



Alaska Statewide Broadband Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Alaska Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development

Minutes for Regular Board Meeting – June 16, 2025, 10:00 AM AKDT.

The minutes were approved by the Board on September 5, 2025.

Attendance

Members Present: Michael Brase, Charles Carpenter, Chair Ledford, Thomas Lochner, Travis Million, Kathleen Moran, Steve Noonkesser, Christine O'Connor, and Mary Swain.

Staff Present: Lisa Von Barga, Deputy Director; Melissa Kookesh, Tribal Liaison; Laura Vaught, Project Coordinator; Sarah Adams, Administrative Specialist; and Jan Cox, DCRA Grants Administrator III.

Members Absent: Speaker Edgmon (staff Amory Lelake attended on behalf of), Ana Hoffman, and Senator Hoffman. One board position is vacant.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:14am. Deputy Director Von Barga called the roll and nine members of the board were present at the time the meeting was called to order. Quorum was met.

II. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Steve Noonkesser to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Charlie Carpenter. The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

III. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

None.

IV. Approval of Minutes from Prior Meetings

a. Regular Meeting April 14, 2025

Motion by Travis Million to approve the prior meeting minutes, seconded by Steve Noonkesser. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

V. Subcommittee Reports

None.

VI. Staff Reports

a. Introduction of New ABO Staff

i. Laura Vaught, Project Coordinator

Director Lochner introduced Laura Vaught as the new Project Coordinator for the Alaska Broadband Office and gave a brief description of her position's role and responsibilities.

ii. Sarah Adams, Administrative Specialist

Director Lochner introduced Sarah Adams as the new Administrative Specialist for the Alaska Broadband Office and gave a brief description of her position's role and responsibilities.

b. Alaska Digital Empowerment Capacity Grant Program (Deputy Director Von Barga)

i. Program Cancellation

Deputy Director Von Barga explained the ABO received a notice on May 9, 2025, from the NTIA terminating the federal State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program. She further explained the funding

from the federal program was the only funding source for Alaska's in-state Digital Empowerment Capacity Grant Program. As a result, the in-state program was also terminated immediately.

c. Alaska Broadband Grant Program (Director Lochner)

i. Application Timeline Update

Director Lochner gave a summary of the changes to the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program along with a timeline update for the revisions to the Alaska Broadband Grant Program. He stated the new Policy Guidance was received from NTIA on June 6, 2025, which means the application portal for the Alaska Broadband Grant Program will reopen on July 5, 2025. Mr. Lochner further explained the ABO only has 90 days to complete our in-state grant program and submit the proposed award recipients to NTIA as part of the Final Proposal. He explained to the Board the sections of the BEAD Program that were eliminated by the new Policy Guidance. He also talked through the significantly revised scoring requirements. Director Lochner stated the ABO would be requesting a time extension to the original submittal deadline of Alaska's Final Proposal but confirmed if that is not approved everything must be submitted to NTIA by September 4, 2025.

VII. Unfinished Business

None.

VIII. New Business

None.

IX. Public Comment

Shawn Williams asked if under the new NTIA policy guidance Low Earth Orbit (LEO) is the only type of satellite technology that will be eligible to apply for grant funding. Director Lochner replied at any technology able to meet the minimum requirements of 100Mbps/20 Mbps and 100 or less milliseconds of latency is eligible to apply. Mr. Williams also asked if the Technology Waiver process was still intact following the release of the new policy guidance. Director Lochner replied that he would need to ask NTIA and follow up with Mr. Williams when he received an answer.

X. Board Member Business from the Floor

None.

XI. Next Meeting Date

The next regular meeting is scheduled for August 18, 2025.

XII. Adjournment

Chair Leford adjourned the meeting at 10:31am on June 16, 2025.