

ConnectME Authority
July 23, 2014 – Meeting Notes

1. Introductions

Board members, Authority staff, and representatives of the James W. Sewall Company and the Office of the Attorney General introduced themselves.

Authority Board Members: Ralph Johnson, Greg McNeal, Tom Welch, and Dick Thompson. Jean Wilson was absent. Dick Thompson served as chair for this meeting.

Authority Staff: Phil Lindley and David Maxwell

James W. Sewall Company: Randy Claar and Lisa Schoonmaker
Tom Knowlton, Assistant Attorney General

2. ConnectME Grant Awards – 9th Round

Board members were advised of the scoring of applications for grants. Thirty-nine applications were received. Ten (10) applications scoring 65 or greater points were identified as potential recipients of awards. After assurance of solvency of the ConnectME Fund to fund the recommended awards, the Board voted unanimously to fund all ten.

Grant award results, as well as the applications of grant recipients, are available on the ConnectME website. (The award results will also be attached to these notes.)

Members of the audience asked several questions regarding the grant awards; details about scoring technique, areas covered, speeds provided, etc.

3. PCs for Maine

Chris Martin, co-founder of the Information Technology Exchange and PCs for Maine, informed Board members and the audience of the services of his organization, specifically acquisition and refurbishment of PCs for sale at his storefront and for use in his training center. His current work with the state library, placing PCs in municipal libraries, provides cost savings to both state and municipal governments. He provided informational material that is available on the ConnectME website. The PCs for Maine presentation was good and spreading the word about their operation is important.

4. Universal Service Fund Assessment

Lisa Schoonmaker of the James W. Sewall Company summarized the draft report prepared for the ConnectME Authority. The Sewall Company researched the Universal Service Fund in order to

evaluate current and future effects on it and its reform, assessed the strength of the position of Maine, and provided recommendations for the Authority to consider for future planning.

The report is the work of the James W. Sewall Company and recommendations and opinions are those of Sewall. The funding for the Assessment was through the Future Leading Practices component of the NTIA mapping and planning grant.

Board members and the public asked questions or made comments after the presentation.

The final report will be widely distributed and posted on the Authority website. Any comments or suggestions will also be posted.

5. Executive Director Report

The sequence of the published agenda was altered at this point in order for the Board members and the attending public to hear the Executive director report before moving into Executive Session.

Board members previously discussed the possibility of a strategic planning session or board retreat. Board members requested that Authority staff develop an objective for the retreat and structure the session to address potential operational and strategic items and for further discussion at a future Authority meeting.

The financial statements for the ConnectME Fund were reviewed.

6. Public Comment

Questions were asked about grant application availability for review and if there will be a report out from the Executive Session.

Tom Welch previously recused himself from participation in the Executive Session portion of the meeting. The Board went into Executive Session at 2:58PM.

7. Executive Session Regarding the Broadband Sustainability Fund

The Board consulted with legal counsel regarding action to take regarding the Broadband Sustainability Fund.

The Board ended the Executive Session at 3:17PM.

The public portion of the meeting was resumed. There were no further questions from the public and the meeting concluded at 3:19PM.