

**Steering Committee Meeting Notes**

**Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013 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: 10:00 am**

- a. Attendees: Brian Churm, Greg Jirak, Jeff Tyrell, Jim Moorehead, John Kuhry, Mike Nichols, Ray Gifford, Susanne Norgard, Trish Steel
- b. Call-in: John McCowen
- c. Changes to agenda: Jim would like to add the addition of an MCOG planning grant application in collaboration with MCOE after the Golden Bear Broadband update

**2. Golden Bear Broadband LLC update**

- a. On January 15 there were two important meetings that happened that related to the broadband issue. In Ukiah, Jim attended a meeting where Golden Bear Broadband LLC organizers Mitch Drake, Tom West, and Cathy Emerson gave a presentation to legislative staff from our various representatives. Present were Dan Hamburg, Mike Nichols, Steve Sharpe, Heidi Dickerson (Congressman Huffman), Jeff Tyrell (Senator Noreen Evans) and Ruth Valenzuela (Assemblyman Wesley Chesbro). Maddy Hirshfield, the District Director in Sonoma County for Assemblyman Chesbro, was also in attendance.
- b. Jim felt that the meeting was successful, and that Tom, Cathy and Mitch did a good job presenting the project. Support from our elected representatives at all levels is important to get the Golden Bear LLC application approved.
- c. The EB5 Regional Center was also discussed, and the application for Regional Center status has been submitted to United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) but hasn't been approved yet. This is a federal level issue, and Heidi will follow up on it. (John McCowen suggested that Jim ask Heidi to also contact Mike Thompson, which she subsequently said she plans to do during her visit to DC for the inauguration.)
- d. Cathy brought a map produced by Chico state GIS folks which showed a map of the fiber existing in Northern California but without the planned routes added, and it shows islands of fiber without being connected to each other. There is little redundancy and clearly shows why this project is needed.
- e. Afterwards there were some positive comments. Maddy said that the presentation helped her a lot, and Jeff found the mapping enlightening, particularly the coverage and the availability of the GBB middle mile broadband to connect it all together.
- f. The Golden Bear Broadband application is being submitted electronically today and tomorrow. It's a 450 page application. Fifteen hard copies are also needed, so there is a team together in Chico to assemble these hard copies for submission by the first of February.

- g. The total cost of the project is 138 million; Golden Bear will provide 19 million in match, of which \$12 million is cash and \$7 million is in-kind donations (dark fiber, rights of way, real property)
- h. Mike informed us that the Sonoma County Supervisor Effren Carillo is the 2nd Vice President of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and at a recent meeting had a conversation with Sunne McPeak. Sunne is president and chief executive officer of the California Emerging Technology Fund, a non-profit organization providing statewide leadership to accelerate the development of broadband and other advanced communication services to underserved communities and populations. Sunne likes the project, and was open to coming out to Sonoma County for a meeting. A formal invitation will be sent to invite her to discuss the state of the project and application.
- i. That same day a meeting was held at the Art Center in Gualala/Sea Ranch to introduce the community to the Golden Bear project and to look at fiber routes and identify anchor institutions in the Gualala – Sea Ranch area. Greg and Mike Nicholls made the presentation, and some key community members were there, including Frank Bell (Sea Ranch Community Manager), Peter Youtz (Sea Ranch Utilities Committee), the Executive Director of the Health Center, and other anchor reps and homeowners. The meeting was only an hour but was productive outreach, as Frank has already sent us 15 identified sites that they consider critical infrastructure for our Broadband Access Inventory. The Alliance plans to do the same thing in Point Arena.
- j. That same day Greg also met with Karen Santana, Director of Administration/Environmental Protection for the Manchester Band of Pomo Indians.
- k. Mike reported that each Pomo band has a group of Tribal Elders who do the administration of that band, and they have a Tribal Elders meeting once/month. Efen Carillo was able to get Mike on the agenda for a presentation at their meeting, and Mike said it was an honor to address them and to provide the information. There were fifteen in the leadership group he spoke to.
- l. January 25<sup>th</sup> is a proposed date for a Route One Corridor Project permitting meeting between Sonoma County and Mendocino County. The meeting is to get started on some groundwork for the permitting process, foresee potential issues, and to make introductions. Steve Sharpe of Sonoma County has wants to get started on the myriad of permitting issues regarding the R1CP.

### **3. Mendocino Council Of Governments (MCOG) planning grant**

- a. The Alliance received a request from Steve Turner and Paul Tichinin of Mendocino County Office of Education (MCOE) to collaborate and submit an application for a Caltrans Transportation Planning grant. The RFP was sent out by MCOG, which would be eligible to apply directly on behalf of MCOE/BAMC for a project, or we could apply as a sub-applicant. Steve and Jim agreed to set up a meeting with someone from MCOG to see how realistic it is for us to do this, as it may be a long shot.
- b. One of the grants is the Environmental Justice Grant, and from the grant summary provided by MCOG, the purpose is to “promote community involvement in planning to improve mobility, access, and safety while promoting economic opportunity, equity,

environmental protection, and affordable housing for low-income, minority, and Native American communities.”

