

Broadband Alliance Public Outreach Meeting

Friday, November 4th, 2016 10 am-11:30 am
Community Foundation of Mendocino County

I. Introductions

- A. Attendees: Dan Hamburg, Jim Persky, Rick Elhert (OES), Katie Gibbs, Brooke Clarke, John Kuhry, Earl Craighill, Mike Nichols, Ashley Trestle (Willits News), Sarah Wright (Mendocino Voice), Diann Simmons, Trish Steel
- B. Additions to the agenda - Willits Main Street project (under 5A) and SMEDD update

II. NBNCBC News and updates since last meeting on Sept 9th, 2016

- A. Consortium grant update - Finally we have some news about the grant we submitted to the CPUC back in January. PUC staff have recommended our grant for approval to the Commissioners, and the item is on their December meeting agenda.
- B. The NBNCBC OverSight Committee once/year in-person meeting was held on Oct. 20th in Santa Rosa. It was an opportunity for all management teams to meet and talk about progress and issues. The main topic of this meeting was the Memo of Understanding (MOU), which currently binds our counties together for the consortium. The idea of forming a more structured organization, such as a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) was discussed, but the feeling was that we are comfortable with the current MOU structure, but in the future we may decide to transition to a formal JPA.
- C. Two members of the Oversight Committee will be retiring at the end of their supervisor term - Sonoma County's Supervisor Carrillo and Marin County's Supervisor Kinsey. Our priority is a smooth transition with new members on the committee.

III. BAMC/County News

- A. BAMC website -Trish has been posting a lot of new content, and although the old content is not visible it is still searchable. Please check out the website, and provide feedback. Trish was able to hook up the projector and show of the new changes at the meeting.
- B. It was suggested that the Broadband Availability Map be posted on the front page of the website (instead under other menus), along with info on using it.
- C. Mendocino County joined Next Century Cities (nextcenturycities.org), and if you go to their website you will see Supervisor Hamburg's photo and quote. We joined as a way to be inspired by what others are doing, and to learn from their experiences. Sonoma County took our lead and has also asked to join.
- D. On Oct 4th Mendocino County submitted a 181-page filing for comments in the Rural Call Completion Proceeding (although comments are really only the first 14 pages, and the rest is the outage report from 2014 and 2015). We are able to do this because we petitioned to be a party to this proceeding. The proceeding is still open, so if anyone

knows of phone issues they should take the 8-question survey associated with the proceeding.

- E. *Added note since the meeting: the County of Riverside is following Mendocino's lead, and has recently petitioned the PUC to be a party to this proceeding as well, because of outages that they have had.*
- F. The County Broadband Working Group has scheduled their first meeting for December 7th. This group will develop broadband goals and strategies for the county, and then seek the endorsement of these goals from various groups and organizations, and eventually the Board of Supervisors.
- G. Sonoma-Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) update - the SMEDD met on November 2nd to approve their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which will now go before the Boards of Supervisors for approval in December. The CEDS is a blueprint for economic development in the county, and the document can be found on the SMEDD website.
- H. Another task for the SMEDD board at their meeting was to discuss and prioritize projects for inclusion in the application to the Economic Development District. There were 33 projects submitted for consideration, and all were very good. A handful of them were broadband-related, and the board prioritized 13 of them for inclusion with the application. Inclusion does not guarantee or mean funding, only that they were considered a priority by the board. Not being selected as a priority project does not preclude that project from funding from the EDA in the future. The selected projects were evenly divided between Sonoma and Mendocino Counties.

IV. Legislative issues and updates

- A. The BAMC submitted a letter to Governor Brown recommending Commissioner Sandoval for re-appointment to the CPUC. The NBNCBC and Access Sonoma did likewise.
- B. The Alliance also signed onto a FCC privacy letter. The FCC received over 500,000 comments on this issue, and ultimately voted 3/2 in favor of privacy protections.
- C. Congressman Huffman introduced "The Public Lands Telecommunications Act" into the House on 9/21/16.
- D. U.S. Senators Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) introduced the "Broadband Connections for Rural Opportunities Program Act" on 9/28/16.
- E. Assemblymember Wood's AB 1549 (Broadband Map Act) passed on 9/23/16.

