



Alaska Statewide Broadband Advisory Board

Alaska Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development

Minutes for Rescheduled Regular Board Meeting- January 22, 2024, at 10:00 AM AKDT.

Approved by the SBAB February 26, 2024.

Attendance

Present:

Members: Glenda Ledford (Chair); Charles Carpenter; Laib Allensworth (staff for Representative Edgmon); Ana Hoffman; Thomas Lochner; Travis Million; Kathleen Moran; Christine O'Connor; Laurel Shoop; Charlene Stern; Mary Swain; and Tara Sweeney.

Staff Present: Lisa Von Barga, Deputy Director; and Melissa Kookesh, Tribal Liaison.

Members Absent: Mike Brase; Representative Bryce Edgmon; Senator Lyman Hoffman; and Steve Noonkesser.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:03am.

Deputy Director Von Barga called the roll, and eleven members of the board were present. Quorum was met.

II. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Charlie Carpenter to approve the draft agenda as presented. Seconded by Mary Swain. Approved by Unanimous Consent.

III. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

None.

IV. Approval of Minutes from Prior Meetings

Motion by Charlie Carpenter to approve the minutes from the rescheduled regular meeting of December 11, 2023. Seconded by Thomas Lochner and approved by Unanimous Consent.

V. Subcommittee Reports

None.

VI. Staff Reports

None.

VII. Referrals to the Technical Working Group

None.

VIII. Unfinished Business

None.

IX. New Business

a. Discussion Item: Program Status Overview and Update

Thomas Lochner began with an update about the Digital Equity Plan. The Alaska Broadband Office (ABO) received 112 public comments on the Plan. The revised plan was submitted in draft form to NTIA on December 20, 2023. As of the date of this meeting, the ABO had received two Curing Requests from NTIA, the most significant was the need to improve the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The revised Plan was sent to State leadership on January 12, 2024, for review. The Final Plan will be submitted to NTIA by January 28th to ensure Alaska's eligibility for Digital Equity Capacity and Competitive Grant programs. Nationwide, \$1.44 Billion and \$1.25 Billion will be distributed for the Capacity and Competitive programs, respectively.

Thomas Lochner also provided an update on the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program. The Initial Proposal, Volume 2 (Grant Program) was submitted to NTIA on December 27, 2023. The Initial Proposal Volume 1 (Mapping Challenge) is still under review by NTIA. The ABO has received, and responded to, four Curing Requests as of the date of this meeting.

Thomas Lochner provided more detail on the Mapping Challenge schedule. Upon approval by NTIA the locations of all Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs) and Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) will be posted for 30 days. Following that, the official Mapping Challenge will begin including three 30-day periods: Challenge Period, Rebuttal Period, and Adjudication Period. The ABO is anticipating a June 2024 completion for the entire 120-day process.

Lisa Von Barga reported the Board will likely be provided with the draft Broadband Workforce Development Plan for review and approval in February.

Melissa Kookesh and Thomas Lochner reported a schedule is being established for future Tribal Consultations that will cover topics including the Mapping Challenge, and the grant program application process.

b. Discussion Item: Ongoing Meeting Cadence

Thomas Lochner suggested the Board move to having meetings every other month unless specific business warranted more frequent meetings. There was agreement among the members of the board to move to an every-other-month schedule, provided special meetings will be scheduled as needed to address items of a time-sensitive nature. It was determined the February meeting would be held but moved to the 26th because of the holiday on the regular meeting day.

X. Public Comment

None.

XI. Board Member Business from the Floor

None.

XII. Adjournment

Motion by Ana Hoffman to adjourn. Seconded by Mary Swain and approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20am on January 22, 2024. The next meeting is February 26, 2024.