

Broadband Alliance Public Outreach Meeting

Friday, January 8th, 2015, 10 am-11:30 am
Community Foundation of Mendocino County
204 S. Oak St., Ukiah, CA

Call in Number: **641-715-3341** Access code: **108 1131#**

NOTE: There is an acronyms list at the end of the Notes

I. Call to Order

- A.** Introductions: **Susanne Norgard**, ED, Community Foundation, BAMC Executive Committee; **Dan Hamburg**, Supervisor 5th District, BAMC Executive Committee, **Jim Moorehead**, retired BAMC Chair, **Camila Vega**, Scout Program, University of California, **Christian Luiz**, Network Administrator, Northern Circle Indian Housing, **Ruth Valenzuela**, Field Representative, State Congressman Jim Wood, **Jon Kennedy**, ED, Employer's Council of Mendocino County, **Sean Garrity**, Counselor, Ukiah High School, **Jim Persky**, CEO, Pacific Internet, **Ozzie Serrano**, CEO, Computers for Classrooms, **Mike Nicholls**, NBNCBC Management Team Member, Sonoma, **Katie Gibbs**, BAMC Executive Committee, **Maureen "Mo" Mulheren**, Ukiah City Council Member, **Trish Steel**, BAMC Chair, **Diann Simmons**, BAMC Administrative Coordinator

By Phone: **Paula Cohen**, ED, Alliance for Rural Community Health, **Kitty Norris**, Community Member, **Heather Gurewitz**, Field Representative, Congressman Huffman, **Randy MacDonald**, Comptche Fire Dept. Assistant Chief, BAMC Executive Committee, **Jennifer Maples**, Student Information Analyst, Willits Unified School District

- B.** Approval of the agenda
Three items were added.
- C.** Special guest Camila Vega with SCOUT (<http://www.ucscout.org/about>)

II. Special Guest introduction and potential collaboration discussion

Camila represents Scout, from the University of California. ("Scouting for students who are academically inclined to fulfill college prep course work".) They provide on-line courses for high school students to fulfill a-g requirements for admission into CSU and UC campuses. They also work with schools to provide flexible and affordable AP and credit recovery online courses to students. Some of their courses are free for California public schools. They provide the curriculum and teachers oversee student's progress. Camila reaches out to every county in California, especially the underserved and has made several trips to Mendocino County and is seeing excitement about the program at the schools. They offer several scholarships for rural communities and want to make sure schools and students are aware of that. Camila related that she has had students who wanted to take the courses but had no access to technology, so they

couldn't complete the course. Scout wants to give them access to have opportunities.

Mike: How do you interface with "10,000 Degrees" in Marin and Sonoma Counties. Camila is not aware of that program. Mike will put her in touch with it. Camila hasn't yet engaged with Sonoma County but plans to.

Camila: Everything we do is on-line so access is very important. For students who don't fit into the typical school day structure, but who are still enrolled in high school and need several courses to graduate, we can provide some of those courses.

Trish: Are all of the schools in Mendocino County aware of Scout?

Camila: I was here in December to talk with schools to make them aware of the program. Several already knew about the program. But it's still a new thing for this community. I'm here today for outreach.

Courses offered include: college prep includes the general areas such as algebra, sciences etc. and are free to qualifying public high schools. There is a **cost for AP classes but there are also scholarships**. The college prep courses are offered in the summer but the AP courses are too intensive and are only offered during the school year. There is a list of courses on the website: www.ucscout.org

Utilizing Scout **doesn't affect the high schools' attendance reimbursement**, as Scout program students are still enrolled in their high school.

Lab courses: the lab portion must be included for UC approval. Scout provides all of the materials and the students need an hour in a lab with a teacher's support. All of the costs for materials are included in the scholarships.

Does Scout offer any other classes besides a-g and AP? Only one Algebra class.

In Ukiah, Cyber High out of Fresno is being used, with a Ukiah teacher assigned to oversee the students.

How does Scout handle oversight? 1) Scout provides free curriculum for CA public school teachers to use and develop new offerings. 2) Students have the option to work with a Scout teacher on a semester basis. 3) Scout also offers an on-demand option for students to work at their own pace.

Camila is working with Ozzie Serrano of computers for classrooms, to assist low income families to purchase computers at lower rates. Scout only provides the curriculum.