V. Broadband deployment updates and data

- A. Willits Main Street project - City planners submitted a USDA/EPA "Cool and Connected" letter of interest for expert help in learning how to leverage existing broadband for economic development as part of their "Main Street Project." We should hear in a few months if they are successful in their bid.
- B. Connect America Funding (CAF2) update - both AT&T and Frontier have accepted these federal subsidies to provide broadband in the state of CA at required speeds of 10 Mbps down and 1 Mbps up. There is a tight timeline for buildout, and 40% needs to be built by 2017, and then more each year until completed by 2020. Companies can use the money for any technology, as long as they reach households to provide service.
- C. Frontier has not shared with us their plans for Mendocino County and CAF2 money.

- D. AT&T has shared their plans, and they made a presentation before our Board of Supervisors on Nov. 1st. You can watch a [video of the presentation](#) here (it starts at 1:27).
- E. AT&T plans to use Fixed Wireless Local Loop, and will modify 8 existing cell towers to accept the new equipment, and then hope to build 14 new towers at various locations throughout the county. This wireless service will provide speeds of 10 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload.
- F. Trish made comments during the public comment portion of the meeting that although these deployments are welcome and a step forward, they will not solve our broadband problem, and we need continued private investment and state and federal public sector investments.
- G. The FCC broadband speed standard is now 25 Mbps down/3 Mbps up, so even with these investments Mendocino will still be “behind the curve.”
- H. Another concern that she expressed during her comments is that by investing in these areas, providers will make the case in Sacramento that the state broadband program (CASF) is now not needed, and therefore should not be reauthorized (see Sonoma County’s update on the Joy Road project from this program). The Alliance is strongly in support of the state program, which we hope will be re-authorized. Recently there have been 2 legislative attempts at re-authorization, but both failed due to lobbying efforts by incumbents.
- I. Trish also asked a question during their update on network resiliency, as to whether the upgrade might make the network vulnerable to more “software driven outages” or more vulnerable to a cyber-attack. Mark Blakeman said that he did not know the answer and would get back to me.
- J. Rick from our Office of Emergency Services attended the presentation, and wondered whether any of these new towers will be available for the county public safety to co-locate their equipment on.
- K. John Kuhry thinks that this is an opportunity for co-location by other providers and that this should be considered. He suggested bringing in Congressman Huffman’s office into the discussion.
- L. Other provider updates - Jim Persky of Pacific Internet updated the group on their activities. A year ago they went to Ignite Wireless for interference-free wireless for last mile, replacing fiber. Pacific Internet recently bought ClearLake Internet and have added quite a few customers there.

VI. Other updates - Executive Office, Libraries, Public Safety, EDFC, other organizations

- 1. EDFC said that their [co-working facility](#) was up and running, located in the United Methodist Church Annex at 205 N. Bush Street (Ukiah). This facility can address the lack of broadband in rural areas, and also provides an opportunity for entrepreneurs to connect with each other, as loneliness can be a big issue. They are trying to get the word out and to build up their member and user base. They will also be starting a Mendo Idea Share as well.
- 2. The Community Foundation reported that Executive Director Susanne Norgard has retired, and Megan Allende is now the new ED. She has been in her job about a month now. They will be holding an open house on Friday December 2nd from 4-8 pm.

VII. Access Sonoma Broadband (ASB) Update - Mike Nicholls

1. Mike reported that Joy Road applied for, and received, a CASF grant for 500 households to receive gigabit service (1000 Mbps download and upload). This provider for this project is RACE Communications, and they are also interested in the Dry Creek area in Sonoma County as well. Other areas where ASB would like to get some broadband projects going are Cazadero and Jenner.
2. ATT will be meeting with their Permitting Department next week to start discussions on details of their CAF2 tower builds. In Sonoma County, ATT plans to modify 5 towers and build 5 new towers.

VIII. Final comments

1. Earl commented that his interest in broadband is as an engineer, and that he didn't realize all of the political problems.
2. The Willits News asked about the Alliance's goals for the future (Goals and Strategies document, bridge the digital divide for economic development). Dan added that our larger, longer-range goals are in the NBNBCB work plan, such as a middle-mile infrastructure along the 101.
3. Jim spoke about how the "Internet of Things" is wide open for hacking, and that is a concern.

IX. Next meeting: January 6th, 2017