- c. Jim wanted to review this with the Steering Committee, but already feels that it would be really beneficial for the Alliance to formally partner with MCOE. Even if the grant is not approved, it is the first opportunity for the Alliance to formally work with MCOE. Both organizations have the mutual goal to deploy broadband where MCOE needs it, both on campus and at student’s homes.
- d. Supervisor John McCowen agreed, and commented that to cement the working relationship between the Alliance and MCOE is positive in itself.
- e. Greg added that the collaboration on the grant would also establish a relationship with MCOG, which would again be a positive step.

#### 4. Planning for 2013

- a. The Alliance Executive Committee will plan to meet soon for a strategic planning meeting for the New Year.
- b. Mendocino County Broadband Plan
  - i. One of the benefits of being in the consortium with Tom West for our planning grant is that we now have the outlines of a draft fiber backbone for the county, and a draft broadband plan for the county. We have this structure to start with, and now we have to involve the county to flush out both of these plans.
  - ii. Jim set the stage by being at the Sheriff’s monthly police chief’s meeting last month with Tom Allman, and the importance of all public agencies filling out the Broadband Access Inventory was stressed.
- c. Broadband Access Inventory (BAI)
  - i. We are making progress on our infrastructure anchor institutions, although we still don’t have sites for County Health and Human Services. We will also be working with the Chambers of Commerce to survey the business community and especially pulling in the larger businesses such as wineries and home businesses. We have a lot of people who work out of their homes, and we need to document both adequate and inadequate broadband access. There is newer and faster technology constantly coming out, but it is not always available to people who may be just down the road, or can’t afford it.
  - ii. Many people, such as Tom West, feel that cellular is not the long term solution to broadband problems.
  - iii. Brian brought up the point that the data is changing so fast we need to somehow put a freshness stamp on it so that we don’t put out false information. Everything in this industry is always on an expiration date.
  - iv. No one really knew the best method to do this or who should do this. Various ideas should be a topic for future discussions.
  - v. There was discussion also around the topic of the “digital divide” and that in the coming years we will have to deal with this. There is a divergence happening in the county, in that increasingly the providers are saying that a

particular area is “lit” but the community side is saying “I don’t have it because I can’t afford it.”

- vi. John K added that he thought Americans pay a higher price for broadband than just about anywhere else in the world.
  - vii. Jim would like to look at this in terms of strategic planning. If Mendocino County ends up with just a duopoly, then the affordability issue will never be resolved. Brian also gave the example of Potter Valley, which has three carriers but there was no price reduction.
- d. California Interactive Broadband Map (<http://132.241.99.41/cpucflex/CPUCSite/>)
- i. The new California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Interactive Broadband Map came out, and you can follow the link above and check it out.
  - ii. Unfortunately, the map is still not accurate. It is based on census block data, so if some of the census block is served, the map shows the entire census block served.
  - iii. As an example, Jim’s road is un-served, but on the map it says that he has available Comcast with 100 MG of download speed. Most of the housing units in Jim’s census block do have Comcast, but there are still 15 un-served houses at the end of the street. If there is one person served, then the entire area is marked as served.
  - iv. The Alliance would like to challenge the CPUC map this year.
  - v. At the Redwood Coast Connect Broadband Forum held in Fortuna last year, Jim sat with Rob Osborn, the new mapping hire for the CPUC, and Jim showed him his house and the inaccurate data. Jim has filled out the online comment form, but otherwise there is no way to refute that data. Jim would like to see the data go down to the parcel level, as it would be much more accurate than the census block level. Rob said that originally that was the plan, but it was decided that it would be too costly to use the parcel level so it was changed to census block level.

## 5. Vision Mendocino 2030

- a. John Kuhry had a conversation with Phil Dow, Executive Director of MCOG, and he will ask Phil to come to our Alliance meeting on January 25<sup>th</sup>.

## 6. Community Foundation Challenge Grant

- a. We should be receiving the Tobacco Settlement Funds very soon.
- b. Mike reported that in Sonoma County, they received \$5 million in these funds, and had \$36 million in requests.
- c. We are close to the completion of the Challenge Grant, and John McCowen suggested we strategize to find the best way to make the “ biggest splash” in making that match.
- d. Regarding the checks we have received from our RCC planning grant, those checks have not been cashed yet and are sitting in the EDFC vault, and Greg will make an appointment with Connie Stewart to discuss them. We want to know exactly for what we have been re-imbursed. We want to report based on our contract with HSU only.

The Sponsored Projects Foundation at HSU has the contract with the CPUC but that is their contract, not ours.

- e. Our grant is a re-imbusement grant, so we only get money back that we spend, and this year because of various reasons we haven't been able to get re-imbursed until just recently (the uncashed checks mentioned above). Greg did say that according to Connie Stewart, any unused amounts from the first year of our grant will be able to be rolled over to this current year.
- f. The budget will be part of the upcoming planning session for the Executive Committee.
- g. Jim will send out some possible dates and see if they work for Dan and John, our supervisors, and then schedule the meeting.

**7. Opportunities – no reports given**

- a. Route One Corridor Project (R1CP)
- b. Rancho Navarro
- c. Sherwood Road/Willowbrook

**8. Committee Reports – no reports given**

**9. Meeting Adjourned at 11:30 am**

**Next meeting: Jan 25<sup>th</sup>, February 8, 15, and 22<sup>nd</sup>.**