Trish: The FCC set a goal for all schools to have 1 gig per 1,000 students. 41% of schools have not met that (especially rural). The US lags behind internationally in this regard.

III. Report out from last BAMC Executive Committee Meeting

No report - there has not been an Executive Committee Meeting since our last Public Meeting.

IV. BAMC/NBNCBC News and updates since last meeting on 11/6/15

A. NBNCBC grant extension application

The North Bay/North Coast Broadband Consortium is our regional planning group that also includes Sonoma, Napa and Marin, and is funded through June by a grant from the CPUC. We are applying for a grant extension to continue our work. The application is very involved and detailed and includes work plans for year 3 and year 4. Trish has been working with people from BAMC to develop the Mendocino work plans and invites anyone who wants to get involved to let her know. She can share the draft and would love to hear other ideas. Email her at trish@mendocinobroadband.org.

Newsletter: Trish is working on the quarterly NBNCBC newsletter and would like to include articles from around the county. **Please send her ideas or articles.**

B. Year 2 Quarter 2 CASF report just submitted and posted on our website:

<http://www.mendocinobroadband.org/wp-content/uploads/PDF.Q2-Report-.pdf>

C. January 25th - NBNCBC Oversight Committee meeting (will be held in Sonoma County)

The NBNCBC Oversight Committee is composed of a supervisor from each county, and ultimately this committee directs the activities of the consortium. Dan Hamburg is Mendocino's Oversight Committee member. Quarterly meetings are held as a chance for the management teams from each county to update the Oversight committee on activities. The meetings are open to the public and posted at the county administrative office. The meetings are via conference call to which anyone can call in and join, but in addition each county also has a physical meeting location where the call can be heard as well. For Mendocino, this location is at the Administration Building on Low Gap Road. Please see the NBNCBC portion of the Alliance website for call-in number, participant code, agenda, and time.
<http://www.mendocinobroadband.org/nbncbc-oversight-committee-meetings/>

Dan: We just received the good news that our current NBNCBC Consortium Manager will be staying with us for the next 2 years. The Mendocino Board of Supervisors is acting to extend our participation in the Consortium for years 3 & 4. In general, Dan sees uptick in awareness in the county, state and nationally, which may be an outcome of the outages. Our representatives are starting to work on broadband issues and TURN is giving us major support. NBNCBC's general goal for the 4 counties is to make progress on middle mile, while separately each county has their own goals. Our County CEO, Carmel Angelo, has become very aware of the problems we face as a county through her work with the CA Association of Counties and RCRC, Rural County Representatives of California. Trish has been brought closer to the center of planning for broadband in the county and there are good things coming from that collaboration. **As counties we are seeing that we need to take control of the broadband future and can't leave it up to the large providers.**

Jon: He feels that the regional consortiums need to be larger to help educate the urban areas about the rural issues. In his experience as a supervisor in Plumas County, he found that outside of rural areas, people are extremely unaware of the realities we deal with in our lack of broadband access. **If more people from more areas really understand what rural areas going through, it would be easier to solve the problems.**

Mike: The members of the Consortium have learned a lot in the last 2 years. We are realizing that **NBNCBC is now seen as one of the "can-do" groups in the state.** Our input is valued. Meeting the *state* goal of 98% served does not serve the rural counties, as our combined rural population is so low that our areas can be left "behind" and it still looks like the state has met its goal. The 98% goal needs to be *by region or county* to truly serve the needs of our rural citizens.

C. Coastal Permitting Workshop held 12/3/15

The successful inland broadband process has made it easier to get broadband infrastructure permits for the inland areas of the county. The Planning Dept. is now working on a coastal permit process, which must receive approval from the Coastal Commission. Dusty Duley, County Planner, held a public meeting that was attended by providers and included good discussions. Dusty is incorporating some of that input into the draft. We are hopeful that the Coastal Commission will be open to considering some important changes for easier permitting, but that outcome is the big question.

D. Sept 2015 Outage Report

A few days after the Sept. outage that affected all of Mendocino and parts of Humboldt, Del Norte and other counties, BAMC set up an on-line survey to document the effects. 627 people took the survey, which was

compiled into a report that will go before the Board of Supervisors on January 12th. (update: They accepted the report and will post on the County web site.) It will be sent out to elected officials and the CPUC, including Assemblymember Wood for inclusion in his Digital Divide hearings. We expect to get a lot of traction from this report. The report from the last outage made it into a US Government Accountability Office (GAO) report.

