



STATE OF MAINE  
CONNECTME AUTHORITY  
145 STATEHOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0145

DICK THOMPSON  
ACTING CHAIR

SANDRA SAUNDERS  
RALPH JOHNSON  
DENISE GARLAND  
SUSAN WOODS  
BRUCE WILLIAMSON  
AUTHORITY MEMBERS

**ConnectME Authority**  
[www.maine.gov/connectme/](http://www.maine.gov/connectme/)

**Maine PUC Worster Room**  
**101 Second Street, Hallowell, ME**  
([Directions to MPUC](#))

**Friday, February 24, 2017**  
**2:00 PM**

Agenda

1. Introduction of ConnectME Authority members and staff
2. Rulemaking, Chapter 101
3. Legislative Update
4. Strategic Plan Review
5. Fund Administration
6. Grant Round Consideration
7. Staff Report
  - Financial Reports
  - FirstNet Update
  - Staff Activities
8. Approval of meeting minutes
9. Other Business
10. Public Comment



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TO: ConnectME Authority Board

FR: David W. Maxwell, Program Director

DA: February 16, 2017

RE: RULEMAKING CONVERSATION WITH OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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As was requested at the January Board meeting, I spoke with Bill Laubenstein, Assistant Attorney General, regarding the need for rulemaking prior to initiating a round of grants, whether planning, infrastructure, or both. Additionally, I asked about the merit in waiting to proceed with Chapter 101 discussion and finalization given pending legislation this session.

Regarding the need for rulemaking prior to grants, it is the opinion of AAG Laubenstein that the statutory changes made in the last legislative session expressly state that rules are required (MRS Title35-A, Chapter 93, sub-section 9204-A) for determining unserved and underserved areas. Without this rule, neither grant program should proceed.

As for waiting to proceed with Chapter 101 revisions until adjournment of the current (first) legislative session in June, AAG Laubenstein believes the process for revising Chapter 101 should continue now. Any requirements to modify the Chapter from legislative action during this session, which are unknown at this time, could be accomplished through another rulemaking initiative later in 2017 and prior the deadline to submit major substantive rules for consideration by the second session of the 128th Legislature in January of 2018.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CONNECTME AUTHORITY TRIENNIAL STRATEGIC PLAN

Triennial Strat Plan Strategies	2016	Timeline		Measure  Target  Status	Current Staff Addressing
		2017	2018		Clerical Assistance Needed
					Requires Contracted Services
Strategy 1, Action 1A. Continue target areas where no high-speed service exists with infrastructure program.	X	X	X	Measure: Service to number of homes or businesses not currently served  Target: 500 homes each yr/infrastructure  Status: On track. 2016 – 392 provided with 10x10 service. Round 9 & 10 complete in 2016. Rounds 1-10, 2198 total 10x10 service.  To do: Update spreadsheet of all grants, go through each grant manually	Current Staff Addressing          Clerical Assistance Needed
Strategy 1, Action 1B. Determine effectiveness & impacts of infrastructure grants		X	X	Measure: Report that helps CMA fine tune programs  Target: 2 Annual Reports Infrastructure Grant Effectiveness and Impact Report  Status: Work remains to be done.  To do: Update grant spreadsheet to reflect households served and adoption rates. Need to research finding adoption rate figures, grants do not require that be tracked. Create Reports.	Requires Contracted Services
Strategy 1, Action 1C. Implement local broadband planning grant program	X			Measure: Number of local and regional efforts supported.  Target: 5 planning grants per year	Current Staff Addressing

