

**FEBRUARY 23, 2022 VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE
COMMUNICATIONS EQUITY AND DIVERSITY COUNCIL
10:00 am – 3:30 pm**

**Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street, NE
Washington, DC**

MEETING MINUTES

In Attendance:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

JESSICA ROSENWORCEL, Chairwoman

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

HEATHER GATE, Committee Chair

NICOL TURNER LEE, PH.D., Committee Vice Chair

SUSAN AU ALLEN, Committee Vice Chair

CLAYTON BANKS, Silicon Harlem

MATTHEW BAUER, Wireless Research Center

CAROLINE BEASLEY, CEO, Beasley Media Group, LLC

ROBERT BRANSON, Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council

ROBERT BROOKS, WHUR-FM, Howard University

JOI CHANEY, National Urban League

MICHELE COBER, Verizon

GRAHAM "SKIP" DILLARD, WQHT-FM/WBLS-FM New York City, MediaCo Inc.

SARAH KATE ELLIS, GLAAD

ANNA M. GOMEZ, Representing Hispanic National Bar Association

DOMINIQUE HARRISON, PH.D., Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

DAVID HONIG, JulGlo Productions, LLC

JILL HOUGHTON, Disability:IN

CHRIS JAMES, President and CEO, National Center for American Indian Enterprise
Development

BRODERICK JOHNSON, Comcast Corporation

RONALD JOHNSON, PH.D., Wireless Infrastructure Association

SHERMAN KIZART, Kizart Media Partners

NICOLE LAZARRE, Charter Communications

ROSA MENDOZA, ALLvanza

AAMA NAHUJA, A Wonder Media Company

LOUIS PERAERTZ, Wireless Internet Service Provider Association

STEVEN C. ROBERTS, The Roberts Companies

VICKIE ROBINSON, Microsoft

MELODY SPANN-COOPER, Midway Broadcasting Corporation
CHARLYN STANBERRY, National Association of Broadcasters
JOYCELYN TATE, Black Women's Roundtable, National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
ANTONIO TIJERINO, Hispanic Heritage Foundation
JAMES WINSTON, National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters
CHRISTOPHER WOOD, LGBT Technology Partnership & Institute
JOHN C. YANG, Asian Americans Advancing Justice
DR. CHRISTOPHER ALI, Associate Professor, Department of Media Studies, University of Virginia
JENNY ALSAYEGH, Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives & Partnerships, US Telecom
FAITH BAUTISTA, CEO, National Diversity Coalition
DR. ROCKELL BROWN BURTON, Dean, School of Communications and Associate Professor, Texas Southern University
BRIGITTE DANIEL-CORBIN, CEO, Wilco Electronics Systems, Inc.
MONICA DESAI, Global Head, Connectivity and Access Policy, Facebook, Representing INCOMPAS
LEO FITZPATRICK, Policy Counsel, Free Press
LILI GANGAS, Chief Technology Community Officer, Kapur Center
DR. JON GANT, Dean, School of Library and Information Sciences, North Carolina Central University
ANISA GREEN, Director, Federal Regulatory, AT&T
CHARLES HARRELL II, President and CEO, The IT Architect Corporation
VIRGINIA HARRIS, Immediate Past National President, National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc.
JENNIFER JACKSON, Executive Vice President, Stellar TV and Central City Productions
DR. GOOYONG KIM, Assistant Professor of Communications Arts, Cheney University of Pennsylvania
DR. DIANE LYNCH, President, Stephens College
OTTO PADRON, President and CEO, Meruelo Media
RANDI PARKER, Senior Director of Partnership Engagement, Creating IT Futures
BRIAN THORN, Senior Researcher, Communications Workers of America
DR. FALLON WILSON, Co-Founder, Nashville Digital Inclusions and Access Taskforce

COMMISSION STAFF:

JAMILA BESS JOHNSON, Designated Federal Officer
RASHANN DUVALL, Deputy Designated Federal Officer
KEYLA HERNANDEZ-ULLOA, Deputy Designated Federal Officer
STEVE BALDERSON
JEFFREY RIORDAN

Link to Meeting Transcript: <https://www.fcc.gov/sites/default/files/cedc-02232022-transcript.pdf>

