



# UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**DEC. 18, 2023**

Council members present: (ExAB = Excused Absence)

ID	Name	Present	ID	Name	Present
1	Ted Hankins (Chair)	Y	9	Chris Stark	Y
2	Michelle Reinen (V.C.)	Y	10	David Berka	Y
3	Nicole Mauritz	Y	11	Amanda Miller	Y
4	John Van Ooyen	Y	12	Brian Peters	Y
5	David Byers	Y	13	John Kinstler	Y
6	Teri Hatchell	Y	14	Michele Ahlman	Y
7	Janet Zander	Y	15	David Mortimer	Y
8	Paul Brad	ExAb			

Commission staff present: Milena Bernardinello, Alyssa Kenney, Tara Kiley, Peter Jahn, Billy Mauldin, Damarr Purifoy, Jenna Schmidt.

**Call to Order.** Chair called the Council meeting to order at 10:03 am.

**1. Approval of Minutes of June 20, 2023, meeting.** (attached)

- Member John Van Ooyen request to amend the June 20 , 2023 minutes on item#2, for there is a typo in the name of the first person that move the motion of minutes approval: it should be David **B**yers – rather than Myers.
- Amendment accepted by the Chair.
- Member Janet Zander moved, and John Van Ooyen seconded that the minutes for the June 20, 2023, meeting of the Universal Service Fund Council be approved as amended.
- Motion carried.

**2. Council Member Exchange.**

Introduction. Two announcements, by member Michelle Ahlman and David Mortimer, of their resignation from the Council , last day Dec.31, 2023.

**3. 2023 USF Fiscal Updates.** Jenna Schmidt-PSC discussed the 2023 audit of the financial statement June 30, 2023, submitted by Baker Tilly US, LLP. (attached)

- The assets of the USF decreased by \$5,400,000, primarily due to cash balances being used for program reimbursements.

- Liabilities decreased by \$1,400,000, primarily due to outstanding payments that had not been processed yet.
- Total revenues increased by \$3,200,000, primarily from assessments from telecommunication providers and increased interest earnings on cash balances.
- Total expenditures decreased by \$7,500,000, with decreases in various programs.

## **USF Programs Updates**

### **4. Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Program (TEPP) Program.**

Billy Mauldin provided an update on the status of the TEPP program and the USF 2024 TEPP grant application.

- The TRS program saw stable numbers in terms of vouchers and expenditures compared to the previous year.
- The most popular piece of equipment in the Tech program is wireless devices, particularly Apple products.
- Outreach programs visit have been conducted at various Independent Living Centers (ILCs) in the state, providing training and support for staff and consumers.
- Grant applications for the 2024 TEPP Outreach Grant have been awarded, and the grant agreement are on the way to be executed before the beginning of the performance period Jan 1, 2024.

### **5. Lifeline Program.**

Peter Jahn provided an update on the Lifeline program; program relatively stable as well; with few anomalies. Overall decline is minimal, but real. (power point attached)

**USF 2023 Grants brief updates.** Damarr Purifoy provided an update on the USF related grants and a non-USF grant closely related to the mission of the USF Council. (power point attached)

- The 2023 Nonprofit Access Grant awarded funding to 12 projects for a total of almost \$500,000.
- The 2023 Lifeline Outreach Grant awarded funding to 2 projects for a total of less than \$150,000.
- The 2022-2023 Telemedicine Grant awarded funding to 12 projects for a total of almost \$800,000.

- The Non-USF 2023 Digital Equity Outreach Grant was a stand-alone grant distributed to gathered data for the statewide digital equity plan.

**PSC Update** – Milena Bernardinello provided an update on the PSC activities and some reminders.

- DE Plan - CO reviewed [ERF # 479504] [*link shared in the meeting chat*]. The current version of the Digital Equity Plan is available for read and feedback. It is a living document that will undergo further revisions.
- ACP program update. Wisconsin Household enrolled: 418,361 [*last week data*] [*link shared in the meeting chat*]
- USF grant priorities. Ask for Council’s insights, and encouragement to USFC members to email to Milena any suggestions or insights for the USF grant priority
- USF grant application. The 2024 Nonprofit grant application will go live in January. Milena provided a heads up for a potential request for USFC volunteers that may needed for grant review.
- Expiring appointments – Reappointment letters for council members that requested to be reappointed will be sent out in late January or February.
- Public Record training – Members are requested to complete the mandatory Public Records Law Training by the end of the calendar year, and email completion evidence to Milena by Dec. 31,2023.
- Next meeting – Ideally last week of May after Memorial day. A doodle poll will be sent out in January.

**Adjourned.** The Counsel adjourned at 11:00 am. David Byers made the motion – Nicole Mauritz, second. Motion carried.

## Item 1\_ Minutes previous meeting.

### UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 2023**

Council members present: Ted Hankins, Brightspeed, Counsel Chairperson; Michelle Reinen, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Counsel Vice Chairperson; Nicole Mauritz, TDS Telecom; John Van Ooyen, Mt. Horeb Telephone Co.; David Byers, Upper Midwest Wireless, LLC; Teri Hatchell, Charter Communications; Janet Zander, Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources; Chris Stark, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension; David Berka, United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County; Brian Peters, Independent Living Services; John Kinstler, Ultratec/Captel, TDI; Michele Ahlman, ClearSounds Communications, Inc.; David Mortimer, Hospital Sisters Health System

Commission staff present: Kathy Endres, Rita Hargot, Peter Jahn, Alyssa Kenney, Tara Kiley, Dennis Klaila, Kara Koonce, Billy Mauldin, Jenna Schmidt

- 1. Call to Order.** Ted Hankins called the Counsel meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.
- 2. Approval of Minutes of December 1, 2022 meeting.** David MByers moved and Ted Hankins seconded that the minutes for the December 1, 2022, meeting of the Universal Service Fund Council be approved as presented. Motion carried.
- 3. Introduction of New Members.** Teri Hatchell, Charter Commissions, introduced herself.
- 4. Election of Officers. a. Counsel Chairperson.** Ted Hankins nominated for the position of Counsel Chairperson. No other nominations were received. Ted Hankins elected Counsel Chairperson.  
**b. Counsel Vice Chairperson.** Michelle Reinen nominated for the position of Counsel Vice Chairperson. No other nominations were received. Michelle Reinen elected Counsel Vice Chairperson.
- 5. Financial Report.** Jenna Schmidt discussed the audit report submitted by Baker Tilly.
- 6. Lifeline Program.** Peter Jahn provided an update on the Lifeline program.
- 7. Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Program (TEPP) Program.** Billy Mauldin provided an update on the current status of the TEPP program.
- 8. Telecommunications Medical Equipment Grant Program (Telemedicine).** Dennis Klaila provided an update on the current status of the Telemedicine Grant program.
- 9. Non-Profit Grant Program.** Alyssa Kenny provided an update on the current status of the Non-Profit Grant program.  
Alyssa Kenney also reported that the Commission had renewed its contract with the current program administrator, SOLIX.
- 10. FY 2024 Universal Service Fund Budget.** Alyssa Kenney presented a proposed budget for funding of USF programs during FY 2024. Janet Zander moved and Nicole Mauritz seconded that the FY 2024 USF Budget be approved as presented. Motion carried.
- 11. Adjourned.** The Counsel adjourned at 11:28 a.m.