# IMPLEMENTATION OF CONNECTME AUTHORITY TRIENNIAL STRATEGIC PLAN

				<p>Status: On track.</p> <p>4 grants funded and multiple other local, regional efforts supported = Arrowsic, Georgetown, Lincoln County, Piscataquis County, St. George, Oxford County</p>	
Strategy 1, Action 1D. Create working partnership with FairPoint – CAF II	X	X	X	<p>Measure: Meetings with ConnectME staff, FairPoint staff and municipal and regional entities.</p> <p>Target: Quarterly coordination.</p> <p>Status: On track.</p> <p>Planning grant applicants required to engage with FP. Other communities not applying for CMA funding are using our grant process as model toward engaging FairPoint. Ongoing, month by month</p>	<div>Current Staff Addressing</div>
Strategy 2, Action 2A. Support innovate efforts to increase consumer and business use of online services.	X			<p>Measure: Households using high-speed internet. Businesses and organizations with websites.</p> <p>Target: Increased actual median household use. Increased percentage of Maine businesses with a website.</p> <p>Status: On track. Utilizing US Census Fact Finder data set, created spreadsheet that tracks Maine to national internet figures.</p> <p>Work remains to be done - the 55% of businesses with websites is a 2014 figure.</p>	<div>Current Staff Addressing</div> <div>Requires Contracted Services</div>
Strategy 2, Action 2B. Coordinate consumer advice/assistance with	X			<p>Measure: OPA report on call information to ConnectME</p> <p>Target: Quarterly Report</p>	<div>Current Staff Addressing</div>

# IMPLEMENTATION OF CONNECTME AUTHORITY TRIENNIAL STRATEGIC PLAN

OPA.				Status: On track	
Strategy 3, Action 3A. Issue annual Broadband Indicators Report.		X	X	<p>Measure: Report that is useful to policy makers and citizens</p> <p>Target: Two annual reports</p> <p>Status: Work remains to be done. Working with NTIA on acquiring national data sets and Maine data sets as part of our pilot program within the Community Connectivity Initiative. Data sets that are part of this work: FCC, American Community Survey, Census. Information on Maine mapping will continue, new contract almost final. Grant recipient information continues to be collected although this work is slow due to increased work load on staff.</p>	Requires Contracted Services
Strategy 3, Action 3B. Serve as BB information resource to ME communities, aggregating, sharing experiences and encouraging collaboration.	X	X	X	<p>Measure: Guidance documents and resource library.</p> <p>Target: Information available</p> <p>Status: On track and work remains to be done. Staff continues to work with community planning grant recipients as well as with communities that did not receive funding and communities moving ahead under their own efforts. All planning grants are posted; they list the planning vendors they have utilized which reflect all in the state at this time. Work continues with NTIA and CCI to make available a range of models for broadband expansion as part of the online assessment tool pilot program. ConnectME lists providers on our web mapping tool. We do not list their community assistance personnel directly. Attend multiple conference, speaking requests, radio appearances, town meetings, etc.</p>	Current Staff Addressing
Strategy 3, Action 3C. Conduct needs analysis to determine level of investment necessary to make BB available to all ME residents and	X			<p>Measure: Needs analysis</p> <p>Target: Complete analysis</p> <p>Status: Work remains to be done. Staff has worked closely with an industry leader who has done with work for other broadband entities in</p>	Requires Contracted Services



# IMPLEMENTATION OF CONNECTME AUTHORITY TRIENNIAL STRATEGIC PLAN

businesses.				U.S. Conversation with DECD have taken place to see if collaboration is a possibility. This work will require funding to accomplish.	
Strategy 3, Action 3D. Leverage broadband opportunities	X	X	X	Measure: Outreach and communication with state agency leadership.  Target: Quarterly review at CMA meetings  Status: On track. Staff continues to reach out to state entities.	Current Staff Addressing



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TO: ConnectME Authority Board

FR: David W. Maxwell, Program Director

DA: February 16, 2017

RE: REQUEST TO SOLICIT PROPOSALS FOR FUND ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

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As you are aware, we presently have a contract with Rolka Loube Saltzman of Harrisburg, PA, for Fund Administrator services for the ConnectME Fund. The contract was structured for a two-year period, with the opportunity for two, one-year extensions. We are in the first of those two, one-year extensions; it will conclude on June 30 of this year.

Historically, we have solicited for Fund Administrator services in conjunction with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

Rather than exercise the remaining one-year extension, both the PUC staff and the Authority staff wish to issue an RFP for the services now, resulting in a new contract to take effect on July 1.

It is possible that the current provider will, once again, bid for the work and may, in fact, be selected. Regardless of what entity is selected, a new contract will allow each agency to incorporate some desired changes in processes and responsibilities, and allow us to include some performance standards which should serve us well moving forward.

