

Broadband Alliance Public Outreach Meeting

Friday, July 10th, 2015, 10 am

Mendocino Room at the EDFC building

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

I. Call to Order

- A. Introductions: **Jim Moorehead**, retired BAMC Chair, **Heather Gurewitz**, Field Representative Representative, Congressman Huffman, **John Kuhry**, Economic Development and Finance Corporation ED, BAMC Executive Committee, **Tom Woodhouse**, Supervisor 3rd District, **Katie Gibbs**, BAMC Executive Committee, **Brooke Clark**, community member, **David Pai**, Mendocino College Faculty, Computer Science, **Maureen “Mo” Mulheren**, Ukiah City Council Member, **Kerrie Lindecker**, District Representative, Senator McGuire, **Judy James**, Comcast Director of Govt. Affairs, North Bay, **Mike Nicholls**, NBN/CBC Management Team Member, Sonoma, **Dan Hamburg**, Supervisor 5th District, BAMC Executive Committee, **Trish Steel**, BAMC Chair, **Diann Simmons**, BAMC Administrative Coordinator

Call-in: **Myron Curtis**, Deputy Sector Navigator ICT/DM for the Far North Regional Consortium, **Jim Persky**, Owner, Pacific Internet, **Regina Costa**, Telecommunications Policy Director, TURN, **Ruth Valenzuela**, Field Rep for State Congressman Jim Wood, **Caren Bishop**, Director of Site Services, California Telehealth Network

- B. Approval of the agenda
No changes or additions

II. BAMC News

- A. Executive Committee

The Executive Board has been asking “Are we making a difference?” Regina Costa sent us a CPUC document that gives positive concrete evidence that the answer is “yes”. In February 2013 the CPUC ordered an independent review of AT&T and Verizon’s infrastructure due to poor performance results to help gauge the condition of carrier infrastructure and facilities and ensure the facilities support a level of service consistent with public safety and customer needs. AT&T and Verizon were opposed to the review, and for whatever reason it was never started. This April, CPUC President Picker proposed that the review be canceled indefinitely. In response, Commissioners Sandoval and Florio issued an “Alternate Proposed Decision” which affirms the need for this study, and in addition, establishes a 6-month timeline to begin. As evidence for the need for this review, our outage report is cited 3 times. (See our website: <http://www.mendocinobroadband.org/wp-content/uploads/Infrastructure-review-alternate-decision.pdf> - pgs. 8, 9, 12).

Regina from The Utilities Reform Network (TURN) commented that BAMC is doing an awesome job of documenting. If this was being done nationally it would make it easier to get the issues before the decision makers.

Executive Committee update: We've had 3 meetings and are in the process of working on the Vision, Mission, Goals and Strategies. We're also making commitments to interested providers to help with CASF grant applications. Our next meeting has not yet been scheduled, but will be in about a month and will include a County Planning representative to continue discussion on the coastal permitting process. Trish has noticed that our County Broadband Plan has not been updated since 2012, and will also bring up that topic.

B. AT&T June 23rd meeting

After working for many months to try to improve communications with AT&T, Trish received a call from Barb Winn to schedule a meeting, which was held on June 21. A number of high level people attended including Barb Winn and Brian Chase, AT&T Public Affairs Manager for N. CA, Sheriff Allman, Tami Bartolomei, County Office of Emergency Services Coordinator, Randy MacDonald, Comptche 2nd Assistant Fire Chief, Supervisor Hamburg, Steve Dunncliff, Building and Planning Director, three Congressional Field Reps and Mike Nicholls from Sonoma. We left with a list of action items that Trish is following-up with everyone on. Tami and AT&T have initiated communication and AT&T has been invited to join the county's emergency training. A second meeting is scheduled for August, with hopes that this will lead to significant improvements in AT&T's communication with the county emergency services and the public.

Dan agreed and believes that the change in AT&T paying more attention goes back to BAMC's documentation of the issues with AT&T's communication during the outage.

Kerrie thinks that the highlighting of AT&T's lack of communication compared to PG&E's current communication procedures showed them how it can be better.

Jim Persky thinks AT&T is being attentive now because of the deal they are in process of closing with Direct TV. He thinks AT&T wants to look good publicly so their merger won't be jeopardized.

