

**Steering Committee Meeting Notes**

**Friday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012, 10:00 am -11:50 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: 10:00 am**

- a. Attendees: Brian Churm, Dan Hamburg, Greg Jirak, Jim Moorehead, Trish Steel
- b. Call-in: none
- c. Changes to agenda: none

**2. Golden Bear Broadband NCRMMI / R1CP – update**

- a. Jim gave a Golden Bear Broadband update, saying that the project is making great progress. Mitch met with Sunny McPeak and Jim Dolgonas (CENIC president) and their political advice was to get the 90% subsidy down to something lower. This might play right in with some developments with Sea Ranch.
- b. Mike Nichols and Steve Sharpe met with the Sea Ranch Association (SRA), and early on they were saying that they want to explore ways that SRA can invest in the GB project. There are 1200 homes at Sea Ranch; it is not yet determined whether just the SRA would invest, or whether they would open up investment possibility to the homeowners.
- c. If half the homeowners would invest 10K each, that would provide significant money for the project, or possibly matching Joseph Kong's money. They will ask Mitch Drake to stay on the coast one extra day on his R1CP drive, to meet with the SRA on the 15<sup>th</sup>.
- d. If the SRA undertakes this, then that would make them a major anchor tenant. There would probably be almost 100% adoption rate for services.
- e. Mitch, Greg, and Jim will be driving the R1CP route Tuesday and Wednesday and they will include a meeting in Fort Bragg with the Mayor and new IT person, and also a meeting with Mitch Sprague at MCN. Mitch Drake has met Mitch Sprague, and he's impressed with the MCN operation, and Mitch S is looking for ways to expand MCN. They are also talking about some type of intern project and possible other ways of collaborating.
- f. The Alliance will also be meeting with Glenda Humiston to see if there is any USDA money available (see last week's notes about agricultural water reduction) to help reduce the subsidy from 90% to something lower. Steve Sharpe is arranging.

**3. Board of Supervisors 2013 Legislative Platform**

- a. Last year Randy came up with three good policies that we submitted to be part of the 2012 Legislative Platform. We haven't submitted anything so far this year.
- b. Trish will call Kristi Furman (Executive Office) to see if the policy recommendations from last year were incorporated into the platform.

- c. We will look at it and see if there is anything we need to do on it. December 11th is probably the meeting where the Board of Supervisors adopts the calendar for the year.

#### **4. Countywide Anchor Institution Inventory**

- a. Currently we are working on a procedure for our local Chambers of Commerce to be able to include businesses in our Anchor Institution Inventory. We will ask each chamber director to send out an Alliance request for connectivity data on their Chamber letterhead (so businesses know it is endorsed by the Chamber) and individual members can either fill out a form or go to our website to give us the information.
- b. The question of WISPS (wireless internet service providers) being anchor institutions came up, because if a provider can buy bandwidth at a central office, then that physical office location/provider could be an anchor institution, but it's a chicken before the egg situation.
- c. A possible scenario could be to ask all the WISPS that if they could get bandwidth at a particular location, would they be interested. Then we would make a list of "potential anchor tenants."

#### **5. County Wide Endorsements**

- a. We currently have over 100 endorsements from throughout the county, and now we have put that effort on the back burner. We still have some endorsements outstanding, such as from the Westport Municipal Advisory Council (WMAC). Jim recently met with Bill Knapp from the WMAC for several hours, and we should be getting that endorsement soon.
- b. Bill Knapp reported that according to the PUC maps, Westport has broadband and it messed up Mike Ireton's CPUC application. Mike got the new Android testing application, and went to do some testing in the area.
- c. When the new phone application becomes widely available, then it can really help with citizen mapping of the county, although it only is testing for wireless cell phone coverage.
- d. Willits city council has not yet sent an endorsement – they have questions. Jim and Greg will meet with them Monday before the R1CP drive that starts in Laytonville.
- e. By June 2013 Verizon will be finished upgrading their network, and that means all the towers will be capable of high speed LTE. That means that coverage will be our main issue...

#### **6. Community Foundation Challenge Grant - \$27k donated, 13k to go!**

- a. Greg is continuing with the tobacco settlement funds application, even though there is a certain amount of hassle involved.
- b. Nothing new on Mendocino County Development Corporation (defunct) funds; as soon as we lock in the tobacco money they can be the group that puts us over the top and hopefully that will attract them.

#### **7. Opportunities**

- a. Projects

- i. Point Arena – The Notice of Opportunity originally considered was dropped since it is included in R1CP/Golden Bear project
- ii. Rancho Navarro – Jim introduced Harold Galicier of SeaKay to Eric Cutright, IT Director for the Karuk Tribe as a possible way for Harold to get access to the junction box by sharing the Karuk CPCN.
- iii. Sherwood Road/Willowbrook – The Notice of Opportunity was sent to Vendor Connect

#### **8. Connect America Fund - inquiry made to Rep. Thompson's staff**

- a. We haven't heard anything back; Jim asked Sean McLaughlin if he has heard anything (no), so no one knows what is going on in Washington.

#### **9. Committee Reports**

- a. Technology: Brian gave up update about recent announcements by Verizon and ATT regarding accelerating LTE deployments, and he also educated us a bit about some of the technical information. "LTE" refers to "long-term evolution", which is a protocol developed for 4G, or 4<sup>th</sup> Generation technology with wireless carriers. This technology allows for high speeds (up to 100 Mbps). The protocol dictates how a wireless device communicates with the tower, and it can grow over time or evolve into greater standards. When we went from 1<sup>st</sup> generation to 2<sup>nd</sup> generation (1G to 2G) the old equipment needed to be moved out with a forklift. When they went to 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation (3G) then that equipment was built literally right next to the 2G, with both existing. By using the term "evolution" the implication is that they won't have to forklift the old equipment out.
- b. The deployment news that came recently is that Verizon plans to be finished with their 4G-LTE deployments by June 2013; ATT plans to be done by June 2014. That means that anyone who lives close to a cell tower and has a signal will have broadband access, and that's good news. Consumers are already buying smart phones with data plans, and these phones can be used as tethering devices to allow home computers to access the internet.
- c. Jim asked if these wireless technologies also have data caps as part of their plans (yes) and so this would not be applicable to things like movies which use huge amounts of data.
- d. This is where competition in the marketplace would give possible edge for WISPs and the GBB, in that the WISPs could offer large data allowances and offer a competitive product.
- e. If Mitch D can light up the central offices, that would create a downward pressure on the markets for wholesale bandwidth, assuming certain assumptions about the pricing structure that GBB would put in place.
- f. Currently there are four big providers of bandwidth: ATT, Verizon, Sonic, and Level 3. Except in Ukiah where three operate, only two of them operate in any one place, so basically you have a "duopoly" and the bandwidth is so expensive that the local WISPs cannot buy bandwidth to provide services.

- g. The GBB could provide the opportunity for disruptive pricing, but we don't know what Mitch Drake's plans are in this regard. A for-profit operates differently from a non-profit.
- h. The work of the Alliance is to collect useful and important broadband data that we own, that can be provided to and used by *any* vendor for a grant application that will deploy broadband in the county. We are building a mapping database that will be a county asset and open to all vendors.
- i. Brian said that he is not sure what ATT is trying to do with regard to expanding their wired footprint and their expansion by "eight million homes." Does this expansion include upgrading old ATT DDSL technology/equipment because they are losing customers? If it does include these upgrades, then the rural areas are out of luck, because the upgrade in the metro areas would easily cover the 8 million homes.

**10. Adjourn 11:50 am**

**11. Upcoming meetings: November 16<sup>th</sup> and November 30th**