
Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

Friday, December 20th, 2013 10:00 am – 11:05

*The Community Foundation of Mendocino County
204 S. Oak Street, Ukiah, CA 95482 (707) 468-9882*

New Dial In Number

Dial In # (760) 569-7225, Participant Access Code: 108 1131#

1. Call to Order: 10:00 am

- a. Attendees: **Jim Moorehead** (Alliance Chairman), **Mike Nicholls** (Co-chair Access Sonoma Broadband), **Trish Steel** (Alliance Administrative Coordinator)
- b. Call-in: **Cathy Emerson** (UCCC Manager, Center Economic Development), **Myron Curtis** (Deputy Sector Navigator, ICT & digital Media, Far North Regional Consortium), **Mitch Drake** (Golden Bear Broadband)
- c. Approval of Agenda: approved with the addition of the topic of ATT fiber in Point Arena planned for the schools.

2. Broadband Coalition of Northern California Counties

- a. Myron brought to our attention a November 4th article he read on-line at Techwire, about broadband advocates, including the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), testifying before the US Senate's Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee. These groups said that broadband access remains unfinished in rural and remote areas, particularly for tribal nations, and that broadband adoption among low income, senior citizens and tribal communities remain a challenging issue. The key issue was the proper role of the federal government, with some parties urging Congress to "connect the dots" and partner more closely with states, localities, community groups, and NGOs.
- b. Executive Vice-President of Comcast David Cohen spoke about how they have connected one million customers with their Internet Essentials program, but this was challenged by CETF President Sunne McPeak who said, "They have not reached more than 8 percent of the eligible recipients."
- c. You can read the entire article here: <http://techwire.net/california-broadband-advocacy-group-testifies-u-s-senate-committee/>
- d. Jim mentioned the book, Captive Audience by Law Professor Susan Crawford who specializes in telecommunications; this book is well-researched, and tells the entire story of Comcast if anyone is interested.
- e. Myron added that people in charge of organizations, like the CEOs, often know the least about what is actually going on at ground level, and that they may actually believe their company is doing great things because of this. Myron said, "We have 1.6 million people who are being ignored."

3. Broadband Coalition of Northern California Counties (BCNCC)

- a. We currently have twenty-eight letters of endorsements for the statement that "Substandard broadband damages the regional economy". Ten different counties are represented, and included are endorsement letters from Boards of Supervisors, County Superintendents, businesses, and non-profits.
- b. Outreach efforts have been on the back burner because we have been focused on other things, but we will be contacting the BCNCC soon.

4. Golden Bear Broadband

- a. MD updated the group since receiving the CPUC letter of determination.
- b. He has been looking at routes that were qualified, verifying mileages, and trying to find ways to lower costs. He will be working on the business plan over the holidays, and hopes to present to the GBB board for review the week of January 8th.
- c. Joseph Kong and his investment group is standing by and will be investing in GBB once CPUC approval is secured.

5. Access Sonoma Broadband - ASB

- a. ASB had good attendance for their Wednesday, December 18th meeting, including Cathy Emerson and Mitch Drake. Mitch was able to report on their progress with GBB, and Mike reported on the status of the new consortium application for 2015-2017.
- b. After the meeting, they had good news when it was learned that Napa County committed to participation in the consortia application. They are making progress. Marin has also committed, and Peter Pratt is working closely with Marin Supervisor Kinsey and his staff, and working with the JPA the Marin Telecom Authority..
- c. The Connect Joy Road (CJR) group announced that they are organizing a forum about getting internet into the rural areas on Wednesday, Feb. 19th from 7-9 pm in downtown Occidental. Several CPUC staff have also been invited.
- d. ASB will be meeting the third Wednesday of each month, and at their next meeting in January they will be finalizing their meeting dates for 2014.
- e. The ASB website will be going live soon.
- f. The Connect Joy Road folks have organized a rural broadband forum and asked ASB to be on a panel and for Cathy Emerson to speak. This meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 19th in Occidental, and everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.
- g. A representative from Verizon will be attending the next ASB meeting on January 15th to give a presentation and to have a Q & A session.

6. North Bay/North Coast Broadband Consortium - NBNCBC

- a. We currently have seventeen letters of support for the new consortia from a diversity of organizations in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties.
- b. Greg and Tom have been working together on the application. They have work plans submitted for Mendocino and Sonoma Counties; Marin County is currently working on their budget, and Napa will be working with Tom on a more generic work plan.