Welcome and Opening of Meeting: Holly Saurer, Chief, Media Bureau, welcomed CEDC members and the public to the second meeting under the CEDC's new charter, and thanked the CEDC leadership for their efforts. She introduced Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel to make her opening remarks. The Chairwoman emphasized the opportunity to build on efforts started during the pandemic to expand access and affordability to broadband service throughout the nation, and to prevent digital discrimination through implementation of the recently passed Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. She explained that the CEDC's mission and membership had been expanded to help the FCC achieve its mandate under the new law to address a wider range of technologies with regards to achieving digital equity through rulemakings, model policies that can be used to prevent digital discrimination, and related activities. Jamila Bess Johnson, Designated Federal Officer of the CEDC, Media Bureau, provided opening remarks, and introduced Rashann Duvall, CEDC Co-Deputy Designated Federal Officer, Wireline Competition Bureau, and Keyla Hernandez-Ulloa, CEDC Co-Deputy Designated Federal Officer, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, for introductory comments.

CEDC Chair and Vice Chairs' Opening Remarks. Heather Gate, CEDC Chair, indicated that the CEDC aspires to provide recommendations to the FCC that ensure equitable deployment of broadband infrastructure so that all can have access at speeds required to meet their needs, particularly in communities that have historically been underserved or adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. She explained that the various CEDC working groups will present their workplans based on their respective charters to develop model policies and best practices to ensure that providers do not engage in digital discrimination and address other FCC priorities, such as enacting the Affordable Connectivity Program outlined in the Infrastructure Bill and in the FCC Chairwoman's remarks. She thanked the Vice Chairs and CEDC members for their hard work.

CEDC Vice Chair Dr. Nicol Turner Lee thanked the FCC Chairwoman, CEDC Chair Gates, Vice Chair Allen, the CEDC workgroup leaders and other members for their support. She outlined the importance of closing the digital divide as well as fostering ownership of emerging digital assets, commitment to supplier and workforce diversity, and advancing social justice for the underserved populations represented on the CEDC as unprecedented investments and decisions are being made pursuant to the Infrastructure Act. Vice Chair Susan Au Allen emphasized the need to ensure that all stakeholders have a voice in addressing generational disparities to access, employment, and economic growth as new investments in broadband access and affordability are made through state and local planning efforts.

Roll Call of CEDC Members/Call to Order. A quorum was present at the meeting.

Discussion of and Vote on Innovation and Access Working Group Report. Robert Brooks, Chair of the Innovation and Access Working Group summarized the group's objectives and provided an overview of the three workstreams this work group would like approval for in its workplan for the next two years.

Workstream 1. Recommendations to Ensure Inclusive Practices for Identifying and Selecting Participating Entrepreneurs in Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Contracting and Grant Practices, Lead, Anna Gomez: Will provide recommendations to ensure inclusive practices for identifying and selecting participating entrepreneurs in IIJA contracting and grant processes to prevent digital discrimination and promote access to opportunities for small and diverse businesses.

Workstream 2. Access to Capital, Lead, C. Howie Hodges, II: Will recommend initiatives to accelerate entry and participation of small, minority, and women-owned businesses (SMW) in existing and emerging technology markets.

Workstream 3. Digital Equity/Closing the Digital Skills Gap, Lead, Matthew Bauer: Will provide recommendations for government investment in and financial support for digital skills training to encourage equitable access for small businesses, entrepreneurs, and all individuals and communities to receive technological skills training.

Workplan Vote: The CEDC unanimously voted to approve and adopt this working group’s work plan.

Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working Group Report. Dominique Harrison, Ph.D., Chair of the Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working Group presented information from the IJA as a backdrop to the role of their group and its three workstreams in ensuring robust broadband access to all communities.

Workstream 1. Model Policies and Best Practices to Prevent Digital Discrimination, Co-Leads Joi Chaney and Dr. Jon Gant: Will help the CEDC provide recommendations to the FCC on model policies and best practices that can be adopted by states and localities to prevent digital discrimination by July 2022.

Workstream 2. Listening Session on Lessons Learned: Connecting Opportunity Communities to Broadband During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Co-Leads Dr. Christopher Ali and Chris James: Will solicit information from key stakeholders across ISPs, federal agencies with emergency broadband funding, state agencies and community organizations to understand and identify lessons learned from programs that provided broadband connectivity to opportunity communities during the pandemic. The term “opportunity communities” was defined as those that are traditionally underserved or face socio-economic barriers to mobility and equity.

