

WNYDEC Steering Committee Meeting

September 11, 2025

Attendance

Present:

- Don Matteson: WNYDEC/Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation
- Al Meyers: Connected Communities in Action
- Bob Spino: Erie 2 BOCES

Absent:

- Samuel Mattle: Center for Self Advocacy
- Simone Ragland: Bits & Bytes STEM Foundation

Excused

- Christine Carr-Barmasse, Mission: Ignite
- Steve Heist, OneBridge Benefits

Financial Update

Total Grant Status: The Coalition has spent \$110,595 against a total grant of \$195,828, leaving a remaining balance of approximately \$85,233.

- **Digital Equity Technical Assistance Grant:** \$26,153 has been spent so far, with approximately \$74,000 remaining to spend against this grant.
- **August Expenditures:** \$1,000 was spent on community member stipends, and a \$19,953 payment to Clementine Gold cleared (this payment was cut in late July but didn't appear in July financials).
- **Current Status:** All invoiced items are current and up to date.

Digital Literacy Survey Project

- **Project Status:** The project is running 3-4 weeks behind schedule, which has Don expressing concern about the timeline.
- **Kickoff Meeting:** A project kickoff meeting was held last month with Clementine Gold Group.
- **Survey Development Issues:** Clementine Gold submitted a draft survey approximately two weeks ago that was more of a general digital inclusion survey rather than focusing on digital literacy.

- **Feedback Process:** Don shared extensive comments and developed an alternative draft of the survey and submitted feedback by the September 4th deadline, but has not received a response as of the meeting date.
- **Payment Structure:**
 - Initial retainer of \$19,953 has been paid (Phase 1: design and development)
 - Second payment of \$19,953 will be triggered upon completion of Phase 2 (fielding the survey and receiving 1,000-1,200 completed surveys)
 - Final payment of \$19,953 will come after final deliverable approval by the Coalition

ConnectALL Office Check-in

- **Meeting Participants:** Don, Steve, and Christine met with Nazeer Jeffries from the ConnectALL Office for a routine check-in.
- **Documentation Requirements:** The meeting focused on understanding documentation requirements and timing for prompt reimbursement.
- **Pre-approval Process:** When 80% of the grant is spent, a preliminary document must be submitted for pre-approval by the ConnectALL Vice President.
- **Reimbursement Timeline:** With pre-approval, final reimbursement should occur within 60 days of final submission.
- **Contract Extension:** Nazeer reiterated openness to extending the contract into early 2026 if needed to complete all deliverables.

Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Training Update

- **Individual Certifications:** Don needs to check progress on certifications for Katie Pieri, Heidi Ziemer, Jackie Hovey, and Christine Carr-Barmasse. Heidi and Jackie are making good progress, while Katie and Christine had not yet started as of the July 28 convening.
- **Coalition-Wide Training:** RBA 101 training for the full coalition is scheduled for October 3rd and October 10th, both virtual sessions from 9am to noon.
- **Training Sequence:** The train-the-trainers program cannot proceed until individual certifications are complete, and performance measures development will follow the completion of RBA 101.
- **Newsletter Announcement:** Information about the training sessions will be included in tomorrow's newsletter.

Digital Inclusion Week Planning

- **Timeline:** Digital Inclusion Week is scheduled for October 6-10, 2025, approximately three and a half weeks away.
- **Current Planning Status:** No specific events are currently planned for this year's Digital Inclusion Week.
- **Planned Activities:**
 - Don will focus on creating social media collateral for dissemination
 - Materials will include county-specific and regional information about digital inclusion
 - Content may be tailored to legislative districts to engage elected officials, time-permitting.
- **Legislative Outreach Idea:** Coordinate with NYS Digital Equity Network members statewide to contact legislators and encourage them to promote the Affordable Broadband Act to constituents. This has not gained traction with NYSDEN, so is unlikely to happen.
- **Newsletter Opportunity:** Al Meyers offered to include Digital Inclusion Week information in CCA's quarterly newsletter, with submissions due around September 15th.
- **Content Requirements:** Al requested a short piece (75-100 words) with "did you know" facts and a link to Affordable Broadband Act information, along with the Coalition logo.
- **Distribution Strategy:** Don will create content that can be shared across multiple organizations' newsletters and communication channels.