Dane County

Minutes - Final Unless Amended by Committee

Dane County Broadband Task Force

Thursday, August 5, 2021	9:00 AM	Virtual Meeting

Virtual Meeting

A. Call To Order

Staff present: Josh Schroeder, Lauren Kuhl, Jim Twieg, Jarom McCallum, Majid Allan, Sharon Lezberg, Colter Sikora, Milena Bernardinello-PSC|WBO, Dave Gault

Andrew Hoyos and Dr. Sarah Ghee introduced themselves.

The meeting was called to order by Ratcliff at 9:00 a.m.

Dickmeyer joined at 9:10 a.m.

Jensen joined at 10:06 a.m.

Present 14 - MELISSA RATCLIFF, DAVE RIPP, KATE MCGINNITY, RENEE LAUBER, BOB WIPPERFURTH, BILL DICKMEYER, MICHELLE JENSEN, DEANA ZENTNER, JOYCE TIKALSKY, ANDREW HOYOS, JAMES DANKY, PETER WEIL, CATHY SUTTER, and SARAH GHEE

Excused 1 - TODD VIOLANTE

B. Consideration of Minutes

1. [2021 MIN-184](#)   Minutes of the July 20, 2021 Dane County Broadband Task Force Meeting

Attachments: [2021 MIN-184](#)

A motion was made by RIPP, seconded by MCGINNITY, that the Minutes be approved. The motion carried by a voice vote.

C. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

None

D. Action Items

None

E. Presentations

None

F. Reports to Committee

1. Presentation and Discussion on County Authority and Funding Possibilities

Taking a look at what funding is available this past summer for broadband from the ARPA. Jim Twieg is a 2nd year law student working on a project in assisting with the research. Counties are an authorized recipient of the funds, and the funds have to be used by 12/31/2024. Law sets out four large categories of allowed uses for the funds the fourth being to make necessary investments in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure. Interim final rule from secretary treasury which provides current guidance on how the funds can be used. Final rule will be published later for final guidance. Local government has flexibility how to best use the funds.

Survey found importance of working from home, attending remote schooling, and attend remote healthcare. Eligible uses of funds reviewed. A major requirement is to improve quality of service to both underservice and unserved households and businesses. Aspects of this include setting goal for new broadband services, and integrating affordable options into their program designs.

Some Wisconsin counties like Brown County are ahead in implementing studies where unserved or underserved areas are. 5 million dollars from ARPA to be allocated to improve county broadband.

Ratcliff: Would like to have discussion today about what the task force sees as good used for these funds. Requested ideas from other members on how to use the funds.

Wipperfurth: Is there any guidance for working with ISP?

Gault: Nothing prohibiting using the funds in conjunction with a for-profit business, but probably some requirements for accepting grants.

Ratcliff: State law requires that it be a public-private partnership. Municipality can't take on the role of being the provider. Also a lot of regulation regarding accepting grant funds.

McGinnity: asked Hoyos is underserviced broadband classification speed 25 down/3 up and what people get from those speeds?

Hoyos: gave an examples that this Zoom meeting takes up about 2.5 mbps of the 3 mbps upload speed.

Tikalsky: Talked about people left behind. Discussed county wide program to supplement costs for technology or broadband connection. Coaching for people to use technology. Go over different types of connections with residents.

Hoyos: provided FCC benefit link. https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit

Ratcliff: Asked Gault if the county has the authority to provide subsidy for broadband rate?

Gault: Subsidizing rate is a short term fix while investing in infrastructure would be a longer term fix.

Weil: Lack of infrastructure in rural is a major problem. What does 5 million get us for infrastructure?

Hoyos: Discussed public-private partnership of the middle mile fiber network. Federal funding used to create Mufn(muffin) fiber network inside Madison. Last mile fiber network is from main streets to homes. Middle mile is creating backbone fiber in main streets. With this middle mile network in place the previous public-private partnership would connect these middle mile networks to "Big Internet".

<a href "https://www.cityofmadison.com/information-technology/initiatives/metropolitan-unified-fiber-network-mufn">
https://mufn.org/

Dickmeyer: Asked the question to the task force if the funds should be spent on one thing or multiple approaches? Building into infrastructure is a great way to get a long term return on the funds spent.

