

Statewide Telecommunications Advancement

9-24-03

September 24, 2003

WHEREAS, a lack of an adequate infrastructure for telecommunications and a state-of-the-art telecommunications system will impede Vermont's capacity for economic growth and creation of jobs for Vermonters; and

WHEREAS, Vermont's ability to create a modern, affordable and universally accessible telecommunications network is crucial to meeting the needs of the technology business sector and bolstering the state's economic future; and

WHEREAS, Vermont's broadband and wireless infrastructure deployment, technology-based business incentives and state government responsiveness must be improved to become and stay competitive over the long-term; and

WHEREAS, a focus on the creation of new technology enterprises in Vermont will reap results for Vermont because technology-oriented businesses provide good jobs with high wages; and

WHEREAS, businesses are placing a larger emphasis on the availability and affordability of broadband access when making location or job creation decisions; and

WHEREAS, the use of technology in state government should be a priority and should facilitate transactions for individuals and businesses;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, James H. Douglas, by virtue of the power vested in me as Governor of the State of Vermont, do hereby direct that the Agency of Commerce and Community Development as the Agency responsible for providing statewide leadership to address expansion of Vermont infrastructure for wired and wireless voice and broadband communications, including working with public agencies and private sector groups to develop and coordinate policies and initiatives related to expansion of Vermont's telecommunications infrastructure. All State departments shall, to the extent possible, actively collaborate with, and affirmatively assist, the Agency in the effort to expand telecommunications infrastructure in Vermont, and shall, in all instances, coordinate and consult with the Agency before engaging in activities and initiatives related to telecommunications development in Vermont.

1. In order to meet its responsibility, the Agency will perform the following functions:

(a) Lead the effort to create the vision for Vermont's telecommunications infrastructure, and establish goals and objectives to achieve the vision, in coordination with the Department of Public Service's Telecommunications Plan, and in conjunction with key stakeholders; and

(b) Develop a work plan with activities, milestones and identification of the entity or individual responsible for achieving the goals and objectives and provide strategic planning and annual review of such plan to ensure accountability, including goal setting and ongoing measurement and reporting of milestones and accomplishments. The Agency shall encourage the involvement of local communities and regions of the State as appropriate and necessary; and

(c) Coordinate activities and initiatives among state agencies and departments, non-government groups, regional partners and other key stakeholders to ensure ongoing collaboration of efforts around telecommunications development throughout Vermont; and

(d) Research and benchmark best practices in other states and communities and be the central repository of knowledge on telecommunications-related activities and projects for both the demand and supply sides in Vermont; and

(e) Identify activities requiring funding to advance the State's telecommunications objectives, and work to secure available private, state, and federal funding; and

(f) Recommend legislative and administrative policies that will support the development of quality telecommunications infrastructure and services in Vermont, and advise the Governor and cabinet members on matters of telecommunications policy; and

(g) Serve as a primary point of information and guidance for the Administration and the Department of Information and Innovation on telecommunications policy; and

(h) Work with State communications and public relations resources to develop marketing and outreach materials in order to communicate the need for, and the potential of, a competitive telecommunications infrastructure in Vermont and the State's telecommunications needs, resources, initiatives and accomplishments.

2. To assist the Agency in meeting its responsibility under this Order, there is hereby created the Telecommunications Advisory Council. The Council shall consist of five members appointed by the Governor from the private sector. The Governor shall appoint the Chair. Members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor for terms of three years, except that the Council shall be initially appointed as follows: two members shall be appointed for one year, two members for two years, and one member for three years. Administrative support will be provided by the Agency. Members may receive reimbursement of expenses in attending Council meetings pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1010 to the extent funds are available. The Council shall have the following responsibilities:

(a) Recommend policies to the Agency with respect to telecommunications infrastructure development;

(b) Provide direction and advice to the Agency as to appropriate strategies to implement the policies recommended;

(c) Seek information from appropriate sources, conduct studies, and develop reports for the Agency on relevant telecommunications issues;

3. Notwithstanding the above, this Executive Order does not alter the status of the Agency of Administration as the exclusive agent for the state of Vermont to contract for the use of state-owned buildings, structures, and land for wireless, two-way interactive telecommunications facilities, as may be required by 30 V.S.A. § 227b or any other relevant provision of law. The Agency of Administration will work cooperatively with the Agency to ensure that the Agency of Administration's exercise of any such separate contract authority is consistent with the Agency's efforts described above.

This Executive Order shall take effect upon signing, and shall replace and supersede Executive Order #12-94, dated October 20, 1994.

This Executive Order sunsets on February 1, 2009.

Witness my name hereunto subscribed and the Great Seal of the State of Vermont hereunto affixed at Montpelier this 24th day of September, 2003.

James H. Douglas, Governor

By the Governor:

Neale F. Lunderville, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs

Executive Order No. 15-03