Regina thinks that the merger offers an opportunity to get conditions included by the CPUC that will require AT&T to improve first responders communication, battery back-ups during outages, etc.

Mike said that AT&T has announced a program that will be connected to their merger that is similar to Comcast's Internet Essentials.

John asked Judy if there is any information about how well Comcast's Internet Essentials is working in Mendocino County. She said it is hard to get the numbers of participants for Mendocino County as Comcast's system doesn't track users by area in the smaller communities. She'll see if she can get more information and if so will try to present at the September 11th meeting. The program is now offered to all students/families in any school with a free and reduced lunch rate of 50%, and she is working with the schools to do a better job of getting the information out to families. Trish offered to help her connect with schools.

C. Benbow Public Participation Hearing update

Verizon is selling all of their landline assets in Texas, Florida and California to Frontier, including Mendocino exchanges in Leggett, Covelo, Laytonville and Piercy. There is concern as to how this will affect service. Commissioner Sandoval is holding public hearings around the state, with the closest in Humboldt held on July 6th. Attendees included Trish and Mike, and a local Mendocino Internet Provider. There was a tour of facilities, a workshop and the hearing. Providers were helpful in asking clarifying questions to the executives from both companies. One issue they uncovered was lack of back-up generators for re-charging batteries in the event of an outage. Trish made 10 comments at the hearing. (see them here: <http://www.mendocinobroadband.org/wp-content/uploads/PDFComments-at-Benbow.published.pdf>). The CPUC is still accepting comments on this transaction and we encourage interested folks to please express their concerns. Refer to **“Frontier and Verizon, Application No 15-03-005”**. **Written comments may be mail/emailed to the** CPUC Public Advisor’s Office, Room 2103, 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco CA 94102 or by emailing at public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov. You can also call to make comments at 1-866-849-8390. We don’t know if there is a deadline for comments. <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUC/aboutus/Divisions/CSID/Public+Advisor/Written+Informal+Comments.htm>

Frontier has shown more dedication to rural areas and to pushing broadband out. New California customers seem happy with their service and Yurok IT people have found Frontier engineers to be accessible and open to innovative ideas. The flip side is that Frontier is not in good financial shape and they are buying infrastructure that is in bad shape. Frontier needs Verizon to apply for Connect American Funds before the deadline in August, and then these funds would be transferred as part of the deal giving them the resources to expand broadband. Privately Verizon has assured Frontier that they will apply, but wouldn’t commit to it publicly at the hearing. At the workshop, Trish met and has since communicated with the President of Frontier’s West Region. Mike also talked with Frontier about providing a fiber connection with AT&T near Sea Ranch, which would provide needed redundancy for the entire area.

D. Wireless Guidelines update

The Planning Commission approved revised Wireless Guidelines and an Inland Zoning Revision. Now, both are on the Aug. 4th agenda of the Board of Supervisors meeting for approval. We encourage anyone interested to please attend and voice your support for these revisions. BAMC written comments submitted to the BoS will also be posted online a week before this meeting. This approval is a good first step, but doesn’t address coastal permitting. Trish has been pursuing alternative permitting information from several other areas. Working with all north coast areas to create “exceptions” may be the best approach and may be appropriate for NBNCBC to address. Trish handed out a flow chart from the Planning Department that shows how exemptions are processed for Wireless Communication Facilities.

E. Adoption program update

Diann has been working with Gayle Greene of the Community Foundation Board and meeting with the Directors of the After-School Programs in Willits (Kids Club) and Ft. Bragg to discuss ideas for an adoption program focusing on youth and their families, to submit to a foundation. Both groups are

enthusiastic about working with us and have given us good information about need. We plan to participate in a county wide youth program meeting to present our ideas and ask for input.

Jim Moorehead wonders if we can utilize foundation funding to improve “last mile” connectivity to homes. Heather’s experience with the West Company showed her that many parents lack skills and don’t prioritize computer literacy for their children, which can negatively affect their long-term success in education and job opportunities. Judy mentioned that the Comcast Internet Essentials program includes low cost computers and free computer literacy training.

Trish was asked by several organizations if she knew of success stories about the federal Lifeline Assistance Program, which gives a monthly subsidy for phone (land or cell) service for low income households. If you know anyone who uses it successfully, let Trish know and she will connect them with these groups for an interview. John suggested connecting with MPIC to get information out about the program.

