

**California Teleconnect Fund (CTF) Administrative Committee (AC) Meeting**

505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94012  
Golden Gate Room

**June 12, 2023**

**The meeting was called to order at 9:36 a.m.**

**1. Introductions**

**Committee Members Present:** Sean McLaughlin-Access Humboldt (Chairperson, Community Based Organization (CBO), Jarrid Keller-Sacramento Public Library (Vice-Chairperson, Libraries), Geoff Belleau-California Department of Education (CDE, Education), Kenneth Rothschild (Deaf), Saira Pasha-AT&T (LEC)-Virtually, Casey McFall (CBO)-Virtually, Ali Dias (CDE, Education)-Virtually, Josh Chisom (California State Library)-Virtually

**CPUC Staff Present:** Emily Chen (CTF), Joy Alba-Librojo (CTF), Daniel Lyulkin (CTF), Karo Serle (CTF), Madison Alcalay Public Advocates Office (PAO), C Miriam Sidney (CTF)-Virtually, Lisa-Marie Clark (Legal)-Virtually, Adam Clark (CTF)-Virtually, Lina Khoury (CTF)-Virtually, Joanne Leung (CTF)-Virtually, Eric Sawyer (Public Advisors Office)-Virtually

**Public Participants Present:** Caroline Siegel Singh (Green Lining-CBO)-Virtually, Max Perrey (Redwood Community Health Coalition (RCHC))-Virtually, Kim Lewis (CENIC)-Virtually, Cathy Benham (Education)-Virtually, Loy Mattison (Education)-Virtually, Rosy Campos (Education)-Virtually, Michele Harken (Education)-Virtually

**American Sign Language Interpreters Present:** Yes

**Absent Members:** Vinhcent Le – (Green Lining-CBO)

**2. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items**

No public comments.

**3. Review Agenda**

Chair McLaughlin requested to elect Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year and add it to the end of the agenda and to defer Item #5F to Item #7 discussion. Approved agenda.

**4. Review and Approve Prior Meeting Minutes**

Approved March 6, 2023 meeting minutes.

## **5. Action Items & Updates from Last Committee Meeting**

- a. Chair McLaughlin to confirm whether Josh Chisom's nomination is approved by Executive Director.
  - The approval letter was received and sent to staff; Josh Chisom is officially the alternate representative for Libraries.
- b. Discuss Chair McLaughlin's position as AC Committee Chair.
  - Item will be taken up at the end of the meeting.
- c. Max Perrey to furnish a short biography and resume, and Administrative Committee to vote on his appointment as the primary representative for the Rural Clinics/Telemedicine Sector
  - Nominated as the primary representative for Rural Clinics/Telemedicine Sector.
  - **Action item:** AC committee will recommend Max Perrey to the Executive Director to fill the primary position.
- d. Caroline Siegel-Singh to furnish a short biography and resume, and Administrative Committee to vote on her appointment as one of the CBO alternates
  - Nominated as the alternate representative for CBOs.
  - **Action item:** AC committee will recommend Caroline Siegel-Singh to the Executive Director to fill the alternate position.
- e. CTF Staff will report back to the AC Committee on the role of alternates
  - Staff member, Lisa-Marie Clark said that there is no official rule outlined in the charter, but in her perspective, alternates should be able to participate in regular meetings even if they are not standing in for a vote for an absent member. The only limitation is alternates are not able to vote if they are not stepping up to that role. Alternates could attend all of the meetings to stay abreast of the issues being discussed and participate in the discussion.
  - Chair McLaughlin said he advocated for the alternates in the past, particularly for those who are not employed by the State to cover the costs of participating in the AC meetings. He asked if we can we qualify alternates for reimbursement for their participation in the AC meetings.
  - **Action item:** Lisa-Marie Clark will look closely at the AC charter but noted that it would be fair for the alternates to receive reimbursement if the charter does not approve it. She will verify this and will inform the staff to notify the alternates.
- f. CTF Staff will share recertification letters with AC Committee for feedback
  - This item will be combined with Item # 7
- g. Presentation schedule update

- CTF staff confirmed that since members from the two sectors were unavailable, so there is no presentation scheduled for today's meeting.
- Committee member Rothschild asked for guidance on what he will present in September's AC meeting. CTF and Chairman McLaughlin advised him to present issues from his sector and educate the committee on the programs for the Deaf community.
- Committee members Rothschild and Pasha confirmed as presenters for the September AC meeting.
- For the December AC meeting, Rural Clinics/Telehealth and PAO sectors are scheduled to present.

