



**Community Advisory Panel  
Meeting Minutes for December 4, 2025**

**Members attending the meeting:**

Cheryl Ball  
Tiki Dixon  
Misty Goodwin  
Laura Johns  
Amy Midis  
Amy Nolan  
Dr. John Nolt  
Dr. Stephen Smith  
Keira Wyatt

**Others in attendance:**

Dawn Ford, Facilitator

**KUB Staff:**

Gabe Bolas  
Jamie Davis  
Erin Gill  
Tiffany Martin  
Mark Walker

**KUB Commissioners:**

Kathy Hamilton

**New Business**

The Community Advisory Panel met at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 4, 2025, at KUB's Hoskins Operations Center (4505 Middlebrook Pike).

Dawn Ford called the meeting to order.

Ms. Ford asked if there were any changes to the October meeting minutes. There were no changes, and the panel approved the minutes.

Ms. Ford then recognized the three members of the panel with expiring terms: Dr. Stephen Smith, Amy Midis, and Tiki Dixon. She introduced KUB Commissioner Kathy Hamilton and Gabe Bolas,

KUB President & CEO, and both shared remarks thanking the panel for their service and input on important topics.

Dr. Smith said that the panel was constructive and encouraged KUB to continue to be a good community partner. He shared his concerns about KUB's natural gas services and promotions.

Ms. Ford announced the new members joining the panel: Melissa Hinten, Nancy Friedrich, and Vincent Jones, Jr. She also announced Claudia Mata and Janet Testerman extended their service for three years. New members will begin attending CAP meetings starting in March.

Ms. Ford introduced the meeting's topic as KUB Fiber. She recognized Jamie Davis, KUB Senior Vice President of Fiber & Chief Technology Officer, to give an update on the fiber buildout, customer response, and to seek input from the panel.

Mr. Davis began with an update on fiber construction for the fiscal year. Keira Wyatt asked how the fiber system is billed and if it is impacted by a cutoff of utility services. Mr. Davis said fiber is a separate bill and requires payment in advance of services being provided.

Mr. Davis continued by sharing customer growth through the first quarter of the fiscal year. Dr. Smith asked how the customer goals were determined. Mr. Davis said it is a combination of workforce capacity and utilizing data provided by other LPCs of their early fiber rollout. Laura Johns asked if KUB was surprised by customer growth in certain areas. Mr. Davis shared an example of service providers giving two-year introductory rates to customers in areas where KUB was about to build infrastructure. Once the introductory rates ended, more customers moved to KUB Fiber.

Mr. Dixon asked if KUB has looked at buying out other internet service providers. Mr. Davis said the providers in the Knoxville area would be unlikely to sell. The companies that usually sell are failing smaller ventures or looking to leave the business, which KUB could consider if the company is in KUB's service area and has compatible infrastructure.

Mr. Davis continued the presentation with an overview of the buildout budget and service pricing compared to the other providers. Mr. Dixon asked if KUB believes the price is the major factor people switch to KUB Fiber. Mr. Davis said it contributes but that a disruptor with a customer's current provider, like a price increase or other poor experience, and word-of-mouth in the community pushes customers to switch. Commissioner Hamilton added that KUB's local customer service representatives and call center differentiate KUB Fiber from competitors. Dr. Smith shared his appreciation of KUB Fiber's representatives and how they suggested setting up his own network at a lower cost. Mr. Dixon added that appointment windows requiring a customer to be available for extended periods would be another factor in switching providers. Mr. Davis shared that KUB developed key brand promises, one of which includes providing appointments that work with the customer's schedule and being respectful of their time.

Mr. Davis continued his presentation discussing local job creation from KUB Fiber. Ms. Wyatt asked for the number of minority employees currently employed by the Fiber Division. Mr. Davis said he did not have the exact number, but the information would be provided to the panel as a follow up. Ms. Wyatt said her organization receives the job listings to share with the community but wanted to make sure it was getting to potential applicants with the listed qualifications or that KUB can assist applicants who need certain skill sets. Mr. Davis said that these positions include on-the-job training and shared an example of high school students who joined KUB from an apprentice program. Tiffany Martin, KUB Senior Vice President & Chief Customer & Talent Officer, shared examples of programs, such as TeenWork and school partnerships, that can be a pipeline for people joining KUB. Ms. Johns said Dow sees more diverse applicants through their apprenticeship program as it allows the opportunity to receive needed training. Ms. Wyatt suggested intentional opportunities, such as job fairs, for reaching applicants in the community. Ms. Martin said KUB's career fair transitioned to a community education fair following feedback that community members were looking for information on KUB's products and services. She added that KUB has been intentional in holding these fairs in different parts of KUB's service area to reach different communities. Ms. Martin said that KUB would prefer to partner with a group that is already holding a fair as it generally has a larger attendance of people looking for a job. Mr. Dixon asked if the goal is to have all internal positions in the division or will a percentage be filled by contractors. Mr. Davis said he believes the positions would predominantly be internal following the buildout of the system, but there could be times when a contractor is used based on needs.

