**Governor’s Task Force on Broadband**

**Tuesday November 26, 2024**

**10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

180 E 5th St Suite 1200

St Paul MN 55101

**Task Force Members in Attendance in Person**: Teddy Bekele; Daniel Lightfoot; Marc Johnson; Melissa Wolf; Brian Hood; Steve Fenske; Bruce Crane; Adam Hutchens

**Task Force Members in Attendance Virtually**: Dave Wolf; Briana Mumme; Gail Hedstrom; Ini Augustine

**Task Force members Absent**: Paul McDonald; John Twiest; Phil Stalboerger

**Others in Attendance in Person**: Bree Maki; Tom Karst; Ben Vargas; Anna Norcutt Preuss; Kristina Rupport

**Others in Attendance Virtually:** Carol Bossuyt; Hannah Buckland; Megan Moudry; Steven Kraus; Ann Treacy; Joe Buttweiler; Michelle Rebholz; Michael Wimmer; Mika Baer; Samantha Ernst; Jennifer Frost; Paul Solsrud; Angie Dickison;

Karrie Jansen; Ace Wesselmann; Diane Wells; Todd Kruse; Barbara Droher Kline; HaoPay Lee; Emily Feeley; Kemal Nezarevic; Mark Boeschen; Nathan Zacharias

**I. Welcome**

Chair Bekele called the meeting to order, roll call was taken, and an overview of the agenda provided.

**II. Approval of minutes from the October 21 Task Force Meeting**

Meeting minutes were approved from the October 21 Task Force meeting.

**III. Office of Broadband Development Overview + BEAD and Digital Opportunity Updates**

Bree Maki (Executive Director, OBD) provided updates on meetings on streamlining the environmental permit and review process, including interagency cooperation, a role at OBD, and a permit process workshop. Additionally mentioned was the Safety-qualified Underground Telecommunications Installer Program, which has more information on the Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) webpage. Diane Wells (Deputy Director, OBD) provided updates on BEAD, as well as Border to Border and Low Density. The final list of BEAD eligible locations will be submitted by December 18. OBD is working with Ready.Net to get a system in place and open the prequalification process for BEAD. Per the approved Volume 2, OBD will plan to hold 3 selection rounds. Hannah Buckland (Digital Equity Program Lead, OBD) provided updates on digital opportunity in Minnesota, including the approval of the Digital Equity Capacity grant in Minnesota. OBD is hoping to be able to share a timeline and expectations on next steps. Tom Karst, NTIA’s FPO for Minnesota, provided an update on how currently BEAD is going to move forward as planned from a federal perspective.

**IV. Line Extension Program updates**

Jennifer Frost, Grants Supervisor, OBD made a presentation on the three rounds of programs for the Line Extension Connection Program (LECP). This included a background on the LECP, some of the key differences between Border-to-Border (B2B) and Low-Density (LD), and updates on the deployment numbers for rounds 1 and 2. Status updates on the third round of LECP, and the future of LECP and BEAD were provided. The hope is to continue LECP during BEAD, and with unused funds from prior Capital Project Funds (CPF). Questions from Task Force members included: tracking take rates for LECP applications; if the gap in funding will be covered and how much will be available moving forward; and on if Line Extension is a program in other states.

**V. Annual report draft progress + work time**

As a whole, the Task Force reviewed the current draft of the annual report. The three subgroups presented on the sections they have been working on, including; Affordability & Digital Equity; Economic Opportunity & Work Force Development; and Mapping, Funding, and Policy.

It was agreed a draft would be sent out to the Task Force for subgroups to integrate the feedback from the meeting into their sections, and that those edits would be made by the end of the week of December 6. The draft will be re-reviewed in December, and if needed an additional one-hour meeting would be scheduled after the December 17 meeting for the Task Force to vote on the annual report.

**VI. Other Business, December 17 Meeting Plans, Wrap-up**
Chair Bekele opened the floor for questions and comments for Task Force members and others attending. An announcement was made that LIUNA will be hosting a [Broadband Forum](https://liunaminnesota.org/orangecard) January 9 with training demonstrations and panel-based discussions.