Workstream 3. Public Convening: Connecting Opportunity Communities to Broadband During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Co-Leads Clayton Banks, Sarah Kate-Ellis, and Vickie Robinson: Will focus on holding a public convening of key stakeholders including internet service providers, key federal and state agencies and community organizations concerning programs that provided critical broadband connectivity to opportunity communities during the pandemic.

Workplan Vote: The CEDC unanimously voted to approve and adopt this working group’s work plan.

Diversity and Equity Working Group Report. Christopher Wood, Chair of the Diversity and Equity Working Group described how this working group will study underrepresentation, underemployment, and challenges to the advancement of diverse employees in media, communications, and technology sectors that serve as barriers to equal opportunity. The group will also identify best practices to encourage participation, upskilling, development, promotion, and advancement opportunities for historically underrepresented groups in these sectors including people of color, women, persons with disabilities, veterans, tribal citizens, and LGBTQ+.

Workstream 1. Defining Digital Discrimination Consistent with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Co-Leads Randi Parker, Jill Houghton, and Joon Bang: Will help the CEDC to define digital discrimination from the broad and complex perspectives that impact marginalized communities across the country based on research, data collection, and collaboration with other experts. Will develop a definition of digital discrimination and provide recommendations to the CEDC for approval by July 2022.

Workstream 2. Identify Model Digital and Tech Upskilling Resources to Increase Employment in Diverse Communities, Co-Leads Lili Gangas and Antonio Tijerino: Define and provide solutions for marginalized communities to gain access to the “future of work” training, job placement, and resources or funding for minority media and tech ownership. Will conduct in-depth research and interviews to understand barriers, identify needed tech skills, and solicit best practices and models for digital and tech upskilling.

Workstream 3. Amplify the Role of Anchor Institutions in Creating Digital Equity in the Labor Force, Co-Leads Dr. Fallon Wilson, Amma Nahuja: Will interrogate and expand the definition of anchor institutions to include community-based and cultural organizations that are not traditionally engaged in the regulatory process or used to support digital inclusion and digital upskilling.

Workstream 4. Minority Media, Communications and Tech Ownership and Development, Co-Leads Ellen Schned, Graham “Skip” Dillard, and Melody Spann-Cooper: Will analyze how the FCC can better

support minority ownership in media, communications, and technology while also exploring how the FCC can support content creators or technology innovators.

Workplan Vote: The CEDC unanimously voted to approve and adopt this working group's work plan.

Facilitated CEDC Discussion Related to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

Heather Gate, Chair, CEDC
Nicol Turner Lee, Ph.D., Vice Chair
Susan Au Allen, Vice Chair

CEDC leadership asked a series of questions to the Council and working group members to share ideas and provide an opportunity for the members to express their individual views as well as the views of the organizations they represent. The goal of this session was to have a more robust discussion of the IIJA, talk about the terms that are either in the infrastructure bill and how they are defined there or were not included in the bill but may be relevant to the work of the CEDC. Also discussed specific sections of the IIJA and how to weave the requirements and nuances together to meet CEDC charter and workplan requirements. Reviewed IIJA Section 60506 (c) language requiring the FCC to develop model state and local policies that can be adopted by state and local governments to prevent ISPs from engaging in digital discrimination. It was recommended that the CEDC workgroups review the Digital Equity Act and the definitions within that framework in addition to the IIJA. This discussion was part of the record though the ground rules and CEDC Chairs emphasized that the views expressed were not necessarily the views of the CEDC and there was no need for consensus on opinions or information that was shared during this discussion.

Questions/Comments from the Public. There were no questions or comments from the public.

Adjournment. Following closing comments from CEDC Chair Gate, CEDC Vice Chair Dr. Nicol Turner Lee, CEDC Vice Chair Susan Au Allen, and FCC CEDC staff, the meeting was adjourned by CEDC Chair Gate.

CERTIFICATION OF MINUTES

I have reviewed the above minutes dated February 23, 2022, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, they are accurate and complete.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Gate, Executive Vice President, Digital Inclusion
Connected Nation
Chair, Communications Equity and Diversity Council
Federal Communications Commission