
As of 9/18/2019

Cash Receipts	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total FY20
Assessments	1,500,000.00	400,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,900,000.00
Interest Income													-
Total Receipts	1,500,000.00	400,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,900,000.00
Expenses													
Personal Services	10,076.24	20,152.76	20,283.26										50,512.26
Professional Services, Not by State	-	1,538.00	1,500.00										3,038.00
Professional Services, By State	-	2,574.00	-										2,574.00
In State Travel	758.00	699.72	679.60										2,137.32
Out of State Travel	35.57	-	-										35.57
Technology/Ancillary	25.00	20,963.19	-										20,988.19
Cell Phone	87.54	44.16	-										131.70
Grants to Cities and Towns	-	35,450.00	-										35,450.00
Grants to Public and Private Org.	-	3,000.00	80,347.12										83,347.12
Total Expenses	10,982.35	84,421.83	102,809.98	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	198,214.16
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	1,489,017.65	315,578.17	(102,809.98)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,701,785.84
Fund/Cash Balance	1,489,017.65	1,804,595.82	1,701,785.84	1,701,785.84	1,701,785.84	1,701,785.84	1,701,785.84	1,701,785.84	1,701,785.84	1,701,785.84	1,701,785.84	1,701,785.84	1,701,785.84

Unliquidated Contractual Obligations (690,084.26)

Projected Ending Fund/Cash Balance **1,011,701.58**

APPROVED
JUNE 10, 2019
BY GOVERNOR

CHAPTER
64
RESOLVES

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND NINETEEN

S.P. 509 - L.D. 1603

Resolve, To Coordinate a Plan To Expand Cellular Telephone Service

Sec. 1. Plan to expand cellular telephone service. Resolved: That the Department of Economic and Community Development, in coordination with the ConnectME Authority established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 12004-G, subsection 33-F, the Department of Administrative and Financial Services and the University of Maine System, Networkmaine, shall develop a plan to leverage state assets to expand cellular telephone service to underserved areas of the State. The plan may be developed in connection with any plans to expand broadband service prepared by the ConnectME Authority pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 35-A, chapter 93.

Sec. 2. Report; authority for legislation. Resolved: That, no later than February 1, 2020, the Department of Economic and Community Development shall submit a report on the plan developed under section 1 to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology. The committee may report out a bill to the Second Regular Session of the 129th Legislature related to the report.