

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

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

September 11,2023

**The meeting was called to order at 9:41 a.m.**

**1. Introductions**

**Committee Members Present:** Jarrid Keller-Sacramento Public Library (Chairperson, Libraries), Geoff Belleau (Co-Chairperson California Department of Education (CDE, Education)), Kenneth Rothschild (Deaf), Max Perrey (Redwood Community Health Coalition (RCHC)), Madison Alcalay-(Public Advocates Office (PAO alternate)) , Joshua Cooper- Public Advocates Office (Public Advocates Office (PAO primary))- Virtually, Sean McLaughlin-Access Humboldt (Community Based Organization (CBO))- Virtually, Caroline Siegel Singh (Community Based Organization (CBO))- Virtually, Saira Pasha-AT&T (LEC)-Virtually, Josh Chisom (California State Library)-Virtually

**CPUC Staff Present:** Joy Alba-Librojo (CTF), Karo Serle (CTF), Connie Wong (CTF), Daniel Lyulkin (CTF), -Virtually, Miriam Sidney (CTF)-Virtually, Lina Khoury (CTF)-Virtually, Joanne Leung (CTF)-Virtually, Lisa-Marie Clark (Legal)-Virtually, Eric Sawyer (Public Advisors Office)-Virtually, Daljinder Singh(High Cost and Surcharge) – Virtually

**Public Participants Present:** Michelle Harken (Education)-Cathy Benham- (Education), Kristina Mattis- (Education), Ali Dias (Education), Kim Lewis (CENIC)-Virtually, Josh Chisom (California State Library)-Virtually

**American Sign Language Interpreters Present:** Yes

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

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

- Joshua Cooper raised the issue on how to engage CTF applicants and CBOs to conduct outreach to communities. CTF staff informed Joshua that the issue will be discussed as agenda item 14.
- Sean Mclaughlin asked for an update on the new contribution mechanism to the USF account. CTF staff informed Sean that the issue will be discussed as agenda item 8.

**3. Review Agenda**

Agenda was approved.

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

Approved June 12, 2023, meeting minutes.

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

- a. Nomination Letters
  - Max Perrey and Caroline Siegel Singh are the confirmed nominees. There are two new members from PAO- Joshua Cooper and Madison Alcalay.
  - CTF staff confirm that they are still looking for an alternative for the real clinics section and an alternative local exchange carrier.
  - Chair Keller said that with filling these positions, it will be good for the committee. This is the most representation that we've had with as many alternates filled.
  
- b. Subcommittee to provide update on amending CTF Charter
  - Chair Keller provided a handout for the sub-committee update on the AC Charter and how to approach modifications. There are three articles listed in the handout.
  - Article Three: Membership: Chair Keller explains the outline of the different names for the different sectors that are part of the AC Charter. Kenneth Rothschild brought up the item of changing the "deaf/hearing impaired" to "Deaf/ Hard of Hearing".
    - **Action Item:** Chair Keller and Geoff Belleau to continue to work on the AC Charter revisions and identify issues.
  - Article Four: Duties and Responsibilities: Chair Keller asked whether the CTF AC should be submitting an annual budget because the Commission had changed their budgeting process? (Public Utilities Code 273(a)). He wanted to clarify and wrap this issue up. Geoff Belleau is thinking whether they are supposed to submit a budget for the advisory committee, which includes outreach and travel costs. They understand that it might not be approved by the CPUC or CTF budget and want to know what the next steps will be. Chair Keller and Sean McLaughlin discussed adding an agenda item after agenda item 14. This new agenda item will discuss with legal representative Lisa- Marie Clark about the topic of travel reimbursements for AC members.
  - Article Five: Meetings and Records: Chair Keller discussed the 5.3 Quorum and teleconferencing. This would require legal opinion. Max Perrey from RCHC suggested that if someone is teleconferencing from elsewhere, they should be post in the agenda and their address should be available. It didn't specify whether someone will be joining remotely. CTF staff responded that they usually ask who is going to be in attendance prior to CTF AC Meetings.
  - Next Steps: Chair Keller wants to bring additional items at the December meeting. Article 3 will continue to have further discussions. He asked CTF staff to provide more information and guidance for the issue to be changed. CTF staff responded that this will be part of the Order Instituting Rulemaking process, and CTF staff is working reviewing the California Teleconnect Fund program rules.

