WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §31G-1-4

§31G-1-4. Powers and duties of the council generally.

(a) The council shall:

(1) Explore any and all ways to expand access to broadband services, including, but not limited to, middle mile, last mile and wireless applications;

(2) Gather data regarding the various speeds provided to consumers in comparison to what is advertised. The council may request the assistance of the Legislative Auditor in gathering this data;

(3) Explore the potential for increased use of broadband service for the purposes of education, career readiness, workforce preparation and alternative career training;

(4) Explore ways for encouraging state and municipal agencies to expand the development and use of broadband services for the purpose of better serving the public, including audio and video streaming, voice-over Internet protocol, teleconferencing and wireless networking;

(5) Cooperate and assist in the expansion of electronic instruction and distance education services; and

(6) Explore ways to achieve digital equality of opportunity throughout the state, which is a condition where all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy and economy.

(b) In addition to the powers set forth elsewhere in this article, the council is hereby granted the authority to:

(1) Promote awareness of public facilities that have community broadband access that can be used for distance education and workforce development;

(2) Advise on deployment of e-government portals such that all public bodies and political subdivisions have homepages, encourage one-stop government access and that all public entities stream audio and video of all public meetings;

(3) Make and execute contracts, commitments and other agreements necessary or convenient for the exercise of its powers including, but not limited to, the hiring of consultants to perform the duties of the council;

(4) Acquire by gift or purchase, hold, or dispose of real property and personal property in the exercise of its powers and performance of its duties as set forth in this article; and

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(5) Receive and dispense funds appropriated for its use by the Legislature to carry out its statutory duties.

(c) The council shall advise and make recommendations to the Office of Broadband, and shall coordinate with the office on bringing broadband service to unserved and underserved areas, as well as to propose statutory changes that may enhance and expand broadband in the state.

(d) The council shall report to the Secretary of Economic Development on or before December 1 of each year. The report shall include the action that was taken by the council during the previous year in carrying out the provisions of this article. The council shall also make any other reports as may be required by the Legislature or the Governor.

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