

GCET

GREENFIELD COMMUNITY ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY
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Called to order at the GCET office at 6 pm April 24th 2024

Attendees: Tim Farrell, Chair, Commissioners: Jen Stromsten, David Russell, Pamela Goodwin

Other Attendees: John Lunt, GCET GM, Bill St Denis, GCET CTO, Fern Smith, GCET Ops Manager

- Roll call taken at 6:01pm
- Introductions were made & Pamela Goodwin introduced and welcomed as new GCET commissioner
- It was noted that no public was present for public comment.

- **Grant Status Presentation**

- **ARPA**

- funds are for moving forward to the North Build, toward Bernardston (not on Country Club Road.)
 - Pole owners are Verizon and Eversource. Most poles are ready but not all. Pole climbers are needed.
 - Approximately \$375-400 thousand in Arpa funds. Build outs and grants rely on the initial ARPA funding. Make Ready is manageable over a period of time.

- **Municipal Digital Equity (M.D.E.) Planning Grant**

- GCET applied in June of 2023. The main goal is infrastructure and connectivity.
 - The Weldon (low income seniors) and The Elks (veterans) held well attended focus groups. The mayor will be given the proposed Digital Equity Plan for the city.

- **Municipal Digital Equity Implementation Grant**

- \$100K
 - no money has been awarded to the city yet.

- **Infrastructure GAP Network Grant**

- \$147 MM available statewide
 - The purpose is to cover all UNSERVED (100/100) locations. A small number of ISPs applied and we did on Dec 11, 2023. There are 15 locations that qualify such as a few businesses at industrial park, a camp, some residents, and city owned infrastructure. GCET was supposed to know something by the end of February from Mass Broadband Institute (MBI). The status has changed to TBD. GCET has finished the process and is now just waiting to hear.

- **Residential Retro Fit**

- \$22 Million available
 - There is a specific criteria of low income housing and no current fiber or cat 6 to the units. Housing Operators must submit an Expression of Interest to MBI. The Weldon has done so and the Greenfield Housing Authority is in the process. Berkshire Apartments has determined they don't qualify. Pamela asked

about Leyden Woods and Greenfield Gardens. An apartment complex can say their existing service is affordable and they are able to connect. GCET will submit bids to RFPs for places in Greenfield.

- The question came up as to whether MBI or GCET would own the wiring?? materials? It was decided that further investigation was needed.
- **CFWM Community Space Public Wi-Fi Program**
 - \$5,000-\$10,000 per location
 - This involves Economic Development and City IT
 - Fernando Fleury – IT Director
 - Amy Cahillane – Economic Development Director
 - Three sites: Town Common, Teen Recreational Center &?
- **BEAD (Broadband Equity Access and Deployment) Grant , \$147 Million available.**
 - Locations must be underserved or unserved. Served is defined by 100/20. MBI is still working w/ the National Telecommunication and Information Administration. (NTIA) The Board discussed that the FCC map is totally inaccurate. There will need to be a "challenge process" before an entity can apply for the grant. There is a 30 day period of time to challenge. ** See further details on the attachment. GCET has sent in an Expression of Interest form. Fern stated that the BEAD grant is in an infancy stage.
- **Additional Funding Possibilities**
 - On March 27, 2024 the NTIA approved the Mass Broadband Institute funding. On April 1st, 2024 the NTIA awarded Federal funding to Expand Digital Access. The \$14.1 Million is from Infrastructure Law.
- **Hybrid Meetings**
 - The Board discussed the need for Hybrid meetings. John stated we possibly need to buy a webcam. Tim stated that he preferred in-person meetings for the board unless a true need by a Commissioner. We all agreed in-person is preferable.
- **Board call for Executive Session**
 - The executive session was called as the Chair read MGL CH 164- Section 47D . Section 10 of chapter 66 and sections 20,21 of chapter 30A... *** please see the included agenda sheet for details. Exec. session commenced at 6:44 p.m.
 - Roll call vote to enter Executive Session was unanimous
 - Board Returned from Executive Session at 7:11.
- **Board vote to adopt FY25 Budget as presented to the Council**
 - David Russel motion, Jen Stromsten second.
 - Unanimous approval.

Adjournment at 7:13pm