# Meeting Minutes

**Ref: Broadband Advisory Council Planning Session          Date: 4.12.2022**

**Place: MS Teams Virtual Meeting**

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| **ATTENDEES** | Madeleine McGee, Jim Stritzinger, Peggy McLean, Melanie Barton, Susie Shannon, Bernie Mazyck, Leesa Aiken, Victor Young, Mike Couick, Stephanie Frazier, Lori Dickes, Elizabeth Carpentier, Anna Berger, with an additional 8 attendees of the public who registered for the meeting and attended. |

A meeting was held on 4.12.2022 from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM virtually, via Webex.  This document summarizes discussions and action items covered during the meeting.

## DISCUSSIONS

I.   **Welcome & Legislative Update - Nanette Edwards**
   a.   **ARPA Legislation- The senate recently took up House Bill 4408; the bill relating to ARPA funds. The current version of the legislation includes $400 million allocated for Broadband expansion, of the money for Broadband expansion, $185 million of that money is related to a provision within ARPA called the Capital Projects Fund (CPF), there is a requirement that a plan is drafted and approved by the federal government before these funds are released. The remaining $215 million is associated with the State Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF).**
   b.   **On May 15 the Infostructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), notice of funding opportunity will be released.**

II.   **Review & Approve Minutes - Jim Stritzinger**
   a.   **Group discussed the review of prior minutes. A motion was made to approve the minutes, the motion was seconded, unanimously approved, and adopted as final.**

III.   **County/Municipal ARPA Projects - Existing/Proposed Broadband Project Updates**

   a.   **Group discussed updates related to Broadband, comments were as followed:**
      i.   **Bernie Mazyck- Broadband Community Champion training program has been working with county leaders, grassroot leaders, school board members and elected officials in order to bring them together and train them on Broadband. They have had training in 10 counties.**
      ii.   **Madeleine McGee- Would like to use Tri-county Cradle to Career as a webinar to promote their efforts to other parts of the state.**

iii. Leesa Aiken- Interested in funds set aside for capital projects because they have a lot of libraries who are focusing on Telehealth but do not have the space for this program.

iv. Victor Young- Invited Jim Stritzinger and the director from Tri-County Cradle to Career to talk about the importance of Broadband on their podcast.

v. Elizabeth Carpentier- Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) and the Department of Education have a project to put Starlink into several homes as a pilot. They are looking for homes that are not likely to have access to fiber.

vi. Peggy McLean- Peggy is now part of the business incentives and community development division. They will be going out to expand their efforts in community development, especially in Broadband.

vii. Stephanie Frazier- ETV is assessing the vertical assets that they have as they get several inquiries. She was hoping to share some data on this, but her team is still working to retrieve this information. They have several partners looking into their towers to see they're a fit for broadband projects. Some towers will need updating but they are working with multiple partners to make this happen.

viii. Brian Stevick- Santee Cooper has worked to get the fiber and transmission assets available for dark fiber, as well as doing pull attachments where possible in order to get fiber to more rural areas.

ix. Mike Couick- They are working with NRECA on a couple of consortiums, one on electric vehicles and the other is for broadband as they try to secure funding under the IIJA

x. Susie Shannon- In the process of SC Competes developing out a multi-stakeholder, public private academic technology and cyber security strategic plan, they are in the final stages of this planning. They are doing charrettes in some smaller pockets around the state.

xi. Melanie Barton- Continuing to monitor legislations.

xii. Anna Berger- Aware of 11 counties that are investing some of their ARPA money into broadband

xiii. Matt DeWitt (City of Newberry) discussed work related to Broadband deployment throughout their jurisdiction. Services are contracted out to Internet Service Providers to manage and maintain associated networks. WC Fiber is providing maintenance and operations. The city has established a framework for an open network based on criteria that ensures the quality of service remains high.

IV. **SpaceX Starlink Pilot Project - Betsy Carpentier and Jim Stritzinger - Connectivity for 20 rural & remote K-12 student/staff homes**
   a. Pilot has been initiated. Department of Education paying for equipment, ORS paying for installment. The first delivery of hardware arrived at ORS this week.
   b. Working alongside Department of Education they funded an angel subscription for 20 units – It covers one year of service and the initial cost of hardware

c. Starlink is typically a DIY installation. For purposes of the pilot, ORS is paying for the cost of the installation. ORS will meet with recipients of the service and obtain feedback on the overall user experience.

d. Stats on Starlink based on Ookla Speed test data (as of 3.31.2022)



**V. SC Broadband Office Update - Jim Stritzinger**

a. Mapping
   i. ORS presented on SC Broadband Mapping efforts at NTIA Conference in Washington, DC.
   ii. ORS funded a discussion paper around Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) technology.
   iii. Modeling is being rerun; updates will be published within the next 90 days in accordance with ORS bi-annual update schedule

b. I Need Internet Survey
   i. At current, over 6000 survey results have been submitted under the I Need Internet Survey. ORS expressed appreciation and thanks to the Advisory Council for sharing the I Need Internet press release through social media outlets which has contributed toward a favorable response rate over the last 90 days.

c. Investment Approach
   i. The first step in the investment approach is continuing to create maps and then investing in the areas that are proven to be priority areas and underserved, with each map created we will continue to invest in areas piece by piece. Priority areas are places with no internet access, houses with public school children and low-income areas. Then we will move to areas that have internet services less than 25/3. ARPA money must be committed by December 31st, 2024.

    **d. Last Mile Pilot**

        **i. Last Mile focusses on underserved areas that are surrounded by served areas, for example, neighborhoods that are difficult to get internet too, they may be surrounded by water or on the other side of train tracks. 120 days has been given in order to complete construction in these areas, short term construction time was given on purpose so we can get this process moving.**

**VI. Other Business**

    **a. Madeleine McGee asked the group to pick-up discussions around Broadband adoption and use during the next Quarterly Meeting**

| ACTION ITEMS | PERSON RESPONSIBLE | DEADLINE |
|---|---|---|
| **Next Meeting   - Tuesday July 12, 2022**<br>**10am to 11:30am EST** | ORS | 07.12.2022 |
| **Follow up to request Matt DeWitt to provide documentation on Newberry's experience with their approach to broadband.** | Matt DeWitt | 07.12.2022 |