Mr. Davis continued by giving an update on ConnectED. Ms. Johns asked what the income guidelines are for the benefit. Ms. Martin shared that the guidelines are 200% of the federal poverty limit or 80% of area median income, which aligns with SNAP benefits and some other benefit programs.

Mr. Davis continued by discussing how fiber is leveraged with smart switches on KUB's electric system. Dr. Smith asked about the impact the smart switch program has had on dispatching trucks. Mr. Davis said that it's unlikely to be a large reduction and gave an example of needing to repair infrastructure during an outage. He added that mileage has likely been reduced for patrolling lines. Dr. Smith said that EPB gave a presentation when they were first rolling out their fiber program and said there were significant savings from reduced truck use. He suggested that KUB try to determine this metric. Mr. Davis said since this was at the beginning of EPB's fiber rollout, the reduction was likely due to new technology for meter reading. Dr. Smith asked if KUB uses fiber for meter reading. Mr. Davis said KUB is not using fiber for this yet. The current generation of meter reading KUB utilizes is wireless. Mr. Davis could see fiber being used for future meter applications.

Mr. Davis continued by discussing fiber and grid modernization. Dr. Smith asked if KUB was familiar with WeaveGrid and if they had discussions about using their technology. Erin Gill, KUB Vice President of Communications & External Relations, confirmed that KUB is familiar with the company. Dr. Smith shared details on WeaveGrid allowing utilities and their customers with electric vehicles to utilize the vehicle's battery in real time during peak demands. He encouraged KUB to investigate the program.

Mr. Davis continued by discussing KUB Fiber in rural areas and new advertisements for the service. He then opened the floor for discussion. Dr. John Nolt asked about the reliability of fiber and shared his outage experience. Mr. Davis shared that the goal is for KUB Fiber to be 99.999% available, but there is still work to be done to achieve this goal. He added that while there can be a multitude of factors that impact outages, he is pleased that these errors diminish over time as KUB learns more and works to fix these issues. Dr. Nolt asked if there is long-term evidence that fiber will be better over time or will degenerate. Mr. Davis shared that the fiber's glass material has a lifespan of more than 50 years, but the fiber and other components will need to be replaced over time through maintenance programs. He added that he has no concerns about the system's ultimate longevity.

Ms. Johns shared her experience with an outage and the timeliness for the repair. She asked if KUB does any monitoring to see if a customer is experiencing an issue. Mr. Davis said there are programs that were put in place in the last year to ensure performance. The program is being refined and constantly improving.

Ms. Wyatt asked what the benefits are of bundling internet, phone, and TV services. Mr. Davis said that KUB does not bundle for a discount. The goal is to attract internet customers and offer TV and phone services if they would like them. He added that KUB TV is priced consistently with large cable providers, but KUB offers tools to help customers decide if going with a streaming provider is better for their needs.

Ms. Midis shared her concern that switching to a different provider would affect the signal of her Wi-Fi network. Ms. Johns said she had the same concerns but that the KUB technician who installed her fiber service assisted with making sure her network was still working properly. Mr. Davis said this was good feedback to communicate with customers concerned with switching providers. He added that KUB's technicians are trained to ask and assist customers with setting up their devices. Ms. Midis asked if KUB provides routers. Mr. Davis said customers can bring their own equipment or pay monthly for a router from KUB. Dr. Smith shared his experience with KUB technicians and expressed appreciation for the assistance with setting up his home network. He added that he sometimes performs a network speed test that shows his speeds are slower than expected, and he acknowledged there are multiple factors that can contribute to this. He asked what is involved with moving to a higher speed plan offered by KUB. Mr. Davis said that there is no extra equipment necessary for the 2.5 Gbps service, but there is additional equipment on the main fiber line for the 10 Gbps service. He added that there are multiple factors that can impact service speed, such as connection type, proximity to the network points, and device limitations. Mr. Davis said that KUB uses multiple survey methods to track customer satisfaction for KUB Fiber, which continues to be much higher than other service providers.

Ms. Nolan shared her appreciation for KUB's ConnectED program and how important internet is for community economic development and parents with children in school. Mr. Davis appreciated her comments and acknowledged the City of Knoxville and Knox County for their partnership and contributions to make the program possible.

Mr. Dixon asked about the training program for technicians and the retention rate of these employees. Mr. Davis said KUB has been fortunate to hire some employees that come with experience, but a pipeline for many technicians is through a contractor with training on in-home installations. Others receive training in both the classroom and on the job. Ms. Gill added that TCAT has been a great resource for training students and offering career opportunities. They added that the retention rate is high.

No members of the public addressed the panel during the public forum.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.