The 2015 Outage Report includes the final comments from the surveys. Many people talked about the need for redundancy and diversity. The outages seem to have educated local people.

When Dan talked with Regina Costa from TURN, she said that Mendocino County is recognized as a broadband advocacy leader in the state and nationally, partly because of the outage surveys and reports.

AT&T released a public statement on 1/6/16 about recent line outages due to the rain. This statement says that they are making significant progress in restoring service that is out from recent storms, and that they have deployed out-of-state technicians who are working 7 days/week to get lines repaired. Although AT&T does not release information on exactly how many lines are in need of repair, conversations with local providers confirm that they have about 100 trouble tickets open.

E. Adoption program update

Diann is in the final stages of gathering information across the county from the After-School Programs. She is working closely with the Community Foundation and Gayle Greene, a CF board member, to develop an adoption program focused on youth that will increase equipment, digital instructions and enrichment. One of the next steps will be a brainstorming meeting to develop a curriculum idea that was put forward by Jayma Shields Spence from the Laytonville Family Resource Center that would be offered to the programs. A draft proposal should be ready for review in March followed by submittal to a private foundation for funding consideration.

V. Legislative issues

A. Congressman Huffman Rural Broadband Infrastructure Investment Act

<http://huffman.house.gov/media-center/press-releases>

On Nov. 12 Congressman Huffman convened a stakeholders' forum (not a public meeting) of high level people in order to understand what the issues are. Invited stakeholders included Mendocino County OES, Cal OES, FEMA, PG&E, AT&T, CPUC, NBNCBC, TURN, MCOE, and BAMC. AT&T made an announcement that there would be important news soon. That news just came out about the deployment of network upgrades (see attached letter). Right after the meeting, Huffman introduced the Rural Investment Act to remove barriers in USDA for funding broadband infrastructure. His goal is to break down some silos and redefine rural so that hopefully Mendocino and other similar areas can qualify for more funding. The bill is currently being reviewed by 2 committees. We'll continue to provide updates.

B. AB 238

This bill was introduced by Assemblymember Mark Stone for a revision to the definition of broadband speeds to match the new federal definition. It would have also made some middle-mile projects eligible for CASF funding. The cable industry pushed back saying that there are only 6,000 unserved households in the state. On 1/6/16 Assembly Member Stone withdrew the bill completely due to this opposition, and will introduce a new bill in the March time-frame. We will keep everyone updated.

C. Assemblymember Wood's "Digital Divide" hearings

http://calchannel.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=7&clip_id=3250

The opening presentation by Michael Ort, CEO, Praxis Associates, (link above) was very good and we encourage everyone to listen to it. Wood has held two hearings and wants to hold a 3rd.

Ruth: Wood will be holding town hall type public meetings in the district. We are talking with Carmel Angelo, County CEO, about setting up a meeting here. We hope to get anchor institutions and providers to attend to see how they are doing and what the issues are.

Dan: CPUC Commissioner Sandoval attended both hearings. We are talking with Regina Costa of TURN about teaming up Sandoval with Wood in Ukiah for an open forum.

D. SB 486 (McGuire)

This bill would change reporting standards for 911 outages to the CPUC by lowering the amount of user minutes for rural areas that would trigger mandatory reporting of an outage by the provider. Right now the threshold is 900,000 outage minutes which doesn't make sense for rural areas, with such low density. They are considering changing from minutes to the number of lines that are out, although in high density areas that could mean a single apartment building outage.

E. BAMC signed onto comments to FCC regarding Lifeline reform (by Rural Broadband Policy Group) and the FCC's back-up power/911 continuity order (National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates)

BAMC signed onto this reform and the letters are posted on our website. These folks are doing the hard work and our signing on gives us publicity. We were interviewed by the Government Accountability Office because we submitted comments to the FCC in one of their dockets.

VI. Broadband deployment updates and data

A. Round 11 CPUC data available

The CPUC collects data from providers about service levels. The most recent information as of December 2014 just went public. It combined fixed wireless and mobile for Mendocino County and is **posted on our website** under Data and Reports/Data and Reports/CPUC Broadband Availability Data/ Round 11. It reports Mendocino County as 83% served, 10% underserved and 6% not served. This means that even with mobile in the mix, there are 2,229 households that have no service for anything.

