



Central New York Regional Planning & Development Board

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Paul W. Pinckney, Chairman David V. Bottar, Executive Director

MINUTES

**Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board
Board of Directors Meeting
June 29, 2022**

ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Pamela D. Caraccioli, Elane Daly, Kipp Hicks, Scott Ingmire, Trisha Jesset, Stephen F. Lynch, Mary Ann Messinger, Paul Pinckney, Eric Ridley, Eve Ann Shwartz, L. Michael Treadwell, Garry L. VanGorder, and Stephen Zabriskie.

Guests: Cameron Beck, Kyle Boeckmann, Tom Bunn, Tricia Kerr, Lynn Marinelli, Andy Lukasiewicz, Joe Starks

Staff: Tom Bardenett, Michael Boccuzzi, David V. Bottar, Chris Carrick, Lauren Darcy, Jean Gleisner, Bruce Keplinger, Amanda Mazzoni, Aaron McKeon, Patricia A. Wortley

1. CALL TO ORDER

Paul Pinckney called the virtual zoom meeting to order at 1:00 pm at the offices of the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board in Syracuse, New York.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA AND MINUTES

A motion was introduced and seconded to accept the agenda as presented; the motion was approved unanimously.

3. CNY REGIONAL BROADBAND INITIATIVE

David Bottar was introduced and he provided a brief overview on the status of the agency's work on a regional broadband initiative. As part of this summary, Mr. Bottar noted that the agency engaged ECC Technologies in November 2020 to prepare a regional broadband internet access study for the region, which was completed and released on December 31, 2021. Mr. Bottar noted that now that the study is complete, staff has been working with member counties to explore options that can be pursued to improve broadband service in the region.

Joseph Starks, President and CEO of ECC Technologies, LLC., was then introduced and asked to provide more detailed information regarding results from the study and recommendations for improving broadband service in Central New York.

Mr. Starks began his remarks by referencing a power point presentation for members to follow during his remarks.

Regarding the study, Mr. Starks noted that the broadband infrastructure visual field inventory that was completed in 2021 for the region shows there are approximately 919 road miles and 8,253 addresses that do not have broadband infrastructure currently in place.

Mr. Starks continued his remarks by noting a major initiative that Madison County is currently engaged with in partnership with Empire Access – a regional telecommunications company, to build out a new fiber optic broadband network in the County. Mr. Starks note this initiative is being funded with a USDA Reconnect grant of \$10.2 million and \$3.4 million from Madison County, and \$2.5 million provided by Empire Access. Mr. Starks indicated the project is currently in the engineering design phase with construction scheduled to begin in 2023.

Mr. Starks continued his remarks by noting that Onondaga County is planning to issue an RFP in early to secure one or more companies to build out broadband services to all unserved areas in the County. Mr. Starks noted that more general discussions are ongoing with Cayuga, Cortland, and Oswego Counties.

Mr. Starks also referenced summary information in his power point and two handouts from the NTIA regarding current and upcoming broadband funding opportunities available at the federal level. Programs referenced included the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act which includes \$42.5 billion for the NTIA Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program and \$1 billion for the NTIA Middle Mile program. Also referenced was NYS plans to fund a \$1.4 billion ConnectAll program.

Regarding the NTIA Middle Mile program, Mr. Bottar noted that the agency has engaged ECC to explore the opportunities to secure a Middle Mile grant for the region. Mr. Starks explained that a Middle Mile Open Access Network (OAN) is classified as middle mile fiber that allows public and private entities to lease or IRU fiber to expand or add to their own networks. It was noted the OAN creates broadband fiber optic infrastructure interconnecting cities, towns, and villages with public and private broadband providers and data centers.

Mr. Starks continued his remarks by referencing middle mile networks that are currently operated by the Southern Tier Network in the Corning, NY region and a system operated by the Development Authority of the North Country in the Watertown region. Mr. Starks noted his office is currently working with the CNY RPDB to determine a 500 mile middle mile network route that would serve the entire five-county region and is also in the process of identify potential organizations that could partner with the agency to develop this network.

Mr. Bottar noted the NTIA funding was announced in early July 2022 and applications are due by September 30, 2022. Given the limited amount of time to prepare the application, Mr. Bottar indicated that staff is recommending that ECC begin exploring in detail the feasibility of the agency submitting a competitive application with the full understanding that many of the project details would need to be worked out following any grant award. Based upon the presentation and remarks by Mr. Starks and staff, Board members indicated their general support for building an open access middle mile network in Central New York and directed staff to proceed with work on the NTIA application.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Bottar provided some brief remarks regarding the range of programs and project that staff is currently working on. As part of these remarks, Mr. Bottar noted that staff is currently preparing a number of NYS Consolidated Funding Applications for a number of communities across the region including a proposal to the State to help fund redevelopment of the former Lafayette hotel in the Town of Lafayette. Also referenced was an application to the NYS DEC to continue the agency's MS4 stormwater mapping program and for funding to prepare a 9-Element Watershed Management Plan for Otisco Lake on behalf of Onondaga County. Mr. Bottar also noted an application being prepared on behalf of the Town of Oswego to secure funds to prepare a comprehensive plan for the community and an application on behalf of Visit Syracuse to secure a major tourism marketing grant for the organization.

5. BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Mr. Bottar noted the next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for July 20th and the next full board meeting will be held on August 31st.

6. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Pinckney noted there was no old or new business presented to the board for discussion.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was introduced and seconded to adjourn the meeting; the motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

L. Michael Treadwell, Secretary/Treasurer

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