

MEETING NOTES

**FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
REGIONAL BROADBAND PLANNING COUNCIL
WASHINGTON CITY HALL
111 NORTH 100 EAST; WASHINGTON CITY, UT
DECEMBER 4, 2013**

THOSE IN ATTENDANCE

Scott Hirschi
Randy Cosby
Amie Parker
Kelleigh Cole
Heather Rankin, via telephone
Justin Fischer, via telephone
Kelly Stowell, via telephone
Matt Brown, via telephone
Mayor Rick Rosenberg, via telephone
Gary Zabriskie
Levi Roberts

REPRESENTING

Washington Co., Economic Dev. Professional
Infowest, Owner
Governor's Office of Economic Development
Governor's Office of Economic Development
Rankin Realty at Lake Powell, Owner
Garfield Co., Economic Development Professional
Kane Co. Center for Education, Business and Arts
Kane County Economic Development
City of Santa Clara
Five County Association of Governments
Five County Association of Governments

Levi Roberts extended a welcome to those in attendance and others joining via conference call. Participants were asked to identify themselves when they speak in order to expedite transcription of the minutes. Introductions were provided and those participating via telephone acknowledged their presence.

I. FINDINGS FROM BROADBAND TECH SUMMIT

Levi Roberts indicated that a newsletter was provided to council members which contains a link to the presentations for the Broadband Tech Summit. He encouraged members to review the presentations, especially those in your particular service area and/or area of focus. A lot of good presentations were provided at the meeting. Council members attending the tech summit included Heather Rankin, Kelly Stowell, and Norman Olson. Gary Zabriskie and Levi Roberts, Five County AOG, also attended.

Kelly Stowell thanked Kelleigh Cole and her entire team for putting on the tech summit and acknowledged that a lot of hard work was involved. He noted that the event was very well organized. It was a good opportunity to attend and discuss broadband issues. Heather Rankin echoed Kelly's comments and noted that the summit was great. The amount of networking that was accomplished during the event was very beneficial. It was also nice to be able to discuss similar issues with other rural counties. She stated that the summit was very well done and beyond her expectations. Levi Roberts continued discussion regarding various sessions at the Tech Summit including the following: **1) Economic Development--** Using social networking for an economic development strategy. This is a powerful tool because others are essentially doing the marketing. Kelly Stowell is doing a lot of good things in Kane County utilizing social networking; and **2) Libraries--** A topic that has been touched on in previous meetings. Libraries play a very essential role for internet access in the community for those who do not have it at home. The

presentation highlighted the different kinds of things that are essential for people to use the internet, especially for those that do not have access otherwise. He noted that Heather pointed out that even though broadband is in many areas, it is not available in all areas. The links provided in the newsletter provide access to all of the presentations from the Broadband Tech Summit.

II. REVIEW PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING PLAN

Levi Roberts explained that the Council is in the middle of the plan development process working toward the fact finding. The group has covered strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. This meeting will review those in more detail to provide an opportunity for members to add and/or amend previous notes. Today's meeting will focus on identification of key priorities for the region. This needs to be kept a little bit broad, but with the focus that we will be specific on strategies specific to our region.

III. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES - ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Levi Roberts explained that in the discussion for the first two meetings included strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges from each members standpoint throughout the region. A chart was e-mailed to participants consolidating information that was gathered during these meetings into specific categories. Reference to this chart will be made throughout today's discussion. Focus area identified in previous meetings include: 1) Rural Service; 2) Internet Providers; 3) Schools; 4) Libraries; 5) Transportation; 6) Business Operations; 7) Economic Development; and 8) Agriculture. The agriculture piece mainly deals with Circle Four Farms and Lynn Dalton serves as the member on this Council. Even though he has not been able to join in any meetings, Levi was able to contact him to obtain input from the agriculture standpoint. This information has been incorporated into the chart. Lynn provides IT for Circle Four Farms. Kelly Stowell indicated that growers/farmers in the Kane County utilize the Natural Resources Conservation Service for real time information. It may also be beneficial to speak to some growers to obtain their perspective. Levi asked that Kelly provide names and contact information for these individuals.