Jim Moorehead: He thinks it's closer to 50% unserved or underserved, when mobile is taken out of the data.

Mike: At the recent meeting in Sacramento, there was a discussion about the need to take mobile wireless out of the equation. The cable industry said it was important to keep mobile in; Mike's response to them was to ask if a child could do their homework on a cell phone.

B. Provider updates

Jim Persky from Pacific Internet provided an update regarding his leased AT&T lines: A trend started 23 years ago to use phone lines to bring in telecommunications, and through the years the speeds have gone up on the copper, but the lines have over-all deteriorated from AT&T's Central office to people's homes. Jim has had lines out since Dec. 11, and can't get estimated times of repair from AT&T. They say there was a storm on that day, although it was clear. Jim reports that he believes that the lines are only being patched, even though in Ukiah there are many lines that are falling apart and need replacement. He is very frustrated because when his lines are out (and his business is affected), it means no phone, no data and no date of repair provided. As a Competitive Local Exchange Carrier (CLEC), he can put his equipment in AT&T's central office but if Pacific can't provide service to the homes due to poor copper lines, the last mile is going away.

Randy also saw this extended lack of repair last year in Anderson Valley.

Mike: We have asked AT&T to meet with us in Sonoma to give us information about where they plan to use the Connect America funding and what are their plans for redundancy and diversity off of the 101 corridor.

The West County is very vulnerable and we need to know if that is going to change but they haven't been willing to set a date to meet.

Trish reported that Rhuenette Alums (AT&T external affairs) rescheduled her presentation to our next meeting, when she would hopefully have more information to share about the network upgrade.

Heather asked that providers let her know if they are not getting appropriate response from AT&T in regards to their trouble tickets. She said that it is her job to hold AT&T accountable, and she will try to make sure that they follow-through.

Trish: The letter we handed out (attached) is the letter that Huffman's office received from Mark Blakeman, Vice President of External Affairs at AT&T. It appears that they will be building more infrastructure which is very good news, but there are not any specific plans. We look forward to hearing more specific information, such as what areas will be getting upgrades, with what equipment, and also what areas will NOT be receiving upgrades and so will still be vulnerable and may need back-up systems.

Dan: It is encouraging but doesn't address the problems with the copper system.

Trish reported that she has heard from **Central Valley Cable (CVC)** that they have upgraded services on the South Coast with no increase in cost. Trish has recently found that a lot of small local providers have Facebook pages, such as CVC, Ukiah Wireless, North Coast Internet, Further Reach, and SeaKay . She has asked for notifications from their pages, and when she sees information about changes/upgrades she will share that information on our Broadband Alliance Facebook page.

We're also talking with SeaKay about partnering with BAMC for digital literacy programs.

C. CAF 2 update

No update

D. Verizon-Frontier Transfer of assets

The Verizon and Frontier transfer of land lines was approved by the CPUC and the FCC in December 2015. We have 6 exchanges in the northern part of the county owned by Verizon. Trish has had direct contact with the California President of Frontier, who has promised to share information after the closing. We are optimistic that some areas may see improvement with the Connect America funds they will have to use in Mendocino County.

E. "CalSPEED" Iphone app *finally* available - download for free!

We encourage everyone to download this free app (available for both Apple and Android) and use it to help us get data about mobile services (or lack of it) from our county into the CPUC database. This app is for your mobile phone, and is an easy way to produce "ground-truth" data to counter the "provider advertised" levels of service that are currently used in the broadband maps.

Download CalSPEED for free from Google Play or the Apple Store. When used, the app does use data, so watch your limits.

The results are sent automatically to the CPUC for mapping and analysis, and for display on the CPUC's interactive California Broadband Availability Map. If there is no connectivity in the area of testing, it will automatically upload the result when you enter an area with connectivity. This new data will allow the CPUC to know, with greater accuracy than was possible before, what areas of the state are lacking mobile service entirely, or receiving only poor mobile service.