Would you please consider authorizing staff to work with the PUC staff to solicit proposals for Fund Administrator services?

Thank you.



DICK THOMPSON  
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TO: ConnectME Authority Board  
FR: David W. Maxwell, Program Director  
DA: February 16, 2017  
RE: FirstNet/FirstNetME UPDATE

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The FirstNetME project continues with education and outreach activities while awaiting news from national FirstNet regarding selection of a single vendor to plan and build out the national system. We understand that this may be as soon as next month.

FirstNetME team members met recently with Bruce Fitzgerald, Director of the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), as is customary to do on a quarterly basis. We reviewed upcoming outreach efforts, including a presentation at the annual MEMA conference in April.

Director Fitzgerald has been apprised of possible structural and staff changes at the ConnectME Authority in light of the Governor's proposed budget.





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**Friday, January 27, 2016**  
**2:00 PM**

Meeting Notes

1. Introduction of ConnectME Authority members and staff  
Dick Thompson, Sandra Saunders, Denise Garland, Sue Woods, Bruce Williamson  
Staff: Lisa Leahy, David Maxwell
2. Community Connectivity Initiative Presentation – federal team NTIA  
Laura Spining, Karen Perry NTIA presented the Community Connectivity Assessment Tool. A report out from the Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> meeting in Augusta took place. See presentations.
  - ConnectME Planning Grant awardee updates from communities/partners – Axiom presented on four grants. Grants have created larger conversation with other communities in Maine. Collaboration between providers is going well. Digital inclusion has led to discussion to explore funding. Island Institute now offering digital literacy education classes. Academic contact to capture this real life demonstration project. UMO relationship, university students to help encapsulate and measure the process.
3. Planning – Infrastructure Grants  
Reported on current grant balance, remaining amounts in ConnectME Fund. Planning grants, prequalified checklist has provided a bench mark. Motion to fund planning grants approved. Provide monthly report on expenditures and revenue.
4. Rulemaking, Chapter 101  
Public Advocate letter referenced a postponement of the rule making process. Ben Sanborn, Telephone Association of Maine, stated concern that Authority may not have legal authority to put funds toward planning grants only. It opens legal challenge. Mr. Sanborn that postponement was

not a good idea. Mr. Sanborn would prefer to work offline with parties on rulemaking. Administrative procedures should be followed to clean up lingering questions on how the Authority operates. New language adoption on potential legislation would not affect the rulemaking. In his reading the only thing we can do is fund infrastructure grants.

John Lawrence spoke to Waldoboro experience with infrastructure grants and planning grants.

Jeff Nevins agrees with Ben on rulemaking procedures. FairPoint is willing to continue process to redraft the rule.

Peggy Schaeffer, of the Secretary of State's Office spoke to no requirement for Authority to do rule making for planning grants.

Staff will come back with suggestion for funding and interest between infrastructure and planning. Staff will talk to Attorney General's office and get guidance about what we are required to do and that we have approval to move forward with grants without an updated rule.

5. Review of potential legislation

- Part W –Governor Budget – review documentation to date

6. Annual Report - approved

7. Staff Report

- Financial Reports - presented
- FirstNet Update - presented
- Staff Activities - presented

8. Meeting minutes – reviewed

9. Other Business – Bill Crandall – staff doing a great job and CMA doing a great job

10. Public Comment

11. Executive Session

February 2, 2017

ConnectME Authority  
ATTN: Lisa Leahy/David Maxwell  
145 State House Station  
51 Commerce Center Drive  
Augusta, ME 04333

***Re: Infrastructure Planning and Digital Inclusion Literacy Grants***

Dear Ms. Leahy and Mr. Maxwell:

As the ConnectME Authority considers providing technical and financial assistance to support local and regional broadband planning activities, we hope that you will consider separating infrastructure planning grants and inclusion/literacy grants into two different initiatives.

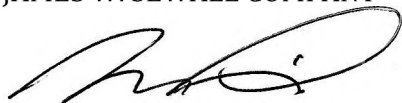
Broadband infrastructure planning and digital inclusion/literacy are two very different disciplines, each requiring a specific skillset, staffing, and timelines that are not necessarily conducive to the prompt and orderly planning process. Combining these two initiatives into one grant also blurs the lines between them, and may complicate scoring and administration of the grants.