Levi proposed to review each of the topics mentioned above to outline the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and challenges. Members were asked to provide input with changes and/or additions in each of the categories. The review may include additional topics and/or consolidation of items with commonalities included on the list.

Items were covered as follows: **1) Rural Service--** Heather Rankin mentioned that under challenges the words regional/interstate needs to be added to difficulty working with federal/state entities to expand network. This would help to address the situation in the Big Water area because working with other states may be an important aspect for consideration, especially in terms access to tribal broadband service. There may very well be opportunity to work with other states to find resolve to this issue. This is also an issue in Six County were the tribe is as well. Randy Cosby asked if the reliance on DSL is because there is only one provider or would it be problems with the DSL service? Levi Roberts responded that Circle Farms mentioned that it would be good to have other service options in the area in addition to DSL. Gary Zabriskie explained that all of the farms are tied with internet connection, but this is with only available through a DSL option. If this connection goes down, then the entire operation is offline. It would be good to have another option to provide redundancy with other services. This is also true for residents in Minersville and Milford who only have the DSL option. There are multiple farm operation locations for the feed storage,

feed silos, train transport, as well as the actual farms. It is important to have communications between all of these various operations. Other fallback options such as satellite are being considered as an option for Circle Four Farms. This would allow operations to function on some level of redundancy. It was noted that South Central and Quest are providers of DSL in Minersville and Milford. This is a huge area to run fiber to provide the wireless connection. Randy Cosby indicated that there are also microwave paths out of this area and perhaps better marketing would help in this situation. There are other options available that Circle Four Farms may not be aware of. Scott Hirschi indicated that if they are connected into the fiber the ability to feed either direction should be in place. That would be contingent on whether the provider they are using goes both directions. The representative explained that land line service is not needed, but is kept by most households as their access to DSL. It is their belief that it would be beneficial for residents in the area to eliminate their need for a land line for DSL. This would actually be a cost issue for residents as well. Scott Hirschi asked about the source of grants available under opportunities that target rural areas. Levi Roberts indicated that one of the sources is federal grants through USDA. Research needs to be done to determine all grant sources and eligible entities. It was noted that it is generally the providers that are working with communities who are eligible to make application for these grants. Heather Rankin commented that the redundancy issue is important, but it is also important to have some type of service at all. In the Big Water area over the Thanksgiving weekend, there was no service available in their area. This makes it difficult for business owners to operate and difficult for residents to purchase gasoline for their vehicles. When the internet access is down, there is no way to obtain fuel, short of traveling to Page, Arizona. Reliable service and redundancy in the Big Water area would be really helpful. It was suggested that perhaps a better word would be diversity and/or competition. Justin Fischer explained that there is actually a natural monopoly issue in many of the rural areas in terms of service providers. If there is only one line into an area and it is interrupted, this is a big issue for all business and residents in the area; **2) Internet Providers--** Levi Roberts reviewed items for strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and challenges for this topic. This is an area that he was somewhat hesitant to include on the list because internet providers are supplying the service to customers. Therefore, the infrastructure is more of an implementation strategy than anything. Kelleigh Cole mentioned that it is good to explore limitations that providers experience and good for these to be reflected in the plan. Randy Cosby indicated that it may be better to say limited facilities access rather than tower access under weaknesses. It is also broader with towers fiber and conduit issues. This would better address challenges with the Tribe as well. Levi reviewed corrected language to include limited facility access including towers, right-of-ways, and fiber networks. Kelleigh Cole explained that getting the provider perspective in terms of their limitations combined with the sector perspective of their needs, would provide a good starting point to develop solutions. Gary Zabriskie indicated that this also needs to reflect the fact the UDOT is installing conduit into every new facility that is constructed, but this does not necessarily include live fiber optics. There is an opportunity for internet providers to partner with UDOT to run fiber through their conduit via a trade arrangement. This public/private partnership works well to fill needs in various areas throughout the region. It was pointed out that there may be a disconnect in communications between UDOT, private partners and small independent providers. It is also good to coordinate needs between business providers, communities and the residents who subscribe to broadband service to understand barriers as well as to provide access to where it is needed. Gary Zabriskie asked about access to hilltop sites and sites located on BLM land. Randy Cosby responded that it is difficult to obtain a new lease on BLM land, but it is possible to negotiate with existing carriers to obtain space on their fiber optics under an existing lease. However, there are too many obstacles to pursue new leases on federal lands. He explained that BLM had some really nice online tools until about five years ago that provided access to right-of-way, hilltop, and what is available. These tools have now been removed from their website due to security reasons. This has created a barrier for providers in

