

E-Rate Consultation

23 February 2022

Meeting Participants

Courtney Whitaker, Whitney Roundtree, Kevin Ward, Natalie Binder, Parker Bugg, Emily Hart

Meeting Overview

Emily Hart began the meeting, sharing her slides with the group. She very thoroughly covered the topic, answering questions related specifically to the Wilderness Coast Libraries consortium. Whitaker asked if Whitney needed her MLIS; Hart said no because Whitaker will officially file and has her MLIS. Whitaker asked if all libraries had to participate if Wilderness Coast filed; Hart said no but that careful documentation would be needed. Whitaker asked Hart to please go over the directors' concerns that this takes too much time and energy for our already strained and short-staffed libraries; Ward mentioned that we can hire a professional company to handle the majority of the work. Hart has a list of these professionals that she has vetted that she will send in an email once she double-checks that it is up-to-date.

Major Obstacles

We cannot file for E-Rate for the 22/23 funding year. Because 28 days must pass between filing the first form and the second, we will miss the deadline. We could potentially file for a waiver to extend the deadline but it is not a feasible plan for this year because we are not prepared to begin anywhere close to the deadline. The good news is that we can line things up for the 23/24 funding year if we wish to proceed. As Hart mentioned in her email, it is a daunting task and it is not simple, quick, or easy. Please see the slides Hart e-mailed us.

Current Assessment

I would like to continue discussing this with the directors and potentially begin the process for the 23/24 funding year. I have additional questions about hiring a contractor to handle the paperwork for us.