c. Compensation for Alternatives:

- Sean McLaughlin explained it is direct expense and accommodation because there's an overnight stay. He will submit the TEC after the meeting and request a better clarification on per diem and reimbursed expenses. CTF staff informed that the information regarding compensation for the committee members is in the AC Charter.
- There was an update on Friday regarding the commission's discussion on whether the work performed by Community Based Organization can be reimbursed when doing work with community relations outside the committee.

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

a. Public Hospitals and Clinics-Primary and Alternate vacancies

- Chair Keller informed that he is still looking to fill vacancies for primary and alternate membership.

b. Rural Clinics and Telemedicine-Primary and Alternate vacancies

- Chair Keller informed that he is still looking to fill those vacancies.
- Sean McLaughlin would like to find out who is receiving the federal, universal service fund subsidies. There is a list of people benefiting from the federal program.

c. Community-Based Organization-Alternate vacancy

- Chair Keller informed CTF staff that Caroline Siegel-Singh has been nominated as the alternate representative for the CBO sector.

d. Local Exchange Carrier-Alternate vacancy

- Committee member Saira Pasha asked whether the circulated template letter has been sent to her.
- Chair Keller said he will resend the letter.

f. Deaf/Hard of Hearing (HOH)-Alternate vacancy

- Committee member Rothschild confirmed there was no update on the alternative for the Deaf/HOH sector.

**7. Presentation by Kenneth Rothschild**

- Committee member Rothschild presented "The Deaf Perspective in Telecommunications" and the way technology benefited the Deaf/HOH populace. He also went over the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program (DDTP) and how the funding is from a portion of the PPP surcharge on all telephone bills.
- Sean McLaughlin raised the question of whether CTF can help the CBO community to connect with the Deaf/ HOH community and maximize the benefit both programs. Lisa-Marie Clark suggested to have one of the CTF staff

members do a presentation about the program in the DDTP advisory committees.

### **8. Surcharge Presentation: Daljinder Singh**

- Daljinder Singh discussed the surcharge fee collection mechanism from CPUC to support six public purpose programs.
- Sean Mclaughlin informed CTF staff on the definition of voice line. Daljinder Singh explained a voice line has all the VOIP Services. The definition of the voice line will be in the decision that will come out in October.

### **9. California Department of Education School Annex Discussion**

- Cathy Benham explained how entities are classified as eligible under the E-rate Program and presented definitions of school annexes.
- Chair Keller suggested looking at the CTF program having annexes or instructional facilities covered by CTF.

### **10. eCAP Update**

#### a. Applications

- CTF Staff provided status of CTF application received from March 01,2023-September 01, 2023.

#### b. Recertifications

- CTF staff discussed participants need to recertify eligibility through eCAP.
- CTF staff explained CBO recertify every 3 years and all other participant types recertify every 5 years and must meet current programs rules.
- Chair Keller inquired about the undeliverable emails that couldn't be sent to the organization. The CTF Staff responded by suggesting the eCAP developers provide a table that explains why the undelivered notices are being sent back. It appears that the primary reason is that contact information is outdated, and the individuals are longer associated with the organization. Additionally, the eCAP portal displays data for only a limited number of months and after five undelivered notices, the notices status changed to "unopen".
  - **Action Item:** CTF staff will work with eCap developer to develop a report to show the reasons for undeliverable mail.

#### c. eCAP Update

- CTF staff discussed the ongoing bugs and issues in eCAP that affect the functionality of the system.
- CTF staff explained that applicants and participants must keep their contact information current and up to date with the CTF program.

