

CONNECTMAINE

Authority Members: Denise Garland - Susan Corbett - Liz Wyman
Fred Brittain - Nick Battista - Jeffrey Letourneau

March 27, 2020

ConnectME Authority – Meeting Notes

1. Introductions: Authority Board Members: Fred Brittain, Susan Corbett, Liz Wyman, Nick Battista and Jeff Letourneau

Authority Staff: Peggy Schaffer.

2. Approval of Minutes: Susan Corbett motions to approve the minutes and Liz Wyman seconds the motion. All were in favor.

3. Monthly Financials: The Director reviewed the monthly financials. ConnectMaine paid \$20,559.66 in expenses for the month of March. The ending balance was \$915,330.21. Additional future obligations were discussed leaving a final cash balance of \$617,830.21. The Board accepted the monthly financials.

4. Director Report: The Director informed the Board that she moved the grant due date to May 7th and we will still be doing another round of grants following the closing of the May round.

Discussion re: aligning scoring criteria for small projects that do not compete with community builds. The board discussed the need for looking forward in the next rounds of grants (not this one) to address the small “gap” type grants.

Consolidated so far is the only company that has provided the data requested and indicated in the ConnectMaine rule. While the action plan does call for companies to provide requested data in order to be eligible for grants, after much discussion, input from TAM, the board decided not to require data submission for the May round. Public Law 2019 Chapter 625 requires submission of data by providers, and for the Authority to go to rule making to define the collection of that data. ConnectMaine will undertake the required rulemaking to reflect the new statute and will include a revamp of other parts of the rule to implement the Action Plan.

Mission Broadband is doing a survey on broadband use in this COVID crisis. ConnectMaine has posted it on our website and shared it on FB and Twitter and through the Maine Broadband Coalition. The survey is currently in the collecting data phase and are working with Mission Broadband on how the data can be used.

ConnectMaine hosted a successful meeting with the FCC on the RDOF funding. The meeting is recorded and sent, along with the slide deck to all participants. We recorded it and sent to all participants. Peggy Schaffer talking with VetroFiber to see what they can do to support ISP's that might be interested in building.

5. Covid-19 Update: ConnectMaine has purchased 500 Samsung tablets with MiFi devices, as approved by the board. DOE is estimating up to 36,000 students do not have internet but there is so many variables with this data and DOE is working with the superintendents. This is a very complex issue and that Susan Corbett and Peggy Schaffer have been working with DOE and others to design a

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workable solution to this complex issue. CME website has a chart under resources displaying what all the providers are offering to their customers during this COVID crisis.

6. Broadband Bond Discussion: The Director started the conversation about the \$15 million bond that will be on the June 9th ballot. The board should start thinking about changes in the application scoring and accountability for grants and grant recipients. The opportunity to potentially use these funds to leverage federal funding, and to fill in gaps for bigger projects that do not meet the USDA requirements of 10/1, yet do meet the CME unserved definition. Nick Battista agreed we should start the discussion and thinking about this process but come back in person with a full Board and Stakeholders comments to have a full vote.
7. Other Business: The board discussed how respond to a request that ConnectMaine be a recipient of a community benefit agreement for energy and other projects. The board requested that the director work with Brian Lippold on a response to the request.
8. Public Comments: N/A

Board meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.