

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

Friday, October 19th 2012, 10:00 am -11:30 am

The Community Foundation of Mendocino County

204 S. Oak Street, Ukiah, CA 95482 (707) 468-9882

Dial In # (605) 477-2100 Participant access code: 565491#

1. Call to Order

- a. Attendees: Brian Churm, Greg Jirak, Jim Moorehead, Susanne Norgard, Trish Steel
- b. Call-in: Randy MacDonald

2. Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Forum report

- a. Greg and Jim gave an update of the 6th annual Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Forum that they recently attended in Fortuna, CA.
- b. The day before the Forum, Greg and Jim had a productive meeting with Connie Stewart and Tina Nerat at Connie's Humboldt State University office.
- c. Greg reported that the networking aspect of the conference was great, and it was a chance to get in contact with people, hear some interesting ideas, and show and tell with the various presentations.
- d. Jim highlighted meeting with Forest James of EnerTribe and Eric Cutright, IT Director for the Karuk Tribe. The tribe has a CPCN, and Jim talked with him about seeing if Harold (SeaKay) and Kim could work with the Karuk to borrow the CPCN, since they are having trouble getting their own CPCN and it could be mutually beneficial. Jim will introduce them by email. Eric also told Jim that he thought that the Alliance approach of creating our Notice of Opportunities was clever.

3. Golden Bear NCRMMI update

- a. Mitch Drake of Golden Bear Broadband was also at the Fortuna Forum, and Jim and Greg met with him and received an update on the project. They are making good progress, pressing ahead and having full intention of submitting their application by February 1st, asking for a 90% subsidy. Mitch also wants to come to Mendocino County and actually drive the R1CP path. There has been a scaling back in the Humboldt portion of the project which makes financial and political sense for them.
- b. Mitch Drake and Mitch Sprague (Mendocino Community Network) are also talking to each other about an internship program to train and hire people for the installation and maintenance of the fiber, and associated equipment. Originally the project was only middle mile, but they need last mile revenue to make their business plan work. The pricing is a "big nut to crack still" (Jim). If GBB gets funded, and the business plan can support it, the Alliance will work for an agreement with the local wisps to be the ones for the last mile construction and "boots on the ground" of the network. These last mile efforts would be subsidized by CASF funding, and local wisps might be able to work under the Golden Bear CPCN. However, the last mile component must be viable for the GBB business plan, and possible involvement of local wisps will come only after that determination.

- c. Brian agreed that the Golden Bear will need to start getting products out there where they're needed to start generating cash flow. Greg pointed out the many business anchor institutions along highway 1. Tom and Mitch have done this before in the San Joaquin Valley, so hopefully with their experience they can make it work.
- d. Rob Osborn is the CPUC mapping guy from Sacramento in charge of all the broadband mapping. At the forum, he made a presentation about their web-based map that has new features and tools, many layers, and looks impressive. The problem is...the underlying data is the same (inaccurate). As a good example of this problem, Rob asked for an address from the audience and Jim gave him his home address. The map came back as showing that he had ATT DSL and Comcast 10 MB down, and that the census block showed that everyone had Comcast. This is a problem in large rural census blocks, where there is some limited coverage inside the block but the whole census block then shows up as covered. Jim felt that at the least, he had the opportunity to share his thoughts about this problem with Rob.
- e. The solution is to go down to the parcel level; Jim's understanding is that originally there was some discussion of this, but at the federal level, the NTIA decided it would cost too much. Jim would like to have that idea re-visited, and he brought this up on the weekly Route 1 call, but Kathy Emerson felt that it would be too complicated and wouldn't work. Clarification is needed.
- f. Brian asked that if the mapping was wrong, would it dis-qualify you from funding? Greg replied that you can challenge your status in the grant application.
- g. Rob Osborne has shared the the PUC mapping application for Android phones with Greg and Jim. After we have had a chance to test it, we plan to launch a county-wide citizen's project to collect data. The app using GIS, automatically sends data about what sort of broadband connection you have directly to the CPUC database. This is important because it's solid credible data; our survey data is useful but considered anecdotal, as anyone could take the survey and say whatever they wanted, so therefore it could be disputed.

4. Endorsements

- a. We are up to 101 endorsements; Trish will follow-up with Howard Hospital, Mendocino Coast Hospital, and Ukiah Valley Medical Center to try to get endorsements from them.
- b. Jim said that a few days ago he looked at the connectivity data for all the schools, and some are still on T1 lines. That should be part of Mitch's application. Also, we need to make sure that all the small satellite schools are on our anchor institution inventory with their connection data. The idea of contacting home school groups and independent study groups about their access to the internet was also brought up as a possible area to explore.

5. Challenge Grant Update

- a. The MCLA application didn't pan out; John K met with Pam Amante who does the pre-screening, and it never got through their committee. They felt that our idea of lighting up the corridors with free wifi for the tourists "does not fit our guidelines for " promotion of Mendocino County."
- b. Mendocino County Development Corporation: Jim Mayfield and Matisse Knight have the lead in this, and we have reason to be hopeful that they will be successful.
- c. Dan is taking the lead on the tobacco settlement funds grant (a supervisor-designated grant) and we are also optimistic about this prospect.

6. Projects – no reports

7. Committee Reports

a. Technology Committee

- i. Brian reported that ATT announced that Sprint and Verizon have offered home phone cellular service for \$9.99/month, so it's clear that they are moving away from copper. An announcement from ATT is expected in the next two weeks about their plans to migrate everyone over to high speed cellular.

b. First Net Report

- i. Randy reported that the FirstNet program is up and going, having formed a board in Washington D.C, had their first meeting on 9/25/12, adopted resolutions and appointed committees.
- ii. Randy met with the Fire Agency Communications Committee, and talked about the recommendations for the three point approach that they are looking at for the implementation of this network. The three points are: 1) insure that all transportation corridors are covered 2) leverage existing facilities in the efforts to deploy the network and 3) to talk to large landholders about cooperation for facilities placement in areas where there are gaps. He will talk to large landowners after they have identified where such gaps are. He also plans to contact all the Fire Chiefs and Fire Departments in the county to see if they have any facilities that might be candidates for such participation, and to see how the FirstNet project can dovetail with their efforts. He has talked to Jim Little of Long Valley Fire Department, which owns a fire lookout tower on Cahto Peak, and Jim is interested in participating in FirstNet. We might want to consider this our first grant opportunity, using that location to draw together the parameters these projects will involve, and with close cooperation with the Alliance. Randy will be monitoring our state's progress in this program.
- iii. Greg asked about identifying all the public safety facilities along the Golden Bear route and making sure that information is included in the broadband access inventory so that Mitch can consider those locations. Randy said that sounds fine, and would compile that information by asking the fire chiefs and Cal Fire to include their connection data. He will request this info from other entities also, such as the Coast Guard and other such facilities.
- iv. Randy also mentioned that he talked to Shannon Barney about our endorsement request, and Shannon would like a personal briefing about what the project is so he can better understand before he could give the general endorsement that we were requesting. People in public safety are wary about some of these requests, as the public safety angle is often used from various parties, and Shannon needs some more information. Trish will contact Shannon and get whatever information he needs to him.

8. Meeting adjourned: 11:41 am