



**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD
BROADBAND TASK FORCE AGENDA**
County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois
Monday, March 10, 2025 - 6:30 p.m.

Shields-Carter Meeting Room
Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana

Committee Members:

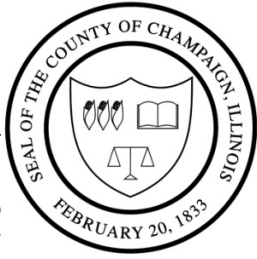
Stephanie Burnett	M.C. Neal
Jon Cagle	Mike Smeltzer
Samantha Carter – Vice-Chair	Eric Thorsland
Bailey Conrady - Chair	Jeff Wilson
Lorraine Cowart	

Agenda Items

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Roll Call**
- III. Approval of Agenda/Addendum**
- IV. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. December 17, 2024
- V. Public Participation**
- VI. Communications**
- VII. New Business**
 - A. Resolution Waiving Broadband Easement Filing Fees for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)-Funded Projects in Partnership with the Champaign County Clerk and Recorder
- VIII. Other Business**
 - A. Date of next meeting
- IX. Chair's Report**
- X. Adjournment**

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CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD
BROADBAND TASK FORCE AGENDA
County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois
Tuesday, December 17, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.
Shields-Carter Meeting Room
Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana

10 **MINUTES – Subject to Approval**

11 Members Present: Stephanie Burnett, Bailey Conrady, M.C. Neal, Mike Smeltzer, Eric Thorsland, and Jeff
12 Wilson

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14 Members Absent: Samantha Carter and Lorraine Cowart

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16 Others Present: Tim Arbeiter (Finley Engineering), Michelle Jett (Director of Administration), Kait Kuzio
17 (Grant Coordinator), and Megan Robison (Recording Secretary)

18 **Agenda Items**

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I. Call to Order

Chair Conrady called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

III. Approval of Agenda/Addendum

MOTION by Mr. Thorsland to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Wilson. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. August 5, 2024

Chair Conrady brought attention to the misspelling of her name on line 208 of the minutes.

MOTION by Mr. Smeltzer approve the minutes of August 5, 2024 as amended; seconded by Mr. Neal. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

V. Public Participation

None

VI. Communications

Chair Conrady mentioned her recent conversations with the Broadband Lab and the Office of Broadband regarding easements.

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VII. New Business

A. Volo Proposal

1. Option 1 – Build an additional 180 miles of underground distribution fiber optic infrastructure
2. Option 2 – Build an additional 36 miles of underground fiber optic backbone and 80 miles of underground distribution fiber optic infrastructure

Peter Folk, CEO of Volo Broadband, gave a presentation showing the work that has already been completed, the next phase of work to be completed and the options available to be completed with the additional funding. He listed the pros and cons of each option.

Task Force members continued to discuss the options. Mr. Neal stated he is leaning towards option one because it would utilize more of the funding and connects more customers. Mr. Thorsland was leaning towards option two because that would build a good backbone, and they could come back later to build smaller pieces off of that backbone. Mr. Smeltzer asked about the funding differences and Mr. Folk explained that they are using all of the ARPA funds in both options.

Mr. Folk also explained that his company would not be able to build the backbone without grant or ARPA funding, but they would be able to expand off of that backbone with smaller projects in the future. Mr. Wilson expressed his preference for option two because of the future options it would create for broadband access.

B. Choose option 1 or 2 for recommendation to the County Board

Chair Conrady polled the Task Force members, asking them to state which option they would choose. The poll showed 5 members chose option two and 1 member chose option one. They will forward option two to the County Board for approval.

VIII. Other Business

A. Date of next meeting

To be determined when needed.

IX. Chair’s Report

Chair Conrady will be on maternity leave, and unavailable, beginning in May.

X. Adjournment

Chair Conrady adjourned the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-XXX

A RESOLUTION WAIVING BROADBAND EASEMENT FILING FEES FOR AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)-FUNDED PROJECTS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CHAMPAIGN COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER

WHEREAS, Champaign County is committed to expanding broadband access to underserved and unserved areas to promote economic development, education, and public safety; and

WHEREAS, Champaign County has allocated funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to support broadband infrastructure projects that will enhance connectivity for residents and businesses; and

WHEREAS, easement filing fees totaling \$51 per parcel associated with broadband infrastructure projects can create an additional financial burden, and waiving them ensures more ARPA funds go directly toward expanding internet access; and

WHEREAS, waiving such fees, in partnership with the County Clerk and Recorder, for ARPA-funded broadband projects will facilitate efficient and cost-effective implementation of these essential infrastructure improvements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Champaign County Board, in partnership with the Champaign County Clerk and Recorder, that all county-imposed broadband easement filing fees filed in 2025 are hereby waived for parcels directly related to the broadband infrastructure projects funded wholly or in part by ARPA.

PRESENTED, ADOPTED, APPROVED, AND RECORDED this 20th of March A.D., 2025.

Jennifer Locke, Chair
Champaign County Board

Recorded
& Attest: _____
Aaron Ammons, County Clerk
and ex-officio Clerk of the
Champaign County Board
Date: _____

Approved: _____
Steve Summers, County Executive
Date: _____