

# Vermont Community Broadband Board Meeting

## Monday, October 14, 2024 – 12:00pm – 4:00pm

### AGENDA

Meeting is being held virtually.

[Join the meeting virtually](#)

Join by Phone: [+1 802-828-7667](tel:+18028287667), [940257260#](tel:+18028287667)

*Note: there may be additional executive sessions as needed.*

No.	Time	Agenda Item	Category	Page #'s
1.	12:00	Call Meeting to Order, Roll Call, Approval of Agenda		
2.	12:05	Minutes Approval – 09.09.2024, 09.30.2024		2-14
3.	12:15	Public Comment – Christine Hallquist		
4.	12:20	KPI Scorecard Update – Christine Hallquist, Alexei Monsarrat <i>Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(6), which protects records exempt from the access to the public records law.</i>	ARPA	
5.	12:45	Maple Broadband Addison County CUD) Construction Grant Amendment – Alexei Monsarrat <i>Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(6), which protects records exempt from the access to the public records law.</i>	ARPA	15
6.	1:15	WCVT Construction Grant Amendment – Kristina Sweet <i>Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(A), which protects records exempt from the access to the public records law.</i>	ARPA	16
7.	1:45	Annual Report – Herryyn Herzog, Christine Hallquist		
8.	1:50	Update on Workforce Development Program – Christine Hallquist		17-21
9.	2:05	Legislative Update – Gwynn Zakov <i>Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(6)(A), which protects records exempt from the access to public records law.</i>		22-25
10.	2:50	Parking Lot – Ginny Raboin		26-43
11.	3:00	BEAD Timeline Update – Alexei Monsarrat		44
12.	3:15	VCUDA Update – Rob Vietzke		
13.	3:25	Public Comment – Christine Hallquist		
14.	3:30	Confirm next meeting date November 18, 2024; Virtual		
15.	3:35	Proposed Board Resolution thanking Holly Groschner for her service		45
16.	3:45	Board Review - Executive session - <i>1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) (3), authorizing a public body to hold an executive session to consider personnel matters.</i>		
17.	4:00pm	Adjourn		

Press inquiries: please contact Herryyn Herzog, [herryyn.herzog@vermont.gov](mailto:herryyn.herzog@vermont.gov)

**Vermont Community Broadband Board Meeting  
Monday, September 9, 2024, 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm  
Meeting Minutes**

**1. Meeting Call to Order, Roll Call, and Approval of Agenda**

Patty Richards called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm, and completed roll call:

- Patty Richards
- Dan Nelson
- Brian Otley
- Laura Sibilila (joined at 12:03pm)
- Holly Groschner (Absent)
- Christine Hallquist – Staff
- Rob Fish – Staff
- Toni Clithero – Staff
- Kristina Sweet – Staff
- Alexei Monsarrat – Staff
- Alissa Mathews – Staff
- Heryn Herzog – Staff
- Lucie Fortier – Staff
- Ginny Raboin – Staff

The Chair moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Nelson and opened the motion for discussion. Ms. Hallquist requested the addition of having a one-hour special meeting seeking Board approval of the NEK CUD Grant that will be introduced during the meeting. With no further discussion, the additional agenda item was approved unanimously.

**2. Minutes Approval** – The Chair made a motion to approve the minutes of August 12, 2024, seconded by Mr. Otley and opened for discussion. Ms. Clithero proposed adding “a portion of” in front of the Construction grant reference to acknowledge the fact it’s not the entirety of the construction grant. With no objections to the change, and no further discussion on a vote of 4-0 the minutes were approved with the correction.

**3. Public Comment** – Ms. Hallquist opened public comment. F.X. Flinn of ECFiber noted page 26 of the Board Packet the slide indicated one suggestion for use of the funds is to reduce ECFiber debt load. Mr. Flinn noted the idea was to put those funds into ECFiber construction grant. The \$17M ECFiber will be receiving from the State of Vermont is only reducing the amount of money they will need to borrow, reiterating that ECFiber understands they are not able to ask for ARPA money to

pay off their bonds. Mr. Flinn continued to share disappointment with the Board for not instructing Staff to propose how to get EC Fiber more ARPA funding given that EC Fiber has worked to reduce the number of locations in the district that would qualify for BEAD Funding.

- 4. KPI Scorecard Update – Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. s. 313 (a)(6), which protects records exempt from the access to the public records law –** Ms. Hallquist introduced the item and noted Mr. Monsarrat will present slides to the Board in open session then they will need to move to executive session to discuss the details. Mr. Monsarrat noted in addition to standard grant monitoring, the Construction Standards policy has additional metrics that Staff is currently collecting. These metrics are business sensitive. Mr. Monsarrat noted this is a review of the performance in the second quarter of 2024 with the next quarterly review potentially in November. Ms. Richards made a motion to go into executive session pursuant to *1 V.S.A. s. 313 (a)(6), which protects records exempt from the access to the public records law* seconded by Mr. Otley, with no discussion the motion carried 4-0 and the Board went into Executive Session at 12:15 p.m. The Board came out of Executive Session at 12:48 p.m. with no action taken.
- 5. Approval of Lamoille FiberNet/OCCUD/SoVT CUD Sustainability Plan –** Mr. Monsarrat noted this information will be provided to refresh the board and noted the SoVT CUD and Otter Creek CUD boards have voted to approve this sustainability plan and turned it over to Lisa Birmingham. Ms. Birmingham noted all three CUDs have voted to approve the Sustainability Plan as presented. Ms. Birmingham shared that the Memorandum of Understanding with Consolidated is fully executed and that she expects with the approval of the construction grant amendment they will draft amendments to their operating agreements as well as a new agreement to codify the eight-year commitment of annual payments. Ms. Birmingham noted after feedback from the VCBB board to consider a single payment versus annualized payments, that the CUDs met to consider the issue but determined annual payments written into the new contract best protected their future interests. Ms. Birmingham provided an overview stating the CUDs prioritized Universal Service Plans with ARPA funds for the first three years and have a sustainability working group that enables them to share resources and alignment to minimize overhead to serve their communities. When the ARPA funding runs out in 2026, they will transition to CCI funded overhead for years 2027 through 2034. Ms. Birmingham noted part of their 10-year commitment offers a biennial review of governance structure and annual reviews with CCI in terms of performance under the operating agreement and their own triumvirate. Mr. Richards advised she would allow questions during the public comment period and would open an executive session for any question pertaining to confidential material provided in the packet. Ms. Sibilila applauded the CUDs for

combining their efforts and asked why it wasn't in the CUDs best interest to have a single upfront payment. Ms. Birmingham noted that annual payments would be easier for budget management and Lamoille was not concerned with non-payment. Ms. Sibilía noted that this deal is allowing CCI to benefit again from significant public dollars with a 10-year partnership commitment and that an upfront payment allows the public investment to generate interest and potentially provide additional years of security beyond the 10 years. Ms. Sibilía asked what the protection is in the event of bankruptcy. Ms. Birmingham responded the Memorandum of Understanding is drafted under bullet two that if there is an issue they can agree to more or less, Ms. Birmingham continued to share that in Lamoille's, Otter Creek agreement is 20 years and protects in case of default and noncompliance. In the out years after construction is complete, that compliance is related to network performance and customer service. The sustainability plan is 10 years, their agreement is for 20 years. Mr. Tilton, the Chair of Lamoille FiberNet CUD noted one of the reasons for an annual payment was that it allowed an opportunity to better forecast their expenses in advance and to be more conservative with those expenses. It would also allow for an incremental increase as needed instead of asking for more money in three years. Ms. Richards noted having questions regarding the confidential materials and made a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to *1 V.S.A. s. 313 (1) (A) after making a specific finding that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage* seconded by Mr. Otley and opened discussion. With no discussion on a vote of 4-0 the Board went into executive session at 1:03 p.m. and returned into public session at 1:32pm with no action taken. Ms. Richards made a motion to approve the Sustainability Plan presented for Lamoille, Otter Creek and SoVT CUDs seconded by Mr. Nelson and opened the motion for discussion. Ms. Sibilía noted her disappointment with the CUDs not being able to negotiate a lump sum payment because CCI is benefiting from public investment. Ms. Sibilía reiterated that a lump sum payment would provide security and noted her appreciation for the work that went into securing the agreement and shared her support of the Sustainability Plan. With no other discussion on a vote of 4-0 the motion was approved unanimously.