Discussion ensued about what the 5 mil should be spent on.

Ripp: Talked about previous project to connect the CCB to Medical Examiner since it is the backup for 911 center, and that it would be a good idea to talk with Public Works to determine the cost and what was needed for that project.

McGinnity: Other piece of funding could come from local municipalities whom we could partner with since the funds they received is separate from the 5 million that Dane County receives.

Tikalsky: Suggested a written plan and proposal for use of funding.

Dickmeyer: Can we use the funds in part with a long-term capital funding plan?

Wipperfurth: Discussed inviting ISP to future meeting.

Danky: Agreed with partnering with local municipality who have additional ARPA money.

Hoyos: State also has ARPA funding for broadband. Grant application were due in June or July and are being reviewed right now. Was founding member of Mufn and can loop additional people into meetings.

Ratcliff: good to keep all of these ideas in mind for upcoming meetings, and for recommendations to County Board. Thanked Gault and Twieg for attending meeting.

2021
RPT-381

ARPA FUNDS AND BROADBAND

Attachments: 2021 RPT-381

2. Presentation and Discussion on Map Coverage and Surveys

Colter Sikora, Jaron McCallum, and Milena Bernadinello presenting.

The members from the Wisconsin Broadband Office at the Public Service Commission introduced themselves and what they do for WBO.

McCallum: Went over high level overview about the WBO and its' mission and also discussed broadband expansion program. Which is a state level funding which application recently closed and the office has 100 mil to distribute for the ARPA grant cycle. WBO does a lot of mapping of various things including broadband access. WBO also has several resources available for the public.

Sikora: Discussed what maps are available including the WI Broadband Map(WBM) which is one of the primary maps they use. This map shows advertised coverage of residential consumers. Talked about current standard set by the FCC, which uses the census block, and the challenges of using this type of mapping standard. Shared list of other tools and partners they work with.

Bernadinello: Ran municipal analysis of internet services and discussed service status and grant eligibility. Talked about Dane County villages that are either unserved or underserved. WBO has joined the National Broadband Availability Map group (NBAM) to get additional information regarding speed tests. Talked about outside tests they use as data.

Sikora: How do we determine what areas really need broadband. Showed map of areas that would require additional broadband support.

McCallum: Talked about the benefits of brining in ISP to meeting earlier on since they have a lot of information regarding service area and expertise. Talked about risks and rewards for inviting multiple shareholders.

Weil: What determines grant eligibility in towns and villages?

Sikora: Grant eligibility is 25 download/ 3 upload speed. Talked about WI grant and census block overstatements. Data is provided form ISP and not from end user speed reporting. Discussed several ISP provided data sets.

Tikalsky: What is the needed down/up speed for consumers?

McCallum: FCC has a list of different that would help determining speed.
<a href "https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/d68ed923b2d34a53b9d51dc8f230eddd">

Ratcliff: What can towns/villages/residents can do to help the maps?

McCallum: Wisconsin Internet Self-Report (WISER) would help provide additional data.

Bernadinello: WISER is good qualitative data, but Ookla and Mlab are quantitative data.
Different types of internet will provide different layer of data on the maps. Additional
resource in governor taskforce report.
<a href
"https://psc.wi.gov/Documents/broadband/2021%20Governors%20Task%20Force%20on
%20Broadband%20Access.pdf">
Mlab speed test shared https://speed.measurementlab.net/#/

Ratcliff: Asked member to test their speed and bring their speed results for the next
meeting. The more that municipality know how important having reliable broadband to
their communities the better.

2021 RPT-383	BROADBANDUSA FIXED BROADBAND COMMUNITY REPORT

Attachments: 2021 RPT-383

2021 RPT-384	MAPPING WISCONSIN'S BROADBAND ACCESS

Attachments: 2021 RPT-384

G. Future Meeting Items and Dates

September 2nd 9:00 a.m.

Links will be sent out to taskforce members.

Next meeting will focus on the grant. County lobbyist Carrie Springer will also be at the
next meeting.

H. Such Other Business as Allowed by Law

I. Adjourn

A motion was made by MCGINNITY, seconded by WIPPERFURTH, that the
meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Josh Schroeder, pending Taskforce approval