#### d. Program Finances

- CTF discussed the fund status report of CTF local assistance budget vs claim projections and payments as of September 5 ,2023.

- CTF provided a state controller office fund reconciliation report for the fiscal year 22-23.
- Chair Keller would like to see the break down by segment for schools, libraries, and CBOs, for the data point for the claims.
  - **Action Item:** Chair Keller will share an example of the claim data by industry segment in the next meeting.

### **11. Digital Divide Grant Program Update**

- CTF staff discussed updates to Digital Divide Grant Program (DDGP) and the purpose of this program.
- CTF staff highlighted the DDGP program's purpose is to provide funding for CBOs to provide holistic solutions that will bridge the digital divide to low income, rural and urban schools in California.
- Lisa-Marie Clark suggested inviting the CBOs to do a presentation.

### **12. Update on Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE)**

- Lisa-Marie Clark discussed the meeting they have with LACOE, and they haven't responded to the demand letter and need to find out their ultimate goals to be reinstated. Michelle Truong will be the representative.

### **13. Pending Legislation**

- Kim Lewis from CENIC mentioned AB 41 and other legislative updates but has nothing to do with CTF.

### **14. Travel Reimbursement for AC Members**

- Chair Keller had a follow up question regarding reimbursements for alternates and required legal advice. They are actively looking to update the AC Charter.
- Lisa- Marie Clark advised that the alternates do get approval from the executive director if they are actively in the meeting. The commission has initiated a grant program called Equity and Access Grant Program for public participation, which provides reimbursement travel expenses.
- CTF Staff shared that the AC charter specifies that the school sector representatives are eligible and must request reimbursement from their employers.
- Sean McLaughlin needs advice on the expenses reimbursement process Lisa-Marie Clark explains that a Travel Reimbursement Form (TEC) will need to be filled out for travel expenses.
- Chair Keller inquires about the duties and responsibilities for AC members specifically under Public Utilities Code 273a, article 4. This article states that before June 1 of each year, the CTF-AC should submit a proposed budget to the commission's telecommunication division. Chair Keller asks about the specific requirements for this budget submission and its implications for advisory committee. Lisa- Marie Clark said that the budget no longer needs to be submitted annually, and she will provide more details in the next meeting.

- **Action items:** Lisa- Marie Clark will provide clarification on travel reimbursement in the next meeting.
- Geoff Belleau inquired about the need to create a budget for the advisory and Administrative Committee, specifically including a line item for travel reimbursement for its members. Lisa- Marie Clark suggested narrowing it down to more specific regarding costs and expenditures.
  - **Action Items:** Chair Keller send out the recruitment letter to AC staff.
- Chair Keller inquired about modifying Article 5: Meetings and Records in the AC Charter need to include additional language related COVID and post-COVID circumstances. Lisa-Marie Clark explained that the rules have been shifting and its necessary to account for individuals who are at the primary location. The information indeed requires updating. There is also a pending senate bill that will account for the attendees who participate at the primary location or teleconferencing locations.
- The Public Advocate Office (PAO) brought up an agenda item regarding how to engage CTF applicants and communities represented by them. Joshua Cooper from PAO suggested exploring the potential for engaging applicants and CBO through outreach efforts to unserved and underserved communities. CTF Staff responded that the team will be hosting a one- hour webinar on September 25, 2023, and it is free to register.

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

- The Local Exchange Carrier presentation.
- Public Advocates presentation.
- Lisa Marie-Clark needs to clarify AC roles in the budget process.
- Chair Keller provides an example of the claim data by industry segment.
- Chair Keller needs to send recruitment letter to AC staffs.
- Chair Keller and Geoff will work with their legal counsel on the AC Charter revisions and identify issues.
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#### **Next AC Meeting Dates:**

December 4, 2023, in Sacramento Public Library

AC meeting adjourned at 1:18 p.m.