6. Act 71 Grant Amendments Otter Creek, SoVT – Ms. Sweet presented the grant amendments noting that Otter Creek is requesting \$352,000 for operational costs from now through 2026 and that it will be relinquishing its remaining allocation of ARPA funds from the original \$1.6 allocation. The second application from SoVT requested \$220,000 for operational costs and relinquishing \$488,000 in ARPA funds that were previously allocated. Ms. Richards asked if there is a recommendation from Staff and if Staff have reviewed the request in detail Ms. Sweet confirmed Staff has reviewed the requests and supports and recommends the Board approve the amendments. Ms. Sibilía asked why staff was in support of the amendments. Ms. Hallquist noted these are funds that the CUDs need to carry their administrative staff

through 2026 to provide necessary the oversight. The first two years will require significant oversight that will decrease over time. Ms. Richards made a motion to approve the request from Otter Creek of \$352,000, seconded by Mr. Nelson and opened for discussion. With no additional discussion, on a vote of 4-0 the motion was approved unanimously. Ms. Richards made a motion to approve the request for \$220,000 for SoVT CUD seconded by Ms. Sibilis and opened for discussion. With no discussion on a vote of 4-0 the motion was approved unanimously.

7. NEK CUD Grant – Mr. Monsarrat noted NEK CUD is working on its plan for it's remaining \$19.7M dollar allocation. They are working through two elements: the first for an APRA build they are proposing and the second for BEAD Match. Staff is providing this information as a briefing with no action required today and is seeking a Special Board Meeting given the complexity of the issues. Staff is working to ensure that any funds allocated for BEAD match are awarded before the BEAD subrecipient selection process. Ms. Shute of NEK Broadband noted for the record the total amount of Capital Project Funds (CPF) that have not been contracted is \$25,339,161, the total request for this amendment is \$19,713,977. Of the requested amount, \$8,404,687 is related to their ARPA spend and \$11,309,290 would be for match contingent on a BEAD award, leaving \$5,626,184 remaining after the proposed amendment. Ms. Richards asked for any discussion that could be public, with none Ms. Richards made a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to *1 V.S.A. s. 313 (1) (A) after making a specific finding that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage* seconded by Mr. Otley and opened for discussion. With no discussion on a vote of 4-0 the Board went into executive session at 1:46 p.m. and came back into public session at 2:15 p.m. with no action taken. Ms. Richards asked Staff to send a Doodle Poll to set up the 1-hour special meeting.
8. Chittenden County CUD Grant – Ms. Hallquist noted when Staff presents this grant prior to issuing funds Staff will ensure those addresses are deduplicated. Mr. Monsarrat noted Staff is working with Chittenden County under the Act 71 obligations to bring this forward given the amount of territory that is served. Mike Vance, Chittenden County CUD noted Chittenden County CUD is apprised of eight towns which are 95% served. Mr. Vance indicated the proposal is in two phases. Phase 1 is a request for ARPA funds to build a portion in partnership with CCI of the remaining unserved addresses. Phase 2 is CCI committing to apply for BEAD with CCCUD support to build the remaining unserved or underserved addresses. The outcome will be CCCUD will own \$2.1M in installed fiber, CCI will own the rest of the network. Mr. Vance stated that CCI will be delivering their Fidium Fiber product as they have done with agreements with three other CUDs and CCCUD has a tentative agreement to negotiate a similar Sustainability Plan agreement that CCI has with the other three CUDs. Ms. Richards asked for Staff's recommendation and questions. Mr. Monsarrat noted that Staff supports this recommendation as one of the benefits

is that it commits CCI to build these addresses with commitment to put in a BEAD bid for the remainder. Ms. Hallquist added this is the most challenging area in terms of universal service because these are small pockets that are best served by an existing provider, without an existing provider it will be a challenge to serve them. Ms. Richards asked if CCI is the only service provider? Mr. Vance noted they were the only service provider that responded to the proposal and went on to note that some of these addresses are unserved or underserved addresses of wealthy homeowners who chose not to extend lines to their homes, these addresses are spread out. With continued discussion Ms. Richards noted concern this application does not achieve universal service. Ms. Hallquist noted like other applications we know other CUDs are counting on BEAD funding to complete their universal service plan. Ms. Fremin of CTC noted the CUD has not committed to universal service in the initial phase, they have committed to fund this Phase 1 with ARPA funding in conjunction with CCI, Phase 2 deployment to the remaining addresses is contingent on identifying funding. Further, CCI has committed a minimum match and will seek additional BEAD funds. Ms. Fremin noted that there is no direct commitment by CCI or CCCUD that they will provide universal service but that this is not very different from other CUDs who are seeking BEAD funds or in some cases have not identified funding sources. Ms. Hallquist noted if they are not funded, VCBB is still obligated under BEAD to find service for them. Mr. Monsarrat noted VCBB is authorized under Volume 2, should there not be a bid we can go out to existing providers to negotiate coverage. Ms. Richards noted the difference is the other CUDs have submitted grant requests that indicate the additional difficult addresses will be pursued with BEAD funding and if unsuccessful will work with VCBB or the State will step in at that point. Mr. Vance indicated he is willing to seek a contract amendment that states Chittenden County CUD is seeking universal service since that is what their goal is. Ms. Richards noted the Board issues grants that achieve universal service, the wording is important in terms of accountability. Ms. Sibilina noted Act 71 requires universal service and accountability and continued to note the reason accountability was an objective of Act 71 is that Vermont was unable to hold providers accountable. Ms. Richards asked Ms. Hallquist to support Mr. Vance with an updated request. Ms. Richards asked for the CCCUD Grant to be addressed in the special meeting the first week of October and confirmed CCCUD should come back with a Sustainability Plan and confirmation of universal service. Mr. Nelson thanked Mr. Vance for working to fill the holes throughout his region. Mr. Otley noted that CCCUD has a unique set of opportunities and challenges that make it different than any other CUD and recommended Staff work with Mr. Vance to refine their application and bring it forward in the hopes of moving in a positive direction. Ms. Hallquist noted she would meet with CCCUD and check in with Ms. Richards before the special meeting.

9. Priorities for remaining ARPA Funds/Connectivity Initiative – Mr. Fish advised the Board on the proposed allocation of the remaining ARPA funds and the Connectivity Initiative. To reach this proposal Staff solicited feedback from CUDs, reviewed compliance with Treasury guidelines, discussed with VCUDA and evaluated for impact. Mr. Fish noted that Mr. Flinn’s remark re ECFiber not soliciting funds to reduce their debt load was correct and that his presentation was in error on that point. He continued that, the top request from CUDs was the Long and Underground Drop Program. Staff views Long and Underground Drops as a way to improve business plans, potentially increase customers and address a barrier to access for low and some middle-income Vermonters. Mr. Fish read the proposal for up to \$2.5M in ARPA CPF Funding and \$1.2M in Connectivity Initiative Funding which proposes these funds be used for expenses associated with Long Drops, covers the cost of drops, supports the implementation of universal broadband service and prioritizes the funding for Low Income Vermonters, manufactured home communities and pre-signed up customers at eligible addresses who commit to a service contract of at least 6 months by December 30, 2024. Ms. Richards asked for discussion on the proposal and noted that item two states “covering the cost of aerial drops is best practice” Ms. Richards asked if that was best practice and what if it needed to be underground? Mr. Fish responded that many providers including some CUDs have adopted a policy where they will cover the cost for all aerial drops and that undergrounding is an exorbitant cost and was hesitant to incentivize what could be an unknown amount of funds. Ms. Richards noted best practice is what individual location necessitates based on geographic structure of the location and the utility will determine the most cost-effective way of getting there and recommending removing the word “aerial”. Ms. Sibilina asked the definition of low income. Mr. Fish advised the goal is to align it with the eligibility requirements present under the Affordable Connectivity Program. Ms. Sibilina noted that she would like to see a reference and clarify what low-income needs are as there are multiple definitions. Ms. Richards stated she is happy to authorize Staff to develop a program and encouraged Staff to identify and summarize, with the main point being the need to address and define low income. Ms. Richards made a motion to authorize Staff to develop a need based long and underground drop program and come back to the Board with an outline of the proposal seconded by Ms. Sibilina and asked for discussion. With no further discussion the motion was passed unanimously with a vote of 4-0.

