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## ConnectME Authority Meeting Notes & Video - March 27, 2015

ConnectME Authority

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# **ConnectME Authority**

## March 27, 2015 – Meeting Notes

### 1. Introductions

Authority Board Members: Jean Wilson, Dick Thompson, Greg McNeal, and Andy Hagler. Ralph Johnson was absent.

Authority Staff: Phil Lindley, Lisa Leahy, and David Maxwell

Board members, Authority staff, and a representative of the James W. Sewall Company introduced themselves, as did members of the public.

### 2. Review of ConnectME Authority Work Session/Retreat

Board members and staff reviewed the notes from the March 13<sup>th</sup> work session, giving session participants an opportunity to ask questions, clarify positions, and affirm the content of the notes. After a thorough review, Board and staff made no content changes to the material.

### 3. Public Comment Regarding Work Session

Public comments on the notes from the work session included:

- endorsement of the Authority in an advocacy role regarding broadband
- a question regarding the definition of an “Authority”
- the importance of due diligence in the grant application process, pre-award, and including both financial and technical review
- the recently-adopted 10/10 standard should be re-thought; could affect grant challenges. Unserved should have lower upstream speed.
- a desire for the Authority to engage public participation; people look to the Authority for well-developed positions formulated through an analytical approach
- promotion of municipally-owned fiber networks with the Authority assisting towns with possible solutions
- needed investment in community efforts

In response to these comments, Board members raised the idea of a bifurcation of potential grant funds; one for unserved and one for underserved. For further discussion at future meetings.

### 4. Discussion of Current ConnectME Authority Statutory Charge

Board member Andy Hagler presented his analysis of the current Authority statute in terms of:

- goals and policy

- essential duties in furtherance of broadband goals and policies
- central duty of the Authority
- additional duties of the Authority
- limitations on Authority action

#### 5. Discussion of Pending Legislation

A listing of proposed legislation was reviewed; Authority position and action regarding each bill was discussed and decided. Dick Thompson would be preparing and presenting testimony.

#### 6. Executive Director Report

Phil Lindley reviewed the latest ConnectME Fund report.

A tentative schedule for the 10<sup>th</sup> grant round was presented. The Authority felt that the round should be delayed due to pending legislation that could have a large impact on Authority activities.

The agenda for the next Board meeting was discussed and outlined.

#### 7. Public Comment

There was no further public comment offered.

The meeting adjourned at 4:28PM.

The next Board meeting will be held on Fri., May 1, at 2:00PM in the Worster Room of the Public Utilities Commission.