## **6. Discussion of Administrative Committee Vacancies:**

### a. Public Hospitals and Clinics-Primary and Alternate vacancies

- Committee member McFall inquired if a CBO that operates clinics are considered under this category. CTF staff confirmed that somebody that works for a CBO that provides healthcare services can be considered under this category. Casey will contact them and will reach out to staff.
- CTF staff shared that the term Public Hospital also indicates Government Hospital and are one and the same.
- Staff member, Lisa-Marie Clark confirmed that there is a definition found on Public Health Code on government hospitals and provided a contact information for one of the government hospital associations: The California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems who represents California's 21 public health care system both at the county and UC level.
  - **Action Item:** Chair McLaughlin will contact and send a copy of the recruitment letter.

### b. Rural Clinics and Telemedicine-Primary and Alternate vacancies

- Max Perrey nominated as the primary representative for Rural Clinics/Telemedicine Sector

### c. Community Based Organization-Alternate vacancy

- Caroline Siegel-Singh nominated as the alternate representative for CBOs

### d. Local Exchange Carrier-Alternate vacancy

- Committee member Pasha informed the committee that finding an alternate is still under progress and inquired if individuals who want to participate in the meeting be reimbursed. Lisa Marie Clark confirmed that since providers are considered utilities, they will need to get reimbursement from their employers.
- Chair McLaughlin suggested to have food in the AC meetings. CTF staff will consider the meal suggestion but pointed out that the providers like AT&T have a stake in the CTF program and a good opportunity for them to join the committee and provide input so it would be in their best interest to join the AC meetings.
- Committee member Rothschild raised the question on why the AC meeting still has remote participation. Lisa-Marie Clark confirmed that the Covid amendments to the rules of Bagley Keene expired July 1st, so moving forward

the only impact that remote participation has is on whether or not we meet quorum. She added that AC members who are participating remotely can still vote on agenda items as long as they meet quorum.

e. Public Advocates Office- Primary and Alternate vacancies

- **Action Item:** PAO will nominate Madison Alcalay as the primary and will submit a nomination letter and resume to the Executive Director

f. Deaf/Hard of Hearing-Alternate vacancy

- Committee member Rothschild informed the committee that he is having a hard time finding an alternate.
- Committee member McFall raised the question if the alternate can be someone from a deaf serving organization, but the person can be hearing. Committee member Rothschild prefers a deaf person to be an alternate.
- Staff member, Lisa-Marie Clark noted that the AC Charter leaves this open so this needs to be discussed with the AC committee. Chair McLaughlin confirmed that the language in the AC charter indicates that a representative from the deaf/hearing-impaired or disabled communities.

## **7. Status of CTF**

a. Applications

CTF staff discussed CTF applications data.

- CTF Staff highlighted two technical eCAP issues that hindered processing efforts. As of June 01, 2023, processing of applications resumed.
- Committee member Keller inquired what sort of verification is going out to the applicants who have duplicate applications that has been delayed, and whether they were notified or is this still on hold. CTF staff responded that for duplicate applications, applicants are emailed to verify if they submitted an application in the past and when this is confirmed, CTF merges their account and deems the new application ineligible.

b. Recertifications

CTF staff discussed recertifications. The updated CTF Recertification Notice was shared with the AC members for questions and feedback (PowerPoint slide #17 and #18)

- Suggestions from AC members:
  - Add CTF staff's email and phone number.
  - Add information about how often CTF recertification happens for each sector.
  - Add information about how CTF program works, maybe add a one-page attachment that tells participants what CTF is all about.
  - Add a sentence to alert participants to check their spam folder.
  - For the 30-day notice, add a sentence notifying the participants that it's the final notice.

- Using bullet points, straightforward to the point – easier to understand and respond.
- Kim Lewis from CENIC inquired if CTF is tracking for email bounce backs from the emailed Recertification notices.
- Committee member Pasha inquired about how the CTF participants were made aware of sending recert notices electronically. CTF staff responded that a press release was sent in May as well as via a Twitter message.
- Committee member Keller shared that there's still confusion about when participants need to start using eCAP, and there has been several staff changes since the pandemic so it might be helpful to reeducate the participants.
- Committee member McFall suggested sending the notifications from the internet providers instead of CPUC. Lisa-Marie Clark agreed and suggested that we can direct the CTF providers to have the notices in their bill inserts.
- Committee member Rothschild inquired if the recert notices are overlooked and participants miss out, can the CTF discounts be retroactive? Lisa-Marie Clark responded that this will be considered on a case-by-case basis, at this point CTF can't definitively say whether or not CTF discounts can be retroactive.
- Kim Lewis from CENIC raised another recertification question and that is if there are any CBOs who have already hit their eligibility deadline, and which participant group is next to be recertified and when.
  - **Action Item:** CTF staff will provide an update on which sector group is getting recertified next.
- Committee member McFall had a follow up comment that if applying CTF discounts retroactively is not assured, smaller organizations like CBOs will lose a lot of money. And there needs to be a more proactive approach to prevent participants from losing their CTF discount. It is up to AC members and CTF to ensure that participants recertify. CTF staff agreed and added that there needs to be more effort to connect with the CBOs. CTF has strived in the past to update participant's outdated contact information and emphasized that it's crucial to keep contact information up to date. In addition, CTF staff informed the AC committee that participants can look up their eligibility start and end dates in the eCAP portal.
- Staff member, Lisa-Marie Clark inquired if there are any plans to hold educational webinars targeted to the CBOs. CTF staff responded that this was discussed internally and with the Outreach office, and CTF is working on putting a plan together and will provide update on this.

