



Central New York Regional Planning & Development Board
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Paul W. Pinckney, Chairman David V. Bottar, Executive Director

MINUTES

Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board Board of Directors Meeting June 12, 2024

ATTENDANCE

Board members: Julie Abbott, Pamela D. Caraccioli, Emanuel Carter, Patrick Clune, Edward Gilson, Jennifer Haines, Beau Harbin, Kipp Hicks, Cydney M. Johnson, David Knapp, Mary Ann Messinger, Brendan O'Bryan, Paul W. Pinckney, Tim Stahl, Scott Steve, Kari Terwilliger.

Guests: Kyle Boeckman, Mark Meyerhofer, Joseph Starks, David R. Turner, and Melanie L. Vilardi

Staff: Michael Boccuzzi, David V. Bottar, Victoria Ciszewska, Erica Herman, Bruce Keplinger, Amanda Mazzoni, Aaron McKeon, Conner McKeon, Allison Perry, Lindsay Speer, Patricia Wortley

1. CALL TO ORDER

Paul Pinckney called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm at the offices of the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board in Syracuse, New York. Mr. Pinckney noted the meeting included a zoom meeting link and that several members were participating in the meeting via the link.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

A motion was introduced and seconded to accept the agenda and minutes from the May 1, 2024 Board meeting as presented; the motion was approved unanimously.

3. NYS CAO Municipal Infrastructure Program and CNY RPDB's Regional Broadband Proposal

Mark Meyerhofer, Director of Broadband for ECC Technologies, was introduced and he provided a summary of the application that the CNY RPDB submitted to the NYS ConnectAll Office to secure a major grant to build broadband infrastructure in CNY.

Mr. Meyerhofer began his remarks by referencing a project summary memo – CNY RPDB CAO MIP Application CFA Application #135293, dated May 29, 2024. Also referenced was the NYS ConnectAll Office Municipal Infrastructure Program summary report outlining the structure of the MIP grants to construct last mile, open access, public broadband infrastructure - <https://broadband.ny.gov/municipal-infrastructure-program>.

Regarding the memorandum, Mr. Meyerhofer noted that in December 2021, the CNY RPDB completed a study that assessed broadband service in Central New York. The study was prepared by ECC Technologies and titled – Central New York Regional Telecommunications Broadband Infrastructure Inventory and Community Survey Report. It was noted the study was completed by ECC Technologies based on actual field observations completed by ECC staff driving all roads outside of urban areas in CNY. The report documented the actual number of road miles and addresses in each county that do not have modern broadband fiber infrastructure in place.

Mr. Meyerhofer noted the study provided the basis for the CNY RPDB’s application to the State’s ConnectAll Office (CAO) for a major grant through the CAO Municipal Infrastructure Program. It was noted the funding application to CAO MIP program is for a \$29.5 million grant that would be used to build out an open access fiber optic network in Cayuga, Cortland, and Oswego County with main connecting routes through Onondaga County and to Madison County. The application was submitted on March 8, 2024. On April 12, 2024, the agency received notification from the CAO the application was being provided a conditional funding reservation and would be considered for a grant award pending further review. A final funding decision is expected in June-July 2024.

In evaluating the proposed location of the CNYNET broadband network – primarily in Cayuga, Cortland, and Oswego County, it was noted that Madison County received a major grant from the USDA Reconnect program in 2017 and is currently engaged in a public-private partnership with Empire Access to build a robust fiber network in Madison County. This project is currently under construction. It was also noted, that based on the CNY Broadband Study, Onondaga County has entered into an agreement with Verizon Telecommunications to build out fiber optic service in the unserved rural areas in Onondaga County. Verizon initiated construction on this project in 2023 and work is scheduled for completion by December 2024.

Mr. Meyerhofer noted the proposed CNY RPDB’s CNYNET broadband infrastructure project consists of approximately 335 miles and referenced a map showing the proposed route for this network in CNY.

Mr. Meyerhofer concluded his presentation by noting the proposed project in CNY is based on two very successful regional models including the Southern Tier Network (<https://southerntiernetwork.org/>) and the Development Authority of the North Country (<https://www.danc.org/departments/Telecommunications>).

Mr. Bottar noted that information about CNYNET project and the agency’s grant application to the CAO has been discussed at meetings of the agency’s Executive Committee over the past six months. Mr. Bottar also noted the Executive Committee recommended at a meeting on May 29th, to advance this proposal to the full board for further discussion and consideration. Following further discussion, board members expressed strong support for the proposed broadband project as summarized in the May 29, 2024 memorandum and directed staff to proceed with efforts to secure the NYS CAO grant and proceed with the project as presented.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The next item discussed on the agenda was a brief program status report as presented by Mr. Bottar. Mr. Bottar noted that staff remain actively engaged in the full range of program activities as outlined in the agency's planner work program for 2024. Mr. Bottar noted some very positive news regarding a recent announcement that NOAA has formally designated of the Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary. Mr. Bottar noted that Oswego County led the regional initiative to secure this designation and referenced a report issued by NOAA regarding this announcement and plans for a formal ceremony on September 6, 2024 at 11:00 am at the William C. Pier in Oswego, New York. Mr. Bottar concluded his program summary by noting that staff are continuing work with the USDA Forestry Service to finalize the formal \$9 million grant award to the agency for the CNY Forestry Initiative.

5. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Bottar noted there was no old or new business presented to the Board for discussion. It was noted that the next Executive Committee is scheduled for July 31st and the next Board meeting is scheduled for August 28th.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was introduced and seconded to adjourn the meeting; the motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Bottar, Executive Director