



Office of Regulatory Staff
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Draft Meeting Minutes

Ref: Broadband Advisory Council Planning Session

Date: 7.12.2022

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

ATTENDEES

Anna Berger, Bernie Mazyck, Elizabeth Carpentier, Eric Budds, Gwynth Nelson, Jim Stritzinger, Kathy Schwarting, Leesa Aiken, Madeleine McGee, Mike Coker, Peggy McLean, Ray Sharpe, Susie Shannon, Victor Young

A meeting was held on 7.12.2022 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.

DISCUSSION

- ORS welcomed everyone; rollcall was observed.
- A link to video recording for the 4.12.2022 BBAC meeting is posted on ORS' website
- Minutes for the 4.12.2022 meeting will be recirculated and voted upon during the next BBAC meeting
- ORS provided a legislative update, specifically HB 4408 has been passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by Governor McMaster on May 13, 2022
- ORS published updates to the eligibility map, best available technology map, areas of need map, and statistics by County along with associated GIS data for download on SCDigitalDrive.org
- ORS discussed the addition of new staff as part of the Office of Broadband Coordinator expanding the office from 3 full time staff to 6.
- ORS introduced the Last Mile Grant Program (LMGP) which was a pilot grant program structured to provide connectivity to housing units in underserved census blocks. Awards have been made to 10 ISPs and work is scheduled to be complete by December 31, 2022.
- ORS provided greater context on the implementation of HB 4408, specifically the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF), grant program which will total up to \$180 million. The Capital Project Fund (CPF) grant program will total up to \$185 million and requires a broadband plan to be approved by the US Treasury. Draft plan was distributed to BBAC members for review/comment.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was proposed to have a webinar with Non-Profits and ISPs to bolster community engagement and provide support toward broadband adoption in grant application submitted by ISPs. ○ SC Association for Community Economic Development and TogetherSC have offered to take point on fostering participation through non-profits. ○ BBAC members to reach out to ORS for those that have interest in participating.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ORS described intent around the ARPA Accelerated Deployment Grant Program which focuses on work ISPs have performed between March 15th, 2021, and June 30th, 2022.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group discussed the draft ARPA CPF plan. Comments were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ While the plan touches on County engagement, it was suggested to be more explicit and intentional about how the state and ISPs will engage individual community members. ○ Some of the targeted communities have leadership that will require additional support. ○ Proposed a small work group to review all comments and suggestions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jason Ward, Administrator of Dorchester County described work that was occurring in his jurisdiction around broadband. Details included free Wi-Fi in parks. They produced a website focused on Broadband, leveraged Broadband Office data to publish their own county-centric GIS viewer, linked to the I Need Internet Survey, and initiated engagement with ISPs in and around their County. Website: https://www.dorchestercountysc.gov/services/broadband-project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ORS discussed additional grant programs related to broadband through the federal government around the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA). Included was funding for middle mile infrastructure, tribal connectivity, digital equity, and the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program. ● The Office of Broadband Coordinator has been appointed by the Governor's office to focus their efforts on the BEAD program. A letter of intent has been sent to the NTIA for this funding. The total investment for the nation under BEAD is \$42.45 billion. The BEAD program will also require use of revised FCC maps.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ORS provided an update on the Starlink pilot program which was a collaboration with the State Department of Education. Rural school districts were identified, homes in rural areas with students were nominated to participate in the program which provides for wireless broadband internet enabled by a constellation of low Earth orbit satellites.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Next BBAC meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 11, 2022.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adjourn

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Provide feedback to the Broadband Office on the CPF plan	All	7.15.2022
Distribute a copy of the letter of intent for BEAD that was signed by Governor McMaster	ORS	7.15.2022
Send email to ORS if there's interest in participating in a webinar to work toward engagement with ISPs and Non-Profits	All	7.15.2022
Setup a date/time for the webinar to collaborate between Non-Profits and ISPs – (Check TogetherSC Calendar for conflicts)	ORS	7.15.2022