VII. County reports

A. Elected representatives

No Report

B. Executive Office

The Board of Supervisors' meeting agenda on Tuesday Jan. 12th includes 2 major broadband items – the Sept. 3rd Outage Report and the counties' response to TURN, The Utility Reform Network. The County had earlier asked for TURN's assistance in moving forward with this issue to help the county get reliable service.

C. Libraries

No Report

D. Public Safety

Randy: We continue to be concerned about the vulnerability of citizens and the 911 system due to outages. We are already gearing up for fire season.

E. EDFC

No Report

VIII. Access Sonoma Broadband Update - Mike Nicholls

The Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) is a new JPA formed district with approval from both County Boards of Supervisors. **SMEDD will provide both counties a larger base and opportunity to apply for larger grants to promote job growth and new industry within both counties.** The first unofficial board meeting (to get acquainted) will be held in February. However, as a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) has to be developed and approved prior to applying to the Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the state for official formation approval, no official business can be conducted at this meeting.

Sea Ranch has asked Access Sonoma Broadband to support their Negative Declaration for the installation of fiber to homes (which they did). A negative declaration says there will be no significant environmental effects from a project. It is going before the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department next week.

IX. Outreach and future agenda items

A. Mendocino County was featured in an article on 11/13/15 in the national magazine The Atlantic: <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2015/11/where-the-cloud-rises-from-the-sea/415236/>

B. Mendocino County outage highlighted in GAO report (p.12) titled Internet Protocol Transition: FCC Should Strengthen Its Data Collection Efforts to Assess the Transition's Effects (<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-167>)

C. Mendocino County was featured on 11/9/15 in an article for the online health news site healthline.org: <http://www.californiahealthline.org/insight/%202015/mendocino-broadband-problems-persist-amid-national-push-for-better-access>

X. Final comments

Camila: This meeting helped her understand our rural issues and she applauds us for the work we are doing. We'll be in touch as we'd like to be a liaison for her.

Christian: He took information from our meeting about Internet Essentials from Comcast to the Board of Northern Circle. The Native community is very underserved. Through N. Circle he has access to the FCC and would be happy to be an advocate to them for other county needs. 41% of Tribal lands lack access. Carbon reduction funds can help tribes get money for infrastructure. He has been working with AT&T on outages on Orr Springs, Pinoleville and Northern Circle. He tried to contact them 10 times and finally found a guy in the field who personally came and re-did all of the lines. The field person said to always call him directly.

Jim: I make a point of treating the field guys well – the majority of them are fantastic.

Mike: In Sonoma County, Joy Road has just passed the 14 day appeal period with the CPUC CASF application, for a \$9 million project of fiber to 760 households. At the Sacramento meeting the Joy Road provider explained that in 2009 he prepared an application to CASF and had to do all of the work. Now that the consortium is formed and supported his efforts, he was able to complete the application in much less time. This provider wants to use Joy Road as a hub for other projects in N. CA, including potential projects in Mendocino County.

Sean Garrity, Counselor, Ukiah High School: He's noticing how critical wifi access at home is for their students. Now he understand better why kids are on their phones when they get to school, as many of them can't connect at home.

Ozzie Serrano: Computers for Classrooms has been a non-profit based in Chico for 23 years serving all of California, for all users. They sell low cost systems to schools, families and seniors starting at \$85, and are Microsoft authorized. They install their own system in used computers and include a 1-year warranty to individuals and a 2-year warranty to schools. They have 10 – 20 thousand computers in schools. Trish will schedule him for a longer presentation at our next meeting. Ozzie@computersforclassrooms.org

XI. Next meeting: Beginning this year, the Public Outreach Meetings will be held every other month.

**NEXT MEETING:
Friday, March 4th, 10 am - 11:30 am
Community Foundation
204 S. Oak St., Ukiah**

ACRONYMS LIST

BAMC – (also referred to as “the Alliance”) Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County
NBNCBC- North Bay/North Coast Broadband Consortium
CPUC – California Public Utilities Commission
FCC – Federal Communications Commission
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
TURN -The Utility Reform Network
RCRC - Rural County Representatives of California
County OES – Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services
Cal OES – California Office of Emergency Services
CASF – California Advanced Services Fund (through the CPUC)
CLEC - Competitive Local Exchange Carrier
ILEC – Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier (Verizon and AT&T)
CVC – Central Valley Cable (local provider)
SMEDD - The Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District
GAO – (Federal) Government Accountability Office