c. Program Finances

CTF staff discussed CTF fund status report.

- Committee member McFall inquired about whether the CTF revenues are rollover from the previous year or does it fall under 2023. In addition, she asked about the change between the expense amounts for the months of January and February. CTF staff took note of the questions and will respond via email.
- Committee member Keller inquired after seeing the robust CTF cash balance about whether annexes are eligible for CTF discount or not. CTF staff will provide a response on whether CTF discount is applicable to annexes.

- **Action Item:** Add an agenda item for the next AC meeting – Discuss CTF eligibility for E-Rate annexes and explore whether administrative-only sites are eligible for CTF.
- Kim Lewis from CENIC raised a question about a recent CPUC rulemaking change about how the surcharges are collected for all the public purpose programs and how this affects the revenue for the CTF program. CTF staff suggested to have a representative from the Surcharge section do a presentation at the next AC meeting.
  - **Action Item:** Invite a representative from the Surcharge section to present in the next AC meeting.

## **8. eCAP Update**

CTF staff discussed updates on the eCAP portal.

- Kim Lewis from CENIC inquired about how CTF will communicate to participants on the ongoing issues with eCAP. CTF staff responded that this issue can be mitigated with educating participants on how to use the eCAP portal. Kim Lewis had a follow up question on whether participants need to access the eCAP portal by July 1st to continue getting their CTF discount. CTF staff responded that participants are encouraged to log in to eCAP to make sure they have access as well as to update their contact information and requested Kim to relay to the participants in her sector that if they did not receive an email to access eCAP, they will need to contact CTF for assistance.

## **9. Digital Divide Grant Program, Resolution T-17770**

CTF staff discussed updates to Digital Divide Grant Program.

- Chair McLaughlin suggested to include an update on this in the agenda for the next AC meeting.

## **10. Update on Los Angeles County Office of Education**

Staff member, Lisa-Marie Clark shared that staff will be meeting with LA County Office of Education, along with CPUC staff in the next two weeks. She will provide an update by the next AC meeting.

## **11. Budget and Recommendations**

CTF staff and AC members discussed the annual budget and recommendations.

- Committee member McFall requested that they need to see up front actual expenditures instead of budgeted expenditures before approving and recommending a budget since in the past they were denied of this information. She added that the AC committee wants to look into recommendations for outreach, training and communications.
- Lisa-Marie Clark confirmed that the AC charter is out of date in terms of the requirement of the AC group and recommended that staff can report on it as the budget proposals go in and

possibly add as a budget change proposal. Committee member Belleau asked Lisa-Marie if she considers section 4.1 a in the AC charter defunct and recommends amending the AC Charter and removing this section, so the AC committee do not need to vote on it. Lisa-Marie responded that the AC Charter can be updated via a resolution and can be worked through the commission voting channels. She recommended to have a subcommittee with a couple of members to look through the charter and provide recommendations to the larger group and vote on whether or not to accept those to forward to the commission staff. Committee members Keller and Belleau will be the subcommittee and will report back in the next AC meeting. Lisa-Marie also added that if the AC committee wants to submit a recommendation to CD, this will have to be submitted a couple of months in advance.

- **Action Item:** Subcommittee members will provide an update at the next AC meeting about their recommendations on updating the AC charter.

## **12. Pending Legislation**

Kim Lewis from CENIC shared that there are currently no bills affecting the CTF program.

## **13. Election of the Chair and Vice Chair**

- Committee member Jarrid Keller was nominated and voted as the AC's new Chairperson.
- Committee member Geoff Belleau was nominated and voted as the AC's new Vice-Chairperson.

## **14. Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

- Nomination letter from PAO.
- Subcommittee to provide update on amending the AC Charter.
- Sector presentation for the September AC meeting - Deaf/Hard of Hearing, and LEC.
- CTF presentation about CTF eligibility for E-Rate annexes.
- TUFFS team presentation of revised surcharge mechanism for PPP funds.

## **Next AC Meeting Dates:**

September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in San Francisco

Tentatively December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in Sacramento

AC meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.