10. Legislative agenda – Ms. Hallquist noted this was meant as a brainstorming opportunity noting a formal presentation will be offered at a later date. Ms. Hallquist outlined Staff recommendations. The first is the Broadband Consumer Bill of Rights. This would implement the quality assurance provisions of the Board’s Consumer Protection Policy and would ensure it applies to all ISPs, noting it addresses resiliency concerns to address emergency weather events, power outages including battery backups and identification of potential partnerships. Ms. Sibilina stated

concerns around talking in open session what the Board would like to do with legislation and asked Ms. Hallquist to explain the rationale. Ms. Hallquist confirmed this was not the Board's position but the recommendation from Staff and is not binding the Board. Ms. Richards recommended Ms. Hallquist give a high-level overview. Ms. Clithero added this information is meant as an overview of ideas to familiarize the Board and in future sessions Staff would like to map out strategies. Ms. Hallquist noted the intent is to protect customers during a declared state of emergency focusing on resiliency and recovery, utilizing used equipment from state agencies to be retooled and provided to low-income individuals who cannot afford devices, including and providing additional funding for the Long Drop program. Ms. Sibilgia noted she would like Staff to frame the problems that they are trying to solve in the legislative session, then have the opportunity to work through those with the Board's attorney and its government affairs consultant in Executive Session. Ms. Hallquist noted in the October board meeting, Staff will identify problems they are trying to solve and provide suggestions on how to solve them and review with the Board in Executive Session. Ms. Richards followed up stating in October she would like to review what was left on the table in the last legislative session and what topics the Board wants to be active on in the upcoming legislative session.

- 11. Parking Lot** – Ms. Raboin updated the Board the items addressed on the parking lot, items currently in progress and items that have been completed. Ms. Raboin noted Ms. Clithero wrote a legal memorandum updating the Board on the BEAD Affordability Scoring Rubric and requested the attorney client privilege be waived so this memorandum can become public record. If approved, Staff will add this to the October Board packet. Ms. Clithero noted this memorandum corrects information that was provided to the Board before the initial proposal of Volume 2 was finalized, in the interim the reinvestment of income is no longer in the initial proposal and part of our scoring rubric. Ms. Richards made a motion to waive confidential treatment to Ms. Clithero's September 4<sup>th</sup> memo to the Board regarding updating the BEAD Affordability Scoring Rubric, seconded by Mr. Nelson and on a vote of 4-0 the motion was approved unanimously. Ms. Richards confirmed the memorandum would be included in the October Board Packet.
- 12. BEAD Timeline Update** – Ms. Mathews noted the BEAD timeline has had some additional changes from the version in the Board Packet. Staff is waiting for the final approval from NTIA on the BEAD eligibility data and Staff is hoping to post the draft RFA for public comment to collect feedback and provide clarity when finalizing the RFA for the full proposal. Staff has a series of subgrantee preparedness workshops being planned and are onboarding the consultants who will provide additional capacity. Staff is estimating the preproposal window will open on or around October 14<sup>th</sup> and will be open for two weeks. That will provide the initial project areas and ISPs will be able to submit justifications for small changes to addresses that will make the project areas more efficient before Staff finalizes the project areas prior to



BEAD Subgrantee selection. The full proposal is estimated to be open on or around December 14<sup>th</sup> and will be open for six to eight weeks. This will provide enough time for bids to be submitted. Initial selection, review process and negotiation will be between February to April. When Staff has their selections before they are able to make it public the NTIA will review. From the date of that meeting Staff is not able to post final decisions for 14 days. Staff is anticipating winning bid proposals and announcing the results publicly around but not sooner than April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Staff is hoping to meet the final proposal on or around June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

**13.** VCUDA Update – Ellie De Villiers, Executive Director of Maple Broadband, noted VCUDA is hosting workshops on financial strategy next week and match funding under the CFR rules on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Ms. de Villiers noted VCUDA has begun to determine their 2025 legislative priorities and went on to say that affordability programs and coordination with other utilities were among some of the topics. Ms. de Villiers noted VCUDA funded the discovery phase of the Digital Equity nationwide competitive grant program that resulted in a coalition forming to pursue the NTIA's competitive grants. While VCUDA is not a core member of the coalition they are providing constructive criticism in an effort to have a strong submission on behalf of the State of Vermont.

**14.** Public Comment – Christa Shute, NEK Broadband posed the question for the Board as it reconciles ACT 71 and our universal service agreement with the potential of a high-cost BEAD requirement could imply we are not able to bring fiber to an on-grid address. If I am bringing fiber to my on-grid addresses, then I don't have to work toward finding off grid or non-fiber potential solutions. This is something the Board or a subgroup of the Board might consider.

F.X. Flinn commented the CCI line extension work in Chittenden County is costing significantly more per location than what ECFiber is spending or asking VCBB to pay for. Mr. Flinn noted that ECFiber is not recognized for the efficient, economical manner in which it has been building out and serving 25% of the locations. ECFiber is not seeking BEAD funding as the locations are already served by ECFiber, are not locations that need to be served or are not broadband serviceable locations. ECFiber is asking the Board and Staff for recommendations as to how to significantly increase the amount of ARPA funding ECFiber will receive noting of the \$550M in state broadband grant funding, ECFiber received \$17M and the citizens of that district are paying off \$80M in debt.

**15.** Confirm next meeting date – Set for October 14, 2024, Virtual

**16.** Board Review – *Executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. s.313(a)(3) (3), authorizing a public body to hold an executive session to consider personnel matters* – Ms.

Richards made a motion to go into executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. s.313(a)(3) (3), *authorizing a public body to hold an executive session to consider personnel matters* seconded by Ms. Sibilia. The Board went into executive session at 3:33pm and ended the executive session at 3:49pm with no action taken. The Board did not return to public session.

## 17. Adjourn

### Action items:

- Ms. Richards asked Staff to send a Doodle Poll to set up the 1-hour special meeting.
- Ms. Richards asked for the CCCUD Grant to be addressed in the special meeting the first week of October and confirmed CCCUD should come back with a sustainability plan and confirmation of universal service.
- Ms. Sibilia noted she would like Staff to frame the problems that they are trying to solve in the Legislative session, then have the opportunity to work through those with the attorney and our government affairs consultant in executive session.
- Ms. Richards followed up stating in October she would like to review what was left on the table in the last legislative session and what topics the Board wants to be active on in the upcoming legislative session.
- Ms. Richards confirmed the Confidential Memorandum to be included in the October Board Packet.

**Vermont Community Broadband Board Special Meeting**  
**Monday, September 30, 2024, 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm**  
**Special Meeting Minutes**

**1. Call Meeting to Order, Roll Call, Approval of Agenda**

Patty Richards called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm, and completed roll call:

- Patty Richards
- Holly Groschner
- Dan Nelson
- Christine Hallquist - Staff
- Rob Fish - Staff
- Toni Clithero - Staff
- Alexei Monsarrat - Staff
- Herry Herzog - Staff
- Kristina Sweet - Staff

The Chair moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Groschner and opened the motion for discussion. Ms. Richards added to the agenda a Board Announcement before Public Comment. With no objections or additional changes, the Board voted 3-0 to approve the agenda with the addition.

