

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 - Ralph Johnson

April 26, 2019

ConnectME Authority – Meeting Notes

1. Introductions: Authority Board Members: Dick Thompson, Sue Woods, Denise Garland, Bruce Williamson, Ralph Johnson and Fred Brittain.

Authority Staff: Brooke Johnson and Peggy Schaffer.

Members of the public were asked to introduce themselves.

2. Review of Monthly Financial Report/Waterfall Financials: Brooke Johnson explained the March financial activity. The ConnectME Authority received \$2,677.58 in assessment money and paid \$53,421.25 in grant payments. The ending balance for the month of March was \$1,556,650.91. Brooke Johnson reviewed the waterfall financials that leaves a projected available balance for funding of \$890,000.
3. USDA Match Money: Peggy Schaffer explained the USDA ReConnect 100% Grant that requires a 25% match and we would like to bring down this match cost to Communities by committing a small percent of their match money from ConnectME funds. We sent out a notification to our Listserv and the MBC asking for communities to contact us if they were applying for the USDA %100 grant program and would like match money from ConnectME. We received 3 towns who are applying. Those towns are Monhegan Plantation, Roque Bluffs and Indian Township. The total requested is \$150,000. Ralph Johnson motions to approve this amount of match as long as they meet our build-to standards and complete the ConnectME grant application if they are awarded. All were in favor. ConnectME will provide them a commitment letter for their application to USDA and another letter between ConnectME and the applicant stating they will complete our application if they are awarded.
4. Approval to Open Grant Round and Set an Amount: Peggy Schaffer recommended \$700,000 be approved for Infrastructure and Planning grants on May 1st and have a due date of June 12th Brooke Johnson explained that that would leave us with \$40,000 that we could set aside incase of another USDA match request. Denise Garland motions to approve \$740,000 and Bruce Williamson seconds the motion. All were in favor.
5. State of Maine Digital Equity & Digital Inclusion Plan: Peggy Schaffer talked about the Digital Equity and Digital Inclusion Plan that NDEC put out in January of 2019. Peggy Schaffer would like to begin the discussion on Digital Literacy. As Digital Literacy is one of our strategic goals Peggy Schaffer would like to start working closely with Susan Corbett to help figure how to embed this in

CONNECTME

State Agencies and how we move forward. This is a draft plan and Susan Corbett is continuing to refine it but this is an excellent starting point.

6. The PEW Charitable Trusts Visit: Peggy Schaffer explained that PEW charitable Trust has chosen Maine as one of their broadband research case studies and they will be doing a site visit in mid-May to speak with and interview providers, communities, stakeholders and various others about broadband practices in Maine. Brooke Johnson has scheduled 20 plus meeting all around the State. PEW will have a Southern Maine day, a Coastal day and a Central/Western day.
7. Broadband Mapping Update: Peggy Schaffer provided an update about the NTIA mapping. We are currently working with Vetro to map all of the data we have and then we will provide that information to NTIA/ESRI next week. Peggy Schaffer also explained that her and Brooke Johnson have been talking about what of this data do we want on our site? An interactive map for example. We will figure out the required technology.
8. Approval of March 22, 2019 Minutes: Bruce Williamson motions to approve the minutes for March 22, 2019 with suggested edit and Denise Garland seconds the motion. All were in favor.
9. Director Report: Legislative Update: Peggy Schaffer provided a legislative update on all broadband bills to date.
10. Other Business: n/a
11. Public Comments: Nick Battista thanks the Board for being flexible around the USDA match. Cliff Island project is going live in the next few months and is going to have a ribbon cutting and ConnectME is invited. MBC will be holding another conference this fall, details to follow.

Board meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.