

ConnectME Authority

August 28, 2015 – Meeting Notes

1. Introductions

Authority Board Members: Jean Wilson, Chair; Andy Hagler; Dick Thompson; and Greg McNeal. Ralph Johnson joined by telephone at 3:12PM.

Authority Staff: Phil Lindley, Executive Director; Lisa Leahy, Associate Executive Director; and David Maxwell

Board members and Authority staff introduced themselves, as did members of the public.

In order to allow for Ralph Johnson to participate in the Executive Session discussion, the agenda was re-structured to move that item to later in the meeting.

4. Strategic Plan Process Update

Phil Lindley spoke about the proposal review and vendor selection process. Planning Decisions, Inc. of Hallowell is the selected contractor. Authority staff is completing the notification and information submittal process. Discussion occurred regarding the four (4) community forums planned for September with two (2) sessions in each location. Details of these events will be discussed with the contractor and shared with the Board members.

5. Community Broadband Planning Grant

Lisa Leahy reviewed work completed to date on the planning grant program, including a per-certification component. There was discussion regarding allocation of available funds between planning grants and infrastructure grants (75-80% infrastructure, 20-25% planning), but no formal decision was made. More information on the planning grant program, including apportionment of funds between planning and infrastructure grants will be presented at a subsequent meeting.

The Boards reviewed the draft “roadmap” of key activities occurring for the next six months and expressed a desire for both planning and infrastructure grant processes to occur simultaneously.

6. Executive Director Report

Phil Lindley reviewed the revised scoring guide which requires minimum broadband speed of 10Mbps up and 10Mbps down. Public comment was solicited; a request for consideration of speeds lower than 10/10 was made. The Board voted unanimously to approve the revised scoring guide as presented.

Phil Lindley advised the Board of two potential new members to the body (a representative of the Department of Economic and Community Development and a representative with expertise in telehealth) consistent with the new statutory requirement.

Phil Lindley briefly reviewed the financial report and indicated that \$1.0M to \$1.2M is likely to be available for the next round of grants, with a decision to be made regarding of apportionment between planning and implementation grants.

It was suggested that FairPoint be invited to the October meeting to discuss their CAF2 funding award from the FCC.

2. Executive Session

Prior to the Board moving into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation, Dick Thompson addressed a concern that had been raised that he should recuse himself from participation in the session topic. He explained his professional background and history in broadband and the Authority. He expressed his intent to participate in the session and his commitment to maintain fairness and an open mind in consideration of the topic.

Executive Session commenced at 3:40PM and concluded at 3:52PM. After resuming the public meeting, the audience was informed that no decisions were made during Executive Session.

3. Broadband Sustainability Fund: Case Update

No update was provided.

7. Public Comment

Public comment was solicited from the audience and none was offered.

The meeting adjourned at 3:56PM.