**1.1 Board Announcement** – Ms. Groschner announced her resignation from the Board noting the October 14 board meeting would be the last Board meeting she will attend. Ms. Groschner thanked everyone for the opportunity and noted that Ms. Richards has recommended two candidates to the Speaker. The Chair thanked Ms. Groschner for her expertise, wisdom and hard work. Mr. Nelson expressed his appreciation for Ms. Groschner stating she is an asset to the board and Ms. Hallquist noted Staff appreciation for Ms. Groschner and her thoughtful input, noting that it has improved the quality of the work.

**2. Public Comment** – Ms. Hallquist opened public comment. Ms. Shute of NEKCV Broadband expressed her gratitude for Ms. Groschner’s participation on the board and the work she has done, her thoroughness and detail dating back to VTA days. Ms. Shute thanked Ms. Groschner for her time and shared that her understanding and knowledge has been important really important.

Ms. Smith of NEKCV expressed her appreciation and gratitude to Ms. Groschner for her work with digital equity noting the importance within the State of Vermont.

Ms. Mackenzie noted how fortunate she was for working alongside Ms. Groschner and thanked her for her work.

**3. NEKCV Broadband CUD – Alexei Monsarrat There will be a short verbal presentation before the Board goes into Executive Session. *Executive***

*Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. s. 313 (a)(1)(A), which allows a public body to hold an executive session after making a specific finding that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body, or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage with respect to contracts.*

Mr. Monsarrat shared there are two requests for the board. The first is to obligate NEKCV's remaining ARPA allocation to be used for an additional set of addresses, noting the Board had been provided with a memo from CTC detailing the request. The second portion is a request for BEAD match, noting a similar structure to the request for the \$30M state funds. This would be a stand-alone piece contingent on winning a BEAD bid. Ms. Richards confirmed the discussion should be in executive session and made a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(6)(A), which protects records exempt from the access to public records law, seconded by Mr. Nelson and asked for discussion. With a vote of 3-0 the Board went into executive session at 3:14pm and returned at 3:49pm with no action taken. Ms. Richards made a motion to approve the amendment to NEKCV's existing construction grant of \$4,339,687.00 in ARPA funds, conditioned on the modification of the grant agreement to indicate the Executive Director will approve the second performance payment of 30% with respect to the OLT detailed designs and the grantee agrees to comply with current and future board policies, including but not limited to the Affordability Policy, the Consumer Protection Policy, the Construction Standards Policy and the Grantee Agreement Policy, and confirmation that CTC has confirmed that the project constitutes incidental over build as required by 30 V.S.A. § 8086 (f). Ms. Richards concurred on the additional condition. The motion was seconded by Ms. Groschner with no discussion on a vote of 3-0 the motion was approved. Ms. Richards made a motion to approve the use of \$20,999,474.00 as BEAD match contingent on NEKCV receiving commitment to a BEAD award prior to September 30, 2025, seconded by Mr. Nelson. With no discussion on a vote of 3-0 the motion was approved. Ms. Richards thanked and congratulated NEKCV for their hard work.

**4. Chittenden County CUD Proposal – Alexei Monsarrat There will be a short verbal presentation before the Board goes into Executive Session.** *Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(A), which allows a public body to hold an executive session after making a specific finding that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body, or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage with respect to contracts.*

Mr. Monsarrat noted that Chittenden County CUD is bringing a two-phase approach to meeting their Universal Service Plan. The first phase they are asking for grant funding of \$2.1M, the second phase would be accomplished with Consolidated Communication's (CCI) commitment to apply for BEAD funding to cover Phase 2, the remaining territory not covered in Phase One. Mr. Monsarrat noted Chittenden County CUD is fully committed to universal service and should

they have challenges they will continue to work until they have achieved universal service. Mr. Monsarrat continued that there is a commitment by CCI to provide sustainability funding to Chittenden County CUD concurrent with the other three CCI partner CUDs. Ms. Groschner noted that South Burlington and Essex have very few addresses in terms of unserved and underserved locations and asked if staff had any concerns of their involvement in this CUD in terms of any potential benefit. Mr. Monsarrat advised that staff is recommending approval of this grant to move forward. Ms. Groschner then asked if the two locations that are on an island are part of this grant application. Mr. Vance Executive Chair of Chittenden County CUD noted that Juniper Island which is off the coast of South Burlington is an island that has an E911 address of South Burlington. Ms. Groschner asked if there was power to the address. Mr. Vance noted they are self-powered, and they are being declared as high cost. Ms. Hallquist noted the addresses do not qualify under Act 71, but they do qualify under BEAD as extremely high-cost locations. Ms. Groschner clarified that the funds requested for 133 addresses are ARPA funds and by board policy ARPA funding must be on the grid. Ms. Groschner asked if those two addresses were part of the 133 addresses in this application. Ms. Davis of Consolidated Communications clarified that those addresses are not included in this application. Ms. Groschner noted that information helped the board to move forward asking Mr. Monsarrat to continue to review addresses to ensure the board is compliant with Act 71 standards. Ms. Richards sought confirmation that based on the discussion from the last meeting if the board approves the \$2.1M allocation it is the commitment of the CCCUD to require CCI to pursue BEAD and complete the next steps for phase two. Ms. Groschner asked if there was incidental overbuilds. Ms. Fremin of CTC confirmed that the overbuilds met the incidental requirements of 30 V.S.A. § 8086(f). With no other discussion, Ms. Richards made a motion to approve Chittenden County CUDs request for \$2.1M of ARPA funds as presented in their universal service plan, with the conditions concerning the approval the Executive Director for the second performance payment of 30% with respect to the OLT detailed designs and a commitment to comply with existing and future board policies, including but not limited to the Affordability Policy, the Consumer Protection Policy, the Construction Standards Policy, the Policy on Mapping and Service Data and Overbuild, and the Grantee Agreement Policy, with Ms. Groschner suggesting the addition of the commitment of CCI to contribute \$1,089,163 to Phase 1 of the project and apply for BEAD funding to complete Phase 2. Ms. Richards welcomed the addition. Ms. Groschner amended the motion to include the conditions listed above, seconded by Mr. Nelson and Ms. Richards asked for discussion. With no other discussion on a vote of 3-0 the board approved the motion.

**5. Public Comment – Christine Hallquist** No public comments.

6. **Adjourn** – Ms. Richards made a motion to adjourn at 4:04 seconded by Mr. Nelson. With no discussion on a vote of 3-0 the board adjourned.

Christine Hallquist, Executive Director  
Vermont Community Broadband Board  
112 State St  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601

October 3, 2024

**Dear Christine,**

Maple Broadband is nearing the end of its Phase 2 of network construction. Our construction grant requires that we “construct a network consisting of at least 244.3 miles, 2,748 passings, and providing service to residents of the towns of Shoreham, Cornwall, Orwell, Whiting, Middlebury, Salisbury, Leicester, Vergennes, Ferrisburgh, New Haven, Monkton, and Waltham.”

As of today, Maple Broadband has active service across 219.2 miles and 3,050 passings, of which 1,703 are eligible passings, and offers service in all of the towns listed above. While our work is not yet complete, we anticipate completing our grant obligations with approximately \$500,000 remaining in grant funds.

Maple Broadband is seeking a grant amendment to enable us to use any excess funds to continue to build and launch service to Act 71-eligible addresses in furtherance of our Universal Service Plan. We are not seeking any changes to the standard grant language. All funds will be spent in accordance with then-current VCBB policies created in relation to 30 VSA § 8086, including the VCBB Policies Regarding Mapping and Service Data and Overbuild.

We plan to use the funds in the following ways:

- Activate service in areas where make ready is pending completion
- Build and launch service to addresses eligible under Act 71 that are not eligible under BEAD, and that do not have fiber service available
- Build routes that will either simplify or reduce the amount of Maple Broadband’s bid for the BEAD program

We expect this will enable us to build approximately 9 additional miles and 158 passings, of which 97 are eligible passings.