7. CPUC Mapping

- a. Myron is also working on creating publicity for the CPUC broadband access survey in the areas of the fifteen Community Colleges that he represents. He is currently crafting a letter to CPUC Commissioner Sandoval to put a human face on this huge problem. They want to get more people involved, and are also putting together a social media blitz from a grass-roots level for mid-January with memes, picture, and sayings to get people to realize there is a problem.
- b. Myron added that a social media blitz has a 99% emotional impact, and that people read the comments as a way to get more information.
- c. The Alliance is also interested in this sort of social media campaign to increase awareness, but we don't have much experience in this area. We would be very interested if Myron is willing to share some of their materials, or if anyone reading this has such experience and wants to volunteer to help us.
- d. We have a working distribution plan for Mendocino County to get this survey out far and wide; more on this survey and distribution plan can be found in the notes from 11/08/13 (<http://www.mendocinobroadband.org/topics/steering-committee/>). Some key components of this plan include:
 - i. The Alliance has a link to the survey on our website at <http://www.MendocinoBroadband.org>. We encourage everyone to take this survey and share the information with friends.
 - ii. Hard copies of the surveys can be found at all public libraries in Mendocino County, and the Library has posted a link to the survey on their website.
 - iii. Various businesses and non-profits have also shared the link with their contacts; we need to have more groups do this and get the survey on more websites.
 - iv. We sent out PSAs and submitted articles in all the newspapers; we will re-submit after the New Year.
 - v. Our next priority will be the Starbucks/coffee houses and high school computer labs. I want to find a way for kids to get involved with the phone app to find all the cellular "dead zones". Maybe with school service clubs?
 - vi. Jim, John Kuhry and Trish met with the MPIC Program Director Debbie Purcell last Friday to discuss collaboration (<http://www.mpic.org/>)
- e. We are still waiting for an iOS version of the application of the mobile cellular testing application.

8. ATT fiber at Point Arena

- a. Jim provided an update on the situation in Point Arena.
- b. The good news is that ATT has a project to run fiber to the high school and grammar school. That fiber is being installed as part of the federal E-rate program, which in Mendocino county, provides on average an 85% subsidy for schools to get connected.
- c. However, the City of Point Arena is still unserved, so when kids go home from school they will still have no way to complete their homework and assignments.

- d. Also, the fiber project for the school would run fiber underground across Fire Department property and go by the library, but not provide fiber to them.
- e. This is a classic example of the “Broadband Silo” mindset, which keeps rural areas locked in the Digital Divide, because the E-rate subsidy doesn’t allow that fiber extend beyond school to homes and other institutions.
- f. ATT has requested a special hearing with the Planning Commission for the morning of December 23rd to review this “fiber to the schools only” project; the Alliance sent a letter in Jim and Dan’s name to the Planning Commission and asked for a delay in this hearing.
- g. Although not confirmed, we think that the hearing is delayed until January 7th.
- h. Part of our strategy will be to ask that ATT offer more IP service in downtown Point Arena.

9. Future Topics

- a. After the meeting, Jim provided information about The California Broadband Council (CBC) for inclusion in these notes. See also: <http://broadbandcouncil.ca.gov/home.aspx>
- b. The CBC has regular meetings, and it was suggested that attending their meetings would be important to let our voices be heard about how lack of broadband is damaging to our economies and lives. Their next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, January 22** from 1:00-3:30 PM in the Legislative Office Building (LOB), 1020 N Street, Room 100, in Sacramento. *We would like as many people as possible to attend this meeting*, so please mark your calendar. Their meetings include a 20-minute public comment period, and even if there is not time for everyone to speak your presence at the meeting will send a message.
- c. The CBC was established by legislation in 2010 (Senate Bill 1462-Padilla) to marshal the state’s resources to further the objectives of increasing broadband network deployment, and eliminating the Digital Divide by expanding broadband accessibility, literacy, adoption, and usage.
- d. There are nine members of the CBC, who all hold very important positions:
 - i. Michael R. Peevey, President of the CPUC, who serves as Chair of the Council;
 - ii. Senator Alex Padilla (D-20th S.D.), who serves as Vice Chair of the Council;
 - iii. Assembly Member Steven C. Bradford (D-62nd A.D.);
 - iv. Director Carlos Ramos, California Department of Technology
 - v. Mark Ghilarducci, Secretary, California Emergency Management Agency
 - vi. Tom Torlakson, Superintendent of Public Instruction
 - vii. Fred Klass, Director, Department of General Services
 - viii. Brian P. Kelly, Secretary, California Transportation Agency
 - ix. Sunne Wright McPeak, President and CEO, California Emerging Technology Fund

10. Meeting ended at 11:05

Next Meeting: January 10th, 2014