terms of planning for facilities. Kelleigh Cole indicated that it would be nice if providers could have special access to this type of information for planning purposes while not making it available to the general public. Land can be leased from School Trust Lands but the state of Utah will not allow any outside use of their towers; **3) Schools--** Levi Roberts reviewed items for strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and challenges for this topic. Gary Zabriskie referenced the broadband newsletter that was recently published in regards to the proliferation of one-on-one in terms of wireless devices in the schools, essentially one device for each student. This creates a great demand in some schools. Having that availability in schools is great, but it is a problem for students to complete their homework if they do not have internet access at home. Justin Fischer mentioned that some schools are experimenting with chrome books right now and occasionally allow a student to take a chrome book home to work offline. When the student returns to the school, it is connected to the network. This may help to overcome this particular challenge. Levi Roberts indicated that there is a big concern and challenge from school districts in terms of the amount of data required to accomplish having everything available as online applications. There are some schools that utilize microwave signals for wireless. The universities have not provided much in-depth feedback other than that service is available on campus; **4) Libraries--** Levi Roberts indicated that much of the information contained on the chart came from the Washington County library system. Kelleigh Cole mentioned that libraries are eligible for large discounts through the Utah Education Network (UEN) to establish internet connection. Education provided to libraries in terms of these discounts could be an opportunity. Having this discount available may also attract some providers into the more rural areas. Heather Rankin pointed out that the closest library to Big Water is 60 miles distant. For this reason, public access to the internet is not available in this area. For a period of time, the town of Big Water opened their internet access to residents until it became a problem. Residents must drive to Kanab for public internet access if they are to stay within the state of Utah. Levi Roberts asked GOED staff if there would be a map of libraries published as part of the broadband project. Staff indicated that the map depicting libraries is posted on the broadband project website. The map shows what people are subscribed to at the different libraries, speed availability, etc. Funding is also available to provide for custom mapping that may be required for this project. A map of libraries that are not connected to UEN may be something of interest for this region. Kelleigh Cole asked if there may be some type of building in Big Water that could be considered a library in order to obtain connection through UEN. Something such as space in the Town Hall may be a consideration. Heather reported that the town council has been interested in pursuing development of a community center in the past, but to date nothing has been decided. In fact, the school district has provided notification that their facilities will not be as readily available for community functions. Space is very limited in the town hall, and they recently learned that federal court is held in that location. There is currently no facility that would be available to serve as a library. Head start facilities also qualify for discounts through UEN; **5) Transportation--** Levi Roberts reviewed the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and challenges for transportation as identified by Monty Thurber, St. George City. Heather Rankin indicated that there is a huge right-of-way along the highway in eastern Kane County. There is nothing in the right-of-way, but it does exist. Mayor Rosenberg, Santa Clara, pointed out from an engineering standpoint there may be limited right-of-way in some areas, but right-of-way constraints are always a big issue. This is especially true in the metro areas where various utilities are located in the right-of-way. Right-of-way constraints should be listed as a challenge under transportation. It is also a challenge in the urban areas to install fiber optics in existing right-of-way because of other utilities being located in the area as well. Right-of-way could be an opportunity in rural areas, but also remain a challenge in developed areas. In the future