

WEST VIRGINIA BROADBAND ENHANCEMENT COUNCIL



APPROVED MEETING MINUTES | June 14, 2018

Meeting Title	WV Broadband Enhancement Council Meeting		
Chairperson	Robert Hinton		
Date	6.14.2018	Location	WV Capitol Complex Bldg. 3, Suite 800 Conference Room
Time	10:00 am		
Audio Connection	304.957.6999 Conf. ID: 935-9172#	P = Present; TC = Teleconference; VC = Videoconference; _ = Absent	

	Council Member	Representing		Council Member	Representing
P	Robert Hinton, Chairman	Rural Business User Congressional Dist. 2	-	Woody Thrasher	Dept. of Commerce, Cabinet Secretary
P	Robert Morris, Vice Chairman	Urban Residential User	P	Jeff Proctor	Representing Woody Thrasher
P	Michael L. Holstine Secretary-Treasurer	Rural Business User Congressional Dist. 3	-	Dr. Steven L. Paine	Dept. of Education, State Superintendent
-	Ric Cavender	Urban Business User	-	Brenda Morris	Representing Dr. Steven L. Paine
P	Robert Cole	Rural Residential User Congressional Dist. 1	P	The Honorable Robert Plymale	WV Senate (D) (Ex-Officio/Advisory Member)
P	John Dunlap	Office of Technology, Chief Technology Officer	-	The Honorable Craig Blair	WV Senate (R) (Ex-Officio/Advisory Member)
TC	R.A. "Pete" Hobbs	Rural Residential User Congressional Dist. 3	-	The Honorable Roger Hanshaw	WV House (R) (Ex-Officio/Advisory Member)
-	John Reasbeck	Rural Business User Congressional Dist. 1	-	The Honorable Kenneth Hicks	WV House (D) (Ex-Officio/Advisory Member)
-	Matt Turner	Higher Education Policy Comm., Exec. Vice Chancellor	-	Vacant	Business User Large Amounts of Broadband
P	Dr. Jack Smith	Representing Matt Turner	-	Vacant	Rural Residential User Congressional Dist. 2
	Representative	Agency		Representative	Agency
-	Mark Debruyn	WVOT Infrastructure Manager, CTO Proxy	-	Tony Simental	WV Geological and Economic Survey, Office of GIS Coordination
-	Mitch Blake	Director, WV Geological and Economic Survey	-	Kelli Talbott	WV Attorney General's Office Legal Counsel
-			-	Wes White	WV Development Office Legal Counsel
-	Tony O'Leary	WV Development Office Project Manager	-	Kelly Workman	WV Development Office Development Manager