Our analysis of the current digital inclusion and literacy marketplace indicates that the demand in Maine will not support multiple companies providing this service. As such, Sewall has limited interest at this time in developing proficiency in providing digital inclusion and literacy education.

Additionally, we respectfully request that the ConnectME Authority implement guidelines which would require an RFP be issued to select a vendor for the planning grants, and that there be a specific minimum timeline for the RFP process. This would help to ensure the most competitive pricing and true apples-to-apples comparison before making award decisions.

In summary, it is our hope that ConnectME will award grants in broadband planning, infrastructure and inclusion/literacy separately, and consider an RFP process for planning grants.

Sincerely,  
JAMES W. SEWALL COMPANY



Brian Lippold  
Vice President Business Development

cc: Denise Garland  
Ralph Johnson  
Sandra P. Saunders  
Dick Thompson  
Bruce Williamson  
Susan Woods

# CONNECTME LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Feb 14, 2017 1:00p

[LD 256](#)

PUBLIC HEARING

An Act To Ensure Continued Availability of High-speed Broadband Internet at Maine's Schools and Libraries

## SUMMARY

This bill changes the limit on the amount collected on prepaid wireless telecommunications service from a percentage to a flat amount. This bill also requires the Public Utilities Commission to convene a stakeholder group to evaluate and provide recommendations regarding the method of collection of funds to support telecommunications access at libraries and public schools. The commission is required to report to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology by January 30, 2018, and the committee is authorized to submit a bill based on the report.

- Dick Thompson provided testimony.

Feb 28, 2017 1:00p

## Budget Briefings

- Office of the Public Advocate
- Governor's Energy Office
- Efficiency Maine Trust
- ConnectME Authority
- Public Utilities Commission

Mar 1, 2017, 9:00a

[LD 423](#)

PUBLIC HEARING

An Act To Extend Internet Availability in Rural Maine*Rep. Alley of Beals*

## SUMMARY

This bill provides one-time funding to extend for 2 years a program that provides mobile wireless hot spot devices to libraries in Washington County.

[LD 461](#)

PUBLIC HEARING

Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 220: Removal of Provider of Last Resort Service Obligation, a Major Substantive Rule of the Public Utilities Co..

## SUMMARY

This resolve provides for legislative review of Chapter 220: Removal of Provider of Last Resort Service Obligation, a major substantive rule of the Public Utilities Commission.

# CONNECTME LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mar 6, 2017, 3:00p

PART W

Governor's proposed budget

## SUMMARY

Amend the statute to change the name ConnectME as the broadband authority and change the name to the Broadband Development Authority and move it into the Department of Economic and Community Development. Part W is on pages 97 – 105 of the Governor's proposed budget.

Mar 7, 2017, 1:00p

[LD 406](#)

PUBLIC HEARING

An Act To Amend the Law Regarding Joint Use of Certain Utility and Telecommunications Infrastructure  
*Sen. Woodsome of York*

## SUMMARY

This bill makes the following changes to the laws governing joint use of equipment regulated by the Public Utilities Commission.

1. It changes the conditions under which the commission may order joint use of equipment by eliminating the requirement that a hearing be held upon the commission's motion or that a complaint be filed by an affected entity before the commission may order joint use of equipment. It also eliminates the requirement that the commission find that the parties have failed to agree on the terms and conditions or compensation for the joint use of equipment before the commission may enter an order.

2. It adds unlit fiber providers, telecommunications service providers and information service providers to the list of entities that may be subject to an order for joint use of equipment.

3. It expands the types of subscribers whose interests must be taken into account by the commission when taking actions or issuing orders related to joint use of equipment.

4. It requires the commission to adopt rules governing joint use of equipment.

Mar 2, 2017, 2:00p

[LD 423](#)

WORK SESSION

An Act To Extend Internet Availability in Rural Maine  
*Rep. Alley of Beals*

[LD 461](#)

WORK SESSION

Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Chapter 220: Removal of Provider of Last Resort Service Obligation, a Major Substantive Rule of the Public Utilities Co...