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## Meeting Minutes

**Ref: Broadband Advisory Council Session**

**Date: July 18, 2023**

**Place: ORS HQ, 1401 Main Street, Suite 900, Columbia, SC 29201**

### BBAC ATTENDEES

Jim Stritzinger, Anna Berger, Brad Wright, Eric Budds, Gwynth R. Nelson, Madeline McGee, Melanie Barton, Susie Shannon, Larry Huff

### GUEST ATTENDEES

Willie Bradley, Matt Hiatt, Sara Pincelli, Howard Fenton, Mauricio Orozco, Elaine Whitfield, Julie Moreland, Mike Shealy, Nabil Natafqi, PhD

A meeting was held virtually and in-person on July 18, 2023, from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM at the Office of Regulatory Staff Headquarters located in Columbia, SC. This document summarizes discussions and action items covered during the meeting. The meeting was also recorded and is available on the ORS web site.

### DISCUSSION

- ORS welcomed everyone; roll call was observed; meeting minutes were approved
- Jim provided an update on the South Carolina Broadband Office's (SCBBO) mapping. The new maps went live on June 26, 2023. They're reflective of infrastructure that was built through December 2022 in combination with Ookla data that came in through in March 2023. This map is rendered based on location level-data. The Federal Communications Commission has moved to what is called Broadband Serviceable locations (BSL). The calculations for these maps are done at a location level for the first time in state history.
- The SCBBO is now evaluating South Carolina at 100/20 Mbps vs. 25/3 Mbps.
- The SCBBO calculates that there are 191,548 BSL's currently without 100/20 Mbps internet speeds. Once construction on current investment is complete, the SCBBO projects that there will be 133,631 BSL's without high-speed internet in Dec. 2024.
- In May of 2022 the General Assembly allocated \$400 million for SC Broadband Infrastructure.
  - This money is separated into two buckets.
    - State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF)
      - \$214.2 Million
    - Capital Projects Fund (CPF)

- \$185.8 Million
    - Requires 100 Mbps Symmetric (100/100)
    - Applications are due on July 17, 2023
    - Will award a portion of \$185.8M CPF fund allocation
  - The SCBBO has awarded over \$25 million across 10 Internet Service Providers through the Accelerated Deployment grant. This grant program provides a 50% match for work that was started after March 2021 and was completed by June 30, 2022.
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- On June 26, 2023, President Biden announced the State of South Carolina was allocated \$551,535,983 for BEAD Infrastructure.
    - For the SCBBO to receive this money they must complete Federal planning and receive approval. The SCBBO must submit:
      - 5-year Action Plan
        - Due on August 28, 2023
      - Initial Proposal
        - Due on December 27, 2023
  - The Department of Administration spearheaded the “Road Shows” for BEAD, this time was used to meet with citizens of rural towns without internet. The information gathered during the Road Shows was used to assist in writing the states 5-year action plan.
  - Julie Moreland, the CEO of Vizbii Technologies, Inc. and Nabil Natafji, Ph.D. with the University of South Carolina partnered with the SCBBO to design and implement the “Better Internet Survey” which was also used to create the BEAD Five-Year Plan.
    - This survey helped identify areas of greatest need for internet
    - There were four target groups:
      - People with internet
        - Does their internet meet their needs
        - Does their internet NOT meet their needs
      - People without internet
        - Would they like to have internet
        - Would they NOT like to have internet
    - This survey also gave the SCBBO insight on the barriers to internet expansion (ex. geography, cost, device/service accessibility)
    - Better Internet Survey went live on February 21, 2023
    - The SCBBO received 13,024 completed surveys
      - 7,355 people have internet that meets their needs
      - 4,341 people have internet that does not meet their needs
      - 3,874 people have no internet but do want it
      - 556 people do not have internet and do not want it
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