Agenda Item	Details/Minutes
1. Call to Order, Opening Remarks and Roll Call	Chair Robert Hinton called the meeting to order at 10:04.
2. Approval of 5/10/2018 Council Meeting Minutes and Financial Statement	Motion was made by Member Morris to accept May minutes, second by Member Holstine. Motion carried unanimously. Jeff Proctor motioned to accept Financial Statements, Member Cole second. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Technical Consulting RFP	Chair Hinton noted the contract with the technical consulting firm, Tilson Technology, has been approved by the Purchasing Division and is now complete. One item the firm will assist the Council is with mapping projects and on a related note, Mr. Proctor asked if it was known how many states are compiling their own speed testing and broadband mapping as alternative data to what the FCC compiles, noting that a joint statement from all states doing this would have an emphasis of importance with the FCC. Chair Hinton said this could be one of the first initiatives the new firm could assist, and Kelly Workman of Commerce said a division of NTIA, BroadbandUSA, has monthly teleconferences with state representatives and this topic could be addressed and coordinated with other participating states.
4. NTIA Public Comment	Chair Hinton noted in that in the Council packet was information re: the US Dept. of Commerce/NTIA Requests for Comment on action to "Improve the Quality and Accuracy of Broadband Availability Data, especially in rural areas. Chair Hinton said the Council would be working to create a response and comment. Senator Robert Plymale asked if a conference call could be made possible so that the Council could be informed of the message the Council is to articulate to the FCC. Chair Hinton asked that Ms. Workman set up a conference call to discuss the response letter once a draft is crafted.
5. FCC Mobility Fund Challenge Process	Chair Hinton discussed a recent visit to West Virginia by Michael Janson, FCC Deputy Director of the Rural Broadband Auctions Taskforce, regarding an upcoming universal service funding (CAF/USF) project known as Mobility Fund II (MF-II) program which is aimed to advance 4G LTE service where there is no qualifying unsubsidized service. Chair Hinton noted the program includes a challenge process for areas labeled ineligible for participation in the reverse auction to make eligible. Discussion ensued regarding the extensive data and timing involved in the challenge process. The Council has gained access to the Challenge Portal and can assist any West Virginia communities in the challenge process.
6. FY2018 CDBG Funding	<p>Chair Hinton discussed how the Governor's Office has responded favorably to the Council's request to make HUD Community Development Block Grant funds available for broadband development projects. In FY2017, \$1.5 million was allocated to CDBG broadband development projects and in FY2018, Chair Hinton noted, that \$2 million is to be allocated to CDBG broadband projects.</p> <p>Ms. Workman added that the WVDO conducted three public hearings as required annually by HUD regarding the CDBG program and said that feedback to the funding for broadband projects has been very positive. Ms. Workman said the planning grants are proving to be an excellent starting point for local government entities to form partnerships in developing comprehensive broadband blueprints for the communities and to pursue additional project development strategies and funding sources. The first FY18 deadline for CDBG applications is October 30 and there is an intent to offer a second round of funding in/around Spring 2019 for local governments that received FY18 planning grants to obtain infrastructure funding.</p>
7. Committee Reports	<p><u>Infrastructure Committee:</u> Mr. Proctor said the committee met briefly prior to the Council meeting to discuss exploring different public-private partnerships that could facilitate faster connectivity in the state with through additional funding sources. The committee also discussed the Dig Once bill passed during the Legislature which effective in June and how the legislation can be incorporated into the many Roads to Prosperity projects. The final item discussed was any possible issues that can be taken to the Legislature.</p> <p>Chair Hinton followed about how local school districts have exemptions to procure internet subscription and the possibility if other agencies and organizations can be part of similar exemptions that could lower connectivity costs.</p>

	<p><u>Education Committee</u>: Dr. Jack Smith noted the Committee met May 31 and discussed how committee members can make presentations at future Council meetings about such topics as E-Rate; digital books; and next generations television.</p> <p><u>Adoption Committee</u>: Committee chair Bob Cole said the committee would like to move forward with creating a PSA campaign for promoting the speed test. In addition, he will bring a future Council meeting an overview of a state universal service fund program that would generate revenue from subscriber earmark fee to potentially fund rural broadband initiatives.</p>			
8. Related Events:	Chair Hinton noted that at a recent event hosted by Microsoft, the Brookings Institute and Create WV, the Council was invited to provide an overview of broadband in West Virginia. Also, Chair Hinton added that a Microsoft rep announced at this event that West Virginia is a priority for the company's initiative to expand wireless service to the state's rural areas and a special announcement about this is expected in July.			
9. Public Comments	Aaron Sporck with Senator Capito's office commented that there is a special allocation of funds in the congressional Omnibus Spending Bill (aka Farm Bill) that could allocate as much as \$775,000 for West Virginia water and sewer projects through ARC and that amount of funds designated for water and sewer projects in the CDBG program could be designated for broadband projects.			
10. Next Meeting Date	Chair Hinton noted that the next meeting be August 9, 2018 and the July meeting be bypassed. There were no objections.			
11. Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 11:58.			
Action Items				
No.	Description	Assigned To	Month Identified	Target Completion Date
1.	Easement acquisition and donation	Committee	May	—
2.	Consultation with WV DOH	Council, WVDO, WVOT	May	Ongoing
3.	Requirements of WV Code 31G	All Committees	June	
4.	Cooperative Toolkit and Training	Workman, O'Leary, Generation WV, WVU Law	June 2017	Initial toolkit near completion and expansion of project into comprehensive legal toolkit being considered.

Attendees, in order of sign-in:

1. Fred Rader, MOVRC
2. Peter Markham, Bowles Rice LLP
3. Marlene Hackett, The Hackett Praxis LLC
4. Loarie Butcher, LHB Strategies