



Dane County

Minutes - Final Unless Amended by Committee

Dane County Broadband Task Force

Tuesday, July 20, 2021

3:00 PM

Remote meeting: Please see top of agenda for
instructions on how to join webinar or to call in via
telephone.

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A. Call To Order

Others present: Lauren Kuhl, Josh Schroeder, Majid Allan, Sharon Lezberg, Courtney Erdman, Bernard Ockers, Forbes Mcintosh, Jaron McCallum, Jeff Schumann, Jerry Derr, Kathy Christoph

The meeting was called to order by Ratcliff at 3:00 p.m.

Present 13 - MELISSA RATCLIFF, DAVE RIPP, KATE MCGINNITY, TODD VIOLANTE, RENEE LAUBER, BOB WIPPERFURTH, BILL DICKMEYER, MICHELLE JENSEN, DEANA ZENTNER, JOYCE TIKALSKY, JAMES DANKY, PETER WEIL, and CATHY SUTTER

Absent 1 - ANDREW HOYOS

B. Election of Officers

1. Election of Chair

McGinnity nominates Supervisor Ratcliff. Ripp moves to close nominations and unanimously pass motion to nominate Supervisor Ratcliff as Chair. Wipperfurth seconds. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Election of Vice Chair

Ripp nominates Supervisor McGinnity. Ripp moves to close nominations and unanimously pass motion to nominate Supervisor McGinnity as Chair. Wipperfurth seconds. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Consideration of Minutes

None

D. Action Items

None

E. Presentations

F. Reports to Committee

1. Introductions

Taskforce members introduced themselves.

2. Discussion of charge and anticipated outcomes

McGinnity provided an overview of the tasks and a background of the taskforce.

3. Broadband Introduction

Presented by Doctor Tessa Conroy of UW Extension.

Doctor Conroy reviewed with the taskforce a brief overview including rural-urban disparities and income-level disparities. Doctor Conroy also discussed percentage of population based on urban-rural communities and income. Shared maps of Dane County highlighting areas with lower broadband coverage, and possible reasons for these lower access areas.

Doctor Conroy talked about barriers including infrastructure, adoption, affordability, and digital literacy as contributing factors to lower access to broadband.

Federal cost of implementation of similar infrastructures shows that it would take a huge investment compared to others like electrifications and the highway system. Doctor Conroy went on to speak about the downsides of having higher number of households without a broadband subscription.

Finally Doctor Conroy discussed broadband adoption why it's important and consideration for success.

Ratcliff: Thanked Doctor Conroy.

Danky: Can fiber optic be run along with gas lines? Conroy doesn't know of a reason why. Could be a possible partner for cost sharing.

Ratcliff: discussed dig once law.

Conroy: Provided a link to the UW extension webpage with additional information about broadband in Wisconsin.

Doctor Conroy shared a links to a speed test and additional information from the UW Extension.

<https://speed.measurementlab.net/#/>

<a href

"https://economicdevelopment.extension.wisc.edu/broadband-internet-and-the-wisconsin-economy/">

[2021
RPT-300](#)

Broadband and The Wisconsin Economy April 2021 V

Attachments: [2021 RPT-300](#)

4. Discussion: How does this affect your constituencies?

Each taskforce member shared their experience with broadband and internet and how it affects them and people around them.

McGinnity: heard about digital divide when running for Board. #1 thing heard from people in her rural district.

Ripp: Represent a rural area, a lot of area has nothing. Towns of 1,000 people have a difficult time doing much. Dane is a town of 1,000 people with 4 providers. Downloading takes too long, watching YouTube videos is a challenge

Dickmeyer: Work at Meriter hospital. Social determinants of health. Healthcare is provided much more virtually now. Challenges helping to support employees working in rural communities.

Jensen: Equal access. Families have invested in satellite which has a huge upfront cost. Kids working off their phones. Being able to access videos, research when at home. The way kids are educated is very different. Disparities between haves and have-nots.

Sutter: Serve on the Board for internet provider – Mt. Horeb telephone company. Owners of large farm, using internet more and more for work. Interested in internet accessibility for all.

Zentner: Be able to help, assist, and educate residents of Rutland. Variety of options, but collaboratively nothing is working.

Wipperfurth: As internet has evolved it has become a need. In Dane County there's a hodge-podge of reliability. Will take investment from government to correct situation.

Tikalsky: Everyone On Stoughton, tech support at Stoughton Senior Center. Provide services for older adults. Assess accessibility in the community. Found variety of services to help seniors. Computers for older adults – have a lending program for seniors to use tablets.

Danky: Cheered and daunted when heard there are 47 different grants available. Need assistance in how to leverage the grant opportunities.

Weil: Interest in dealing with the market failure – need to look at a hybrid solution. Government needs to be involved, relying on maps that are provided by providers distorts reality – can't rely on them. Small towns don't have a lot of expertise with the grants – need to work together.

Violante: Planning department has a familiarity of the topography, work close with jurisdictions. Have perspective of communication tower applications. Contribute thinking and apply resources of department.

Lauber: Problem of uneven coverage, inaccurate data. Towns have various degrees of employees to work on this topic. Wide variety of resources of towns and need out there. Towns do not have staff to take on the work.

Ratcliff heard from constituents of the need.

- 5. [2021 RPT-261](#) How can the task force help address gaps due to incomplete infrastructure and/or cost for services

Attachments: [Broadband Expansion Recommendations 7-13-21 \(1\)](#)

Ratcliff noted that the document attached to agenda was a document from Rep. Beth Meyers, who was on the Governor’s Broadband Task Force.

The policy recommendations noted at the bottom of page one are things the task force will be working towards as they meet over the next year.

- Present** 12 - MELISSA RATCLIFF, DAVE RIPP, KATE MCGINNITY, TODD VIOLANTE, RENEE LAUBER, BILL DICKMEYER, MICHELLE JENSEN, DEANA ZENTNER, JOYCE TIKALSKY, JAMES DANKY, PETER WEIL, and CATHY SUTTER
- Excused** 1 - BOB WIPPERFURTH
- Absent** 1 - ANDREW HOYOS

6. Upcoming presentations

Discuss the list of potential presenters; who else should we hear from? What is missing? What other information do you need?

This is the draft list provide to the taskforce.

Funding sources and county authority, Success stories and presentation from Public Service Commission, Technology options, Discussion of rural and urban issues, Land use and mapping, Digital equity, Public Engagement, Sharing information about broadband with the public.

Next meeting county funding and funding sources that might be available.

Violante: how to make maps more accurate.

James Danky: Could we hear from a provider about what it costs to lay fiber?

Tikalsky: Wonder about surveying about coverage.

McGinnity: wants to know how data was collected so that the taskforce doesn’t repeat the same procedures.

G. Future Meeting Items and Dates

August 5, 2021 at 9:00am

H. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

Jeff Schumann commented on items on the agenda and the Broadband Taskforce.

I. Such Other Business as Allowed by Law

J. Adjourn

A motion was made by TIKALSKY, seconded by DANKY, that the MEETING be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 4:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Josh Schroeder, pending Taskforce approval