**Thank you,**

*Ellie de Villiers*

*Ellie de Villiers*  
*Executive Director*



October 7, 2024

Ms. Christine Hallquist  
Executive Director  
Vermont Community Broadband Board  
112 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601

Re: Amendment to Grant 02240-FY24-Act71Const-07

Dear Christine,

Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom (WCVT) is writing to request amendments to its existing grant for the towns in its Non-CUD Act 71 Universal Service Project Area. WCVT requests a construction grant amendment of \$602,183. This is the amount of remaining Act 71 Construction Funds that were allocated to the WCVT Non-CUD towns grant area. WCVT, with these funds in combination with WCVT's existing capital expenditure budget, will pass every un and underserved Act 71 Eligible Address by 6/30/2026.

With the additional funding and WCVT's own investment, WCVT commits to and will pass all locations in its non-CUD towns by 6/30/2026. WCVT will convert all existing customer locations. This grant will enable WCVT to complete Vermont's goal of to Universal Service with fiber.

Of the total locations passed by fiber, approximately 2,600 locations were served by fiber before Act 71 Grant Funding and an additional 2,000 have been converted to fiber since the inception of Act 71. Finally, an additional 2,900 locations that currently do not take service from WCVT will be passed by fiber and connected to the network upon request.

With this amendment and the funds WCVT has contributed so far, as part of the initial grant, the estimated total contribution of WCVT to the universal service plan is estimated to be well over \$20,000,000. The VCBB total contribution will be \$8,592,073.00 Original Grant and Town Match plus the new funds via the amendment of \$602,183.

As part of this amendment request, we also ask that the current award end date of 12/31/2025 be extended to 6/30/2026. Again, all locations within WCVT will be passed by fiber by this date.

Finally, WCVT agrees to comply with all Board policies that the VCBB has established, including meeting monthly to review the Key Performance Indicators that are identified in the VCBB Construction Standards Policy.

Sincerely,

Roger Nishi  
VP – Industry Relations

cc: Mr. Robert Fish, Deputy Director, VCBB

P.O. Box 9  
WAITSFIELD VERMONT 05673-0009  
TELEPHONE 802-496-3391  
OR 1-800-496-3391  
WWW.WCVT.COM





# VERMONT

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## **VERMONT COMMUNITY BROADBAND BOARD**

Presentation to VCBB Board on the status of the Workforce Development program  
10/14/2024

Christine Hallquist, Executive Director  
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov

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[HTTPS://PUBLICSERVICE.VERMONT.GOV/VCBB](https://publicservice.vermont.gov/vcbb)

# Key Points



\$42.5 Billion will be infused into the economy during 2025 with a priority to construct fiber networks. According to the his will require The Fiber Broadband Association similarly projects that 205,000 fiber-optic technicians will be needed over the next five years to meet the demand. As of today, other than make-ready work from municipal utilities, the workforce has not been a major issue for Vermont. With historically low unemployment and competition for workers, recruitment is critical.



WIA (Wireless Infrastructure Association) was key to helping set up a 5-week (10 full days with 10 evening sessions) certified training program as part of the requirement of the Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL) grant. After extensive outreach, the first class 5-weekolchester offices and only 4 candidates showed up. The VCBB, VDOL and WIA moved quickly to establish a 2000 hour on-the job apprenticeship that would include the required classroom certifications.



The WIA has provided guidance, direction and much needed support to help Vermont set up a federally recognized Fiber Optic certification program with employers. A number of employers are interested and one, Sertex, has now signed on. This was the “heavy lift” in terms of the program. WIA manages a number of apprenticeship programs nationwide. Currently the VCBB does not have the budget to continue with the relationship.

# Timeline

Workforce Development Team established – VDOL and VCBB survey of Employers

Employer training advisory board established – outreach to Communication Workers and Congressional Delegation

VDOL issues grant to VTC – VTC joins Workforce Development Team

Training curriculum developed with the Fiber Broadband Association – National Certification established

After many changes at VTC and the transition to Vermont State University, the VDOL grant is transferred to the VCBB

Recruitment for trainers – Outreach to the IBEW, CWA, telecom construction companies – training locations identified

Q1'22

Q2'22

Q3'22

Q4'22

Q1'24

Q2' 24

# Timeline

Advertising, Marketing and Outreach – training dates and location established; training started; low participation

Apprenticeship program developed, met with employers, established requirements, delivered BEAD workshop

Delivered workshop – 53 participants; North Country Career Center certified for pre-apprenticeship training; First employer signed; Recruitment phase begun,

Recruitment – booth at job fairs, formalize relationship with Vermont Works for Women; Establish program with correctional facilities. Continue to sign up employers.

Ensure BEAD compliance; Work with Career Technical Education centers and Vermont Community College to develop curriculum

Develop “Pay it Forward” program to help employers with job retention. Support DE workforce programs

Q3'24

Q4'24

Q1' 25

Q2'25

Q3'25

Q4' 25

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# Questions?

The background features a light blue-grey color with several stylized, semi-transparent white leaf patterns scattered across it. Some leaves are simple outlines, while others have internal vein structures. There are also a few small white circles of varying sizes.

**Legislative Initiatives  
for VCBB Board Consideration  
October 14, 2024**



# Broadband Consumer Bill of Rights

- Protecting consumers during a declared State of Emergency
- Some potential initiatives include:
  - Prohibiting Disconnections
  - Waiving Plan Data Usage Limits
  - 24-hour battery backups for VOIP Phone Service
  - Contributions to whole house battery backups connected to the electrical grid
  - Identification of Potential Partnerships, e.g. Utilities
  - Credit to Rep. Sibilias's Keep Vermonters Connected provision in H. 419
- Incorporation of Consumer Protection Policy Provisions



## Technical Corrections/BAA

- Update the definitions of served, unserved and underserved broadband locations to mirror the FCC definitions.





# Affordability

- At this time, it is not recommended that we seek additional funds from the Legislature.
- Given the increased amount to VCBB from the USC adjustment we should wait to determine whether the connectivity initiative will be receiving funds from the USC.

State of Vermont  
**Vermont Community Broadband Board**

**PARKING LOT  
STATUS  
REPORT**



# Parking Lot Items Addressed In Today's Agenda and/or Board Packet

101	Ms. Sibiliala noted she would like Staff to frame the problems that they are trying to solve in the Legislative session, then have the opportunity to work through those with the attorney and our government affairs consultant in executive session.
100	Ms. Richards followed up stating in October she would like to review what was left on the table in the last legislative session and what topics the Board wants to be active on in the upcoming legislative session.
99	Ms. Richards confirmed the Confidential Memorandum to be included in the October Board Packet -BEAD Affordability Scoring Rubric.
98	Update on BEAD Affordability Scoring Rubric .
97	Legislative Priorities Discussion item on the Agenda for the October meeting.

# Parking Lot Items Completed

87	Ms. Richards asked Mr. Fish to provide an action suggestion of what to do with the \$2.6 million.
92	KPIs will be reviewed informally monthly and formally quarterly to the Board.
93	Ms. Groschner would like a review of the scoring criteria for BEAD.
94	Ms. Richards reiterated the importance of all materials for Board review are sent with the Board packet.
95	Ms. Groschner noted for the record this plan is sustainability for the CUD and not sustainability of the business plan as part of grant obligations and <u>asked the staff to review sustainability of a business plan consistently.</u>
96	Ms. Richards asked for a spot on the next months agenda to have discussion and questions. RE: Sustainability Plan Lamoille FiberNet.
97	Legislative Priorities Discussion item on the Agenda for the October meeting.

