

CONNECTME



State of Maine
ConnectME Authority
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Dick Thompson
Chair

Authority Members - Denise Garland - Susan Woods - Bruce Williamson - Sandy Saunders - Ralph Johnson

October 26, 2018

ConnectME Authority – Meeting Notes

1. Introductions: Authority Board Members: Dick Thompson, Sue Woods, Ralph Johnson and Sandy Saunders.

Authority Staff: Heather Johnson and Brooke Johnson.

Members of the public were asked to introduce themselves.

2. UVEC Sherman/Stacyville Update: Heather Johnson explained that the UVEC Sherman/Stacyville project was unable to obtain additional funding to support the project so this grant has been cancelled. Heather Johnson described the three options for the \$150,000 now available and the options are, hold the funding for the January round, revisit the March 12th round applications or open a new grant round on Monday October 29, 2018. Heather Johnsons opinion is that we open a new grant round on Monday with our new eligibility criteria. Heather Johnson thinks we will get more impactful projects using this option. Dick Thompson asked about a timeline if we opened a new grant round. Heather Johnson discussed having applications due in 45 days from Monday and we could turn around and complete the scoring quickly to have final approval for our next Board meeting on Dec 14th. Several attendees discussed their thoughts of the options. Dick Thompson suggested a 30-day application deadline instead of 45-days and asked attendees if that would affect them. Brain Lippold responded with that is not enough time for communities to prepare their applications and Don Flewelling said it would not affect him. Ben Sanborn said the applicants from the previous round in March still had the same build to targets even though the eligibility criteria have changed and he does not think delays are beneficial to anyone. Peggy Schaffer suggested opening a new grant round due to the new eligibility criteria but that 30 days is not enough time. Susan Woods motions to open a new grant round and Sandy Saunders seconds the motion. All were in favor.
3. Macpage Audit Presentation and Findings: Bob Dube and Steven Falco introduced themselves. Bob Dube explained that the results of the audit were reasonably positive and that him and Steven will go through the findings with us. Bob Dube explained that we did not spend \$750,000 in federal money so there is no single audit compliance testing of federal funds but if we do spend over that amount in the future we will need a single audit. The draft audit components were reviewed fully by Heather Johnson and were submitted on October 15, 2018 on the deadline with the State. Bob Dube stated that once the Board approves this audit that all documents will be ready for final draft to the State except we are waiting on a legal letter back from The Attorney General's office. Steven Falco briefly reviews the audit because the Board received the draft for prior review. Ralph Johnson motions to approve the audit and Susan Woods seconds the motion. All were in favor.

4. Approval of July 27, 2018 & September 28, 2018 Minutes and Review of Financial Report: Susan Woods motions to approve the minutes for July 27, 2018 and September 28, 2018 Ralph Johnson seconds the motion. All were in favor. Brooke Johnson explained the September financial activity. The ConnectME Authority received \$388.29 in assessment money and paid \$31,250 in grant payments. The ending balance for the month of September was \$1,351,957.54.
5. Director Report: Heather Johnson talked about the Annual Report and how we will come to the December 14th Board meeting with some new ideas. We will send out drafts before the next meeting and we are currently getting input from other folks as well. Heather Johnson described the mapping data is well on its way and we should have it by mid-November and she has been out talking to communities about it. Brooke Johnson has set-up a new tool with Informe that will be easy for providers, residents and communities to use in helping with the list. Heather Johnson explained that after speaking with NTIA we will be able to take this data to the USDA for the e-connectivity pilot funds. Heather Johnson wanted to let everyone know about the new GFR from the USDA, Thomas Becker and she will be meeting with him some time in November. Dick Thompson asked Heather Johnson if she has been contacted by any of the candidates for Governor. Heather Johnson explained that she had previously reached out to all 4 candidates and either have met with the candidate or their policy person.
6. Other Business: N/A
7. Public Comments: Ben Sanborn reminded the Authority Board and Staff that the Strategic Plan is due soon and that there is a 90-day comment period required before approval. Peggy Schaffer described that the MBC is working on the messaging around broadband and the conversation does not need to be about speed but rather use.

Board meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.