F. Mapping Update - http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/planning/pdf/E-Population_Density_Only.pdf

Brooke displayed a copy of the population density map that is posted on the county’s website. The map he showed us also includes information about some of the service provider areas and will be updated as more information is available. Developing this map will help to clarify where better service is needed. At this time, the map posted on the county’s site does not contain the service provider’s information.

III. North Bay-North Coast Broadband Consortium News

A. Regional Planning efforts and Oversight Committee Meeting 6/18/15 Update

Dan discussed the activity that the Oversight Committee has been involved in to address the fact that SMART and Sonoma County have entered/may soon enter leasing agreements, both with <http://sonic.net/Sonic.net>. The issue is about providing open access to multiple providers in public Rights of Way. The committee feels that leasing to one provider could limit a *regional* solution to create a fiber middle-mile backbone along the 101 corridor from Marin County to the Oregon border and discourage industry investment. Not enough information is known though; letters were sent to the SMART Board and Sonoma County asking for meetings to discuss the agreements. Both entities are willing to meet with the Oversight Committee and dates are being set.

B. Legislative Update

Trish reported that AB 1262 was supposed to go for a full floor vote on Thursday, 7/9 (yesterday) but that she didn’t know what happened.

IV. Area updates

A. Ukiah – Councilmember Mo Mulheren

There was a long discussion about the Ukiah Perkins Street work and the fact that the city isn’t putting empty conduit in the trench. Mo has brought this up with city officials and was told that the project was planned years ago and at this point, it doesn’t pencil out to try to add it. The private partners (AT&T and Comcast) are already putting in fiber and the city doesn’t want to take over that utility. The city’s priority at this time is a water project and they have a limited budget. The idea of cities owning conduit to lease out as a source of revenue was discussed along with the “dig once” approach adopted

by other jurisdictions. BAMC is interested in having discussions with the City Utilities Department about future work and planning of conduit to allow the city a range of options in the future. Mo will work to facilitate discussions.

John would like BAMC to put effort into working with the high density areas to increase household access. Trish is interested in finding out what we can do to support more Ukiah residents getting internet access and would like to work with Mo on that.

- B. Albion (Not enough time for these updates)
- C. Sherwood Road

V. County Updates (Not enough time for these updates)

- A. Executive Office
- B. MCOE
- C. Libraries

The Coast Community Library in Point Arena is currently served by Further Reach. But the Friends of the CCL felt that a 2nd connection was necessary for redundancy, and have purchased this for the library through Ukiah Wireless.

- D. Public Safety
- E. EDFC
- F. Technical Chair

VI. Access Sonoma Broadband Update - Mike Nicholls

The permitting for Sea Ranch has been slowed down with coastal zone issues and they have hired a new consultant to work with PRMD. They are hoping for environmental clearance in several weeks. Ryan Dulan of the CPUC will make a visit to look at Joy Road soon.

VII. Outreach and future agenda items (Not enough time to discuss)

- A. Health care facilities, City Councils, Municipal IT departments, PSAPs

VIII. Final comments and future agenda items

Caren Bishop from California Telehealth Network (CTN) participated in the meeting via conference call, and she provided some background on the CTN. The CTN is California's authorized FCC broadband consortia for healthcare, with priority access to the FCC's Healthcare Connect Fund for qualified healthcare providers. This provides a 65% subsidy for high speed broadband services for their members who use CTN's partner providers.

A meeting was set up by Eric Brown of CTN several years ago, but it was poorly attended by representatives from our health care facilities. Currently only a few of our clinics are participating in the program, even though both AT&T and Verizon are partner providers.

Trish will work with Caren to set up a presentation of their services at a monthly Public Meeting in the next several months, and we will make a strong outreach to all health care facilities and clinics in the county with invitations to attend.

Kerrie is working with Senator McGuire on the “Next Generation 911” emergency communication system bill. She is also working on the increase of the state definition of broadband to the FCC level of 25Mbps down and 3Mbps up.

Mitch Drake will join us next month to update us on his activities. Also, the new Superintendent for the Mendocino County Office of Education will join us and hopefully bring and introduce their new Technology Director.

IX. Meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon

Next meeting: Friday, August 7th, 2015, 10:00 – 11:30

At EDFC – Conference Room 2