# Parking Lot Items In Progress

40

Develop recoupment policy for the VCBB funded network and components

FOR ANY SPECIFIC BOARD REQUESTS PLEASE  
REACH OUT TO ME DIRECTLY AT:  
802.636.7329 OR [GINNY.RABOIN@VERMONT.GOV](mailto:GINNY.RABOIN@VERMONT.GOV)

#	Priority	Item	Date entered	Assigned to	Resolution and date
101		Ms. Sibia noted she would like Staff to frame the problems that they are trying to solve in the Legislative session, then have the opportunity to work through those with the attorney and our government affairs consultant in executive session.	09.09.2024	Christine Hallquist	<b>On Agenda for October Board meeting in conjunction w/task #100</b>
100		Ms. Richards followed up stating in October she would like to review what was left on the table in the last legislative session and what topics the Board wants to be active on in the upcoming legislative session.	09.09.2024	Christine Hallquist	<b>On Agenda for October Board Meeting</b>
99		Ms. Richards confirmed the Confidential Memorandum to be included in the October Board Packet -BEAD Affordability Scoring Rubric	09.09.2024	Toni Clithero Ginny Raboin	<b>Memo is in the October folder to be included.</b>
98		Update on BEAD Affordability Scoring Rubric	09.05.2024	Toni Clithero	<b>Memo prepared for Board review under conf. cover. Staff request the Board waive privilege so it can be included in October Board packet for public review. In October packet.</b>
97		Legislative Priorities Discussion item on the Agenda for the October meeting	09.03.2024	Christine Hallquist	<b>On proposed Agenda for October Board Meeting</b>
40	1	Develop recoupment policy for the VCBB funded network and components	07/18/23	Holly Groschner/Christine Hallquist	Per Toni 08.20.2024-The lien and recoupment policy may be unnecessary given the BEAD/ARPA guidance that came out last summer. <b>Added to the Planner for follow up. - GR Emailed CH/TC to follow up. 08.20.2024 GR Policy is in revision. Meetings to be scheduled.</b>

103		Ms. Richards asked for the CCCUD Grant to be addressed in the special meeting the first week of October and confirmed CCCUD should come back with a sustainability plan and confirmation of universal service.	09.09.2024	Christine Hallquist	Date of special meeting 9/30/24 is scheduled.
96		Ms. Richards asked for a spot on the next month's agenda to have discussion and questions. RE: Sustainability Plan Lamoille FiberNet	08.12.2024	Christine Hallquist	On 09.09.2024 Agenda for discussion/approval
95		Ms. Groschner noted for the record this plan is sustainability for the CUD and not sustainability of the business plan as part of grant obligations and <u>asked the staff to review sustainability of a business plan consistently.</u>	08.12.2024	Christine Hallquist	Completed
102		Ms. Richards asked Staff to send a Doodle Poll to set up the 1-hour special meeting.	09.09.2024	Ginny Raboin	Doodle poll sent date 9/30/24 3-4pm
94		Ms. Richards reiterated the importance of all materials for Board review are sent with the Board packet.	08.12.2024	Toni Clithero Ginny Raboin	Board Packet process adjusted to include updated timeline for Staff to submit Board materials including confidential materials for inclusion in Board Packet. Confidential materials will be sent in a subsequent email just after the Board Packet is sent. The Board will then be texted to review the emails. This will be completed the Tuesday the week prior to the Board Meeting. -GR
93	1	Ms. Groschner would like a review of the scoring criteria for BEAD.	06.10.2024	Toni Clithero	Legal Memo in the Board Packet September. -GR
92		KPIs will be reviewed informally monthly and formally quarterly to the Board.	From 06.10.2024 meeting.	Christine Hallquist Alexei Monsarrat	Added to Parking Lot and Planner as a reminder to add quarterly to Board Meetings as indicated by the Board 06.10.2024 Board



					Meeting. Last report 08.12.2024 Board Meeting.
87		Ms. Richards asked Mr. Fish to provide an action suggestion of what to do with the \$2.6 million.	07.08.2024 08.12.2024	Rob Fish	In progress - This will be presented at the September Board Meeting. – GR 08.06.2024
58	1	Prepare a memo explaining that they intend the Board Policies apply to grant holders over and above whatever standards are applied by the FCC	03/25/24	Christine Hallquist Toni Clithero	Completed Issue addressed in policy.
74		Ms. Groschner asked Ms. Clithero to pay special attention to whether they can have two grant recipients here where their entity has become one, unless you're maintaining two separate organizations. Ms. Groschner said Ms. Clithero should be the one to tell the Board what to do in terms of the new entity taking the grant that belonged to another entity.	6.10.2024	Toni Clithero	Completed w/Legal Memo 08.12.2024 Board meeting
59	1	Prepare a memo that addresses a conflict if one arises between the Board policies and preexisting grant agreements	03/25/24	Christine Hallquist Toni Clithero	Completed- Superseded by CUD Sustainability plan. (pending board approval) -GR 08.26.2024 In progress. 6.28.24 GR
90		KPI scorecard be sent out under confidential cover.	07.08.2024	Christine Hallquist	To be sent out as part of the August 2024 Board packet under separate cover. Sent 08.09.24 -Completed
85		Clarification in the press in regard to Digital Equity and Affordability	07.08.2024	Herryn Herzog	Reviewed by Herryn Herzog and Christine Hallquist - Response to be sent out as part of the August 2024 Board packet. Sent 08.07.24-Completed

81	Ms. Sibilía asked if staff has a policy about CUD audits, do they see them? Ms. Sibilía is asking to see the staff policy around that.	6.10.2024	Christine Hallquist	<b>Per Kristina Sweet 08.01.2024:</b> Contracts and Grants Administrator (PSD) ensures grantees are meeting the requirement to have a single audit. Director of Regulatory Compliance (VCBB) reviews single audit reports for compliance issues when received by the state. Director of Regulatory Compliance (VCBB) drafts a decision letter if follow-up action is required. Single audits are also reviewed as part of the risk assessment process prior to issuing a new grant. This is captured in our roles and responsibilities document. <b>Completed</b>
80	Ms. Groschner asked if it's appropriate for the Board to want an audit of its own for the organization. She would like a staff proposal on this.	6.10.2024	Christine Hallquist	<b>Response to be sent out as part of the August 2024 Board packet <a href="#">response to question regarding audits and oversight.docx</a></b> <b>Sent 08.09.24- Completed</b>
75	Ms. Groschner said they would want in approving the transfer of a grant, to know what the status of compliance is, status of the entity, is there remediation that we expect as a condition of the grant transfer. *add to parking lot*	6.10.2024		<b>CV/NEK Merger plan and proposal to be presented at the August 2024 Board meeting</b>  <b>Completed</b>
73	Ms. Richards said that for the next meeting staff is instructed to model the costs and issues associated with contingent grant amendments to eligible applicants on or before July 31, 2024. Staff will report status of the amounts at the July VCBB Board meeting and detail all program expenditures in the VCBB annual report issued on January 15, 2025.	6.10.2024		<b>Completed July Board Meeting &amp; Task added to the Planner to add to the Annual Report. - GR</b>

72		Ms. Sibilia said she would like the Board to be informed of what amounts the model comes back with for match for interested BEAD applicants even though they are not voting on it.	6.10.2024	Christine Hallquist Alissa Matthews	<b>A presentation was prepared for the July meeting. The Board did not request the information. Mr. Fish provided the information individually to Ms. Sibilia. GR 08.07.2024</b>
69		Prepare a memo accessing whether CV Fiber and NEK Broadband are in compliance with their grant agreements prior to the Boards approval of the merger.	6/10/2024	Christine Hallquist Toni Clithero	<b>Memo will be emailed out under confidential cover. – GR 08.06.2024 Toni will report in August. GR 7.3.24</b>
62	2	Create cross-referencing between the reporting requirement under the constructions standards and a policy on reporting.	03/25/24	Christine Hallquist Toni Clithero	<b>In progress. 6.28.24 GR Completed</b>
78		Ms. Richards and Ms. Groschner said they assume this extra contractual help will enable a level of detail of regular reporting on how each grantee is doing. She reiterated they need more reporting to make sure they don't have anybody going awry and they have knowledge into what is happening. We are moving from entrepreneurial to more professional mode and see what is going on and monitor.	6.10.2024	Christine Hallquist	<b>The intention of the KPI report and monthly meetings is to provide that oversight.</b>
51	2	Application scoring criteria policy	11/13/23	Christine Hallquist	Awaiting approval from the NTIA. <b>Approved</b>
83		Ms. Groschner asked that it be presented like a scorecard – KPIs – with the metrics that mean the most at the top.	6.10.2024		<b>See parking lot item #90</b>

82		Ms. Groschner asked to see at the July meeting what the reports will look like without specific numbers.	6.10.2024		See parking lot item #90
89		*Ms. Richards indicated this motion needed more work, not to be rushed and will be taken up in the July special meeting	07.08.2024	Holly Groschner Toni Clithero Rob Fish	Toni and Rob revised, meeting 07.19.2024 w/Ms. Groschner to review/complete. GR Completed 07.22.2024- GR
79		Ms. Sibilia asked about a discrepancy in the slide explaining what has been approved and what has been obligated. Ms. Sweet says they are still working to find out the cause of that discrepancy. Ms. Groschner asked that this slide is stamped "draft." Please go back to Board with explanation.	6.10.2024	Christine Hallquist Kristina Sweet	Slide updated 6.14.2024 to reflect "Draft". – GR From the Weekly 08.01.2024: Staff confirmed that the apparent discrepancy between the total of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds approved by the Board and ARPA funds awarded to grantees as shown during the June VCBB (Vermont Community Broadband Board) meeting was due to the approved materials transfer from Lamoille FiberNet to Northwest Fiberworx.
77		Ms. Groschner said it's helpful to compare our organization to what the cost is for other organizations to manage similar amounts of money. That should be in our annual report.	6.10.2024	Christine Hallquist	Planner task created to add to the Annual Report. – GR <a href="#">RE Parking LotBoard Assignments AOT Comparison.msg</a>
84		Ms. Groschner would like a review of the scoring criteria for BEAD. Ms. Sibilia asked if we are doing enough to differentiate between when we're doing BEAD work and when we're doing other work. Ms. Groschner suggested having categories on the	6.10.2024		Completed, new category added to the agenda to identify BEAD, USF, Act 71. -GR

		agenda of what kind of work it is. (BEAD, USF, Act 71)			
88		Ms. Groschner stated that a task needs to be added to the parking lot for Ms. Clithero to address the requirements for merger and have a standard set of things that need to happen at a merger.	07.08.2024	Toni Clithero	<b>Duplicate Task #69, in progress. -GR</b>
76		Ms. Groschner pointed out that the actual expenditure was \$531,000 more than shown. She asked for an asterisk that the number was reduced by the amount of the VDOL grant, especially for the end-of-year report.	6.10.2024	Kristina Sweet	Completed 6.14.2024 <a href="#">VCBB Budget Presentation Jun 2024.pptx</a> <b>Task added to the planner to add to the Annual Report. – GR</b>
71		Ms. Clithero draft letter to all Act 71 eligible providers with universal plans to assess interest since interested parties must file written letters of intent by email no later than July 1, 2024.	6.10.2024	Toni Clithero	Completed.
70		Include Ms. Clithero’s legal memo on the authority of the Board with regard to affordability in the Board Packet for July.	6.10.24	Toni Clithero	<b>Completed July 8, 2024, Board Meeting- GR</b>
55	1	Present updated information as to ARPA funds remaining (Plan B for ARPA money, verify that changing funding source from ARPA CPF to SFR is permissible, get CUD reactions.)	03/25/24	Christine Hallquist	Will include in April 1 Board packet –Board has requested further information in the May 13 meeting. Will close this item at the June Board meeting. <b>Complete per July Meeting Minutes GR</b>

67	2	The Board would like an update on the Ookla reporting project at a future meeting	04/01/24	Christine Hallquist Alissa Mathews	Will present to the Board at the July meeting. <b>On Agenda for 7/8/24 meeting. 6.28.24 GR Completed 07.08.2024- GR</b>
63	1	Update from the Digital Equity Officer on what other states are planning to do about affordability now that the ACP is ending.	03/25/24	Christine Hallquist Britaney Watson/Toni Clithero	Present to the Board in the July meeting. <b>On Agenda for 7/8/24 meeting. 6.28.24 GR Completed 07.08.2024-GR</b>
57	2	Act 71 and BEAD differential list -	03/11/24	Christine Hallquist Toni Clithero	Providing a presentation at the May 13 Board meeting by Joanne Hovis from CTC and staff will follow up with document after. <b>Complete per July Meeting Minutes GR</b>
91		Poll sent to determine July Special Meeting	07.08.2024	Ginny Raboin	<b>Doodle Poll sent 07.11.2024- Completed GR</b>
35	1	Patty Richards to lead the Board in a response to the auditor's report	04/10/23	Dan Nelson/Christine Hallquist	Completed.
53	2	Develop Cross-reference table with definitions	03/25/24	Christine	Will include in May Board meeting packet
54	1	Develop a reporting policy and document w/ schedules	03/25/24	Christine	Completed. Included in the May Board packet.
56	2	Cumulative dashboard for Grants	03/11/24		<a href="#">Explore VCBB (arcgis.com)</a>
64	1	Is the Board's conditional approval of ARPA funds to CUDs for BEAD match constitute an obligation sufficient under ARPA? (even if the grant is contingent upon BEAD approval?)	04/01/24	Toni Clithero	If in a grant agreement, yes.
52	2	Is Ookla data sold to third parties? Do users have an opt-out?	02/12/2024	Toni	TC: Yes and there is no opt out and all ISPs require some form of speed testing upon installation of service. To address the Board's consumer privacy concerns, Staff declined to proceed with a contract to Ookla. Staff have, however, arranged to support the CUDs' requests for this information through its consultant, Stone Environmental. <b>Complete</b>

66	1	Board members would like a statement from CTC about how Vermont is doing on this relative to what they're seeing elsewhere (Joanne Hovis).	04/01/24	Christine Hallquist	Completed (presentation at May 13, 2024 meeting) <b>Complete</b>
68	2	Change lien policy to recoupment policy	04/01/24	Toni Clithero	Name has been changed
60	1	Prepare a redline version of the Grantee Agreement Policy for the Board to consider at the next meeting.	03/25/24	Toni Clithero	Complete. Policy has been approved. <b>Complete/on Website-GR 08.20.2024</b>
41	1	Policy for certification of Grantee compliance to Performance and Operating Standards	07/18/23	Christine Hallquist	Approval of Construction standards complete. Will have this policy In place by the May Board meeting. <b>Complete/on Website-GR 08.20.2024</b>
39	1	Develop Grantee agreement that VCBB will operate the system in the event of failure to comply	07/18/23	Christine Hallquist	Completed
37	1	Develop Construction Standards <sup>1</sup>	07/18/23	Dan Nelson/Christine Hallquist	Completed
38	1	Annual Report Submission List <sup>2</sup>	07/18/23	Christine Hallquist	Included in the Board Policy that will be submitted for approval at the 2/12/2024 meeting
48		Policy development Timeline, if needed	11/13/23	Patty	Completed
47		Process for Approval of Working Group Policy drafts	11/13/23	Rob V/ Patty	Completed
44		Letters/memos to House and Senate Appropriations Committees		Christine Hallquist	Completed
42	1	Produce an overlay of the BEAD and ARPA timelines and the grant request timelines in the upcoming work of the Board.	09/11/23	Board	Completed

<sup>1</sup> Include open architecture policy, safety, reporting process on compliance and detailed description for each attribute. Staff process required for compliance to Board policy.

<sup>2</sup> Identify all criteria, including how to address affordability, geographic diversity, Universal Service, operating standards, and reliability. Staff process required for compliance to Board policy.

49		Develop an RFP for Government Affairs to bring on someone prior to January 01, 2024 and determine funding source	11/13/23	Staff	Completed
43	1	Propose strategy for Government Affairs	09/11/23	Christine	Completed- Government Affairs contractor hired – will tailor strategy suited for individual committees
45		Revise September 11 meeting minutes	11/13/23	Staff/	December meeting
46		Create folder on VCBB website for Board Policies, starting with Ex parte Communications	11/13/23	Patty Richards	Patty sent memo to Board members
36	1	Determine what restrictions exist for ex parte communications	07/18/23	CH	Passed policy at 09/11/23 meeting
26	1	Establish policy to address issue of enforceability with any of the partners and the CUDs.	8/22/22	CH	Policy discussion to be held at 4/10/23 meeting. This is now part of the Board Policy discussions related to the Auditor's report.
29		Include placeholder for budget update, dashboards, and policy and goals discussion to all Board Meeting Agendas	11/03/22	CH	Budget and Dashboards addressed at January and February Board Meetings Christine will confirm with Patty what Board expectations are for the policy and goals discussion
24	1	Invite to the Federal Delegation to future Board Meeting	8/8/22	CH	Delegation will be invited to the January Board meeting
22	3	VCBB's approach to mapping and strategy for challenging the FCC.	6/14/22		Presented initial strategy 12/12/22. A Federal Program Officer at the NTIA will be needed to work on this with and that has finally been announced as Clay Purvis from the Public Service Department. He will be invited to January meeting.
28		Finalize subsequent overbuild policy and data policy.	10/31/22		This is addressed in the VCBB Data and Overbuild Policy submitted to the Board for continued discussion at the 12/12/22 meeting.



32		Alignment of VCBB Mission Statement based on Act 71	11/14/22	CH	Patty Richards to lead this 12/12/22.
25	2	Host workshop for the CUDs on Uniform Guidance	8/8/22		Completed December 7th
30		Adjust timing of Board Packet to at least 5 business days before the Board Meeting	11/03/22		Plan to start new schedule in January
33		Create a Communication Procedure Plan for Board notifications of updates from Staff (press releases, legislative presentations,	11/14/22		Completed in the November 28 Board meeting.
34		Discussion regarding development of a separate website			Staff recommends we continue with the current website which follows state protocols.
27		Board requested that a grant agreement template be shared	10/31/22	CH	Item closed – agreement was shared
23	1	Define audit criteria and post award grant reporting and review process for grantees/CUDs	8/8/22	CH	Item Closed - Compliance Recommendation Memo presented October 31 <sup>st</sup> . Additional reporting requirements will be shared once the new form is updated and staff will create a dashboard for tracking.
18	1	Signature Authority of Executive Director	03/28/22	CH	Closed. Approved in July.
19	1	Policy around hiring staff	03/28/22	CH	Closed. Approved in July.
21	1	Invite to Doug Farnum to future Board Meeting	6/14/22	CH	Attended August 8 <sup>th</sup> meeting.
20	3	Recommendation for designation of an entity for Digital Equity & Affordability Office	03/28/22	board	Closed. This is being addressed by the Governor's office per a directive from the NTIA. This falls into the responsibility of the VCBB as a subset of the IJA program.
8	2	Policy on "Material Default" see §8086(c)(2)	11/1/21	CH	Closed. Issue has been resolved through legislation.

5	3	VCBB Dashboard – to be shared monthly to show progress. What are the milestones?	11/1/21	CH	Closed. Stone Environmental has presented its proposal and the software platform meets the needs.
16	1	Provide Board with impact of Commitment letter	02/14/22	CH	Closed with material pre-purchasing proposal.
17	2	Statewide marketing collaboration with VCUDA	02/14/22	CH	Closed. VCUDA is not interested.
15	2	Provide Benchmarks for what telecom companies spend on Marketing	02/14/22	CH	Will research and present back on 3/14/22 Board meeting
1	1	Budget	10/18/21	CH	Completed. 2021 budget approved. 2022 will be presented in March.
2	1	Overbuild – what is the standard (20% of total served?)	11/1/21	CH	Completed. See Construction RFP Definition
3	2	Business Plans – what is the scope? Will they be updated before construction grants?	11/1/21	CH	Completed. The updated business plans will be included in the Construction RFP responses.
6	3	Fiber purchase – VCBB involvement? authorization? Status?	11/1/21	board	Completed
7	1	Make Ready Construction – policy: part of §8085 grants or not?	11/1/21	RF	Policy established. Make ready construction will be part of the construction grant program.
9	2	Revisiting timeline for VCBB – construction RFP & reporting timelines	11/22/21	CH	Completed. Part of the construction RFP. RFP approved by the Board on 01/03/22
10	2	Sequence assumptions for preconstruction and construction & reporting timelines	11/22/21	CH& board (LS)	Completed. Part of the Construction RFP. RFP approved by the Board on 01/03/22
11	2	DPS 2021 Map – Unserved	11/1/21	CH/Legal	Completed
12	1	Confidentiality. Grant Agreement Art 5 (state standard). Is the product of a grant a “public document” – e.g. will we post construction plans?	11/1/21	Board LS/HG	The RFP and construction schedules will be public.
13	2	USP & contiguous CUD construction-policy	11/22/21		Completed. Addressed in the Construction RFP.
14		Legislative Consideration – Purchase of consolidated services/goods	11/29/21		Not needed.



## VCBB Estimated BEAD Timeline as of October 4, 2024

(This document supersedes the timeline contained in the VCBB draft RFA)

Start Date	End Date	Activity	Notes
<b>September 2024</b>	November 2024	Host Subgrantee Preparedness Workshops	
<b>November 5, 2024</b>	December 5, 2024	Pre-proposal window open	
<b>December 6, 2024</b>	January 3, 2025	Pre-proposal review and final project area determination	Ensure all unserved locations will be included within a full proposal
	January 6, 2025	Post final project areas	
<b>January 20, 2025</b>	March 3, 2025	Full proposal window open	
<b>March 4, 2025</b>	May 9, 2025	Subgrantee initial selection and negotiation process	
<b>May 2025</b>		Special award condition meeting	Review awards with NTIA
<b>No earlier than May 30, 2025</b>		Present winning bids to Board/announce results publicly	
<b>Ongoing</b>	July 15, 2025	Complete and submit Final Proposal to NTIA	
<b>To be announced by NTIA</b>		Final Proposal approved by NTIA	Remaining subrecipients may begin deployment activities

# Vermont Community Broadband Board

## Resolution Honoring Holly E. Groschner

**WHEREAS**, the Vermont Community Broadband Board (Board) was created by the Vermont General Assembly (General Assembly) to coordinate, facilitate, support and accelerate the development and implementation of universal community broadband solutions (Broadband Deployment) pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 8081 (see generally Act 71); and

**WHEREAS**, the Board is comprised of five (5) members, with two members appointed by the Governor, one appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees, one appointed by the Speaker of the House, and one by the Vermont Communications Union District Association; and

**WHEREAS**, Holly E. Groschner (Ms. Groschner) was appointed in 2021 by the Speaker of the House and reappointed by the Speaker on February 1, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Groschner brought immense intelligence, legal acumen, deep understanding of technical and financial materials, and a keen sense of humor to Board meetings; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Groschner was always well-prepared and engaged in the critically important issues being deliberated by the Board; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Groschner demonstrated tremendous commitment to developing accountability policies focusing on issues including reliability, high-quality, and affordability, and;

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Groschner worked tirelessly on behalf of all Vermonters and with steadfast commitment for policies that support affordable broadband.

**NOW, therefore it is resolved** that the Board expresses its immense gratitude to Ms. Groschner for her exemplary work, dedication, years of service and fellowship on the Board and wishes her the best in her future endeavors.

October 14, 2024

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Patricia Richards, Chair

Approved by:

Patricia Richards, Chair  
Dan Nelson, Vice-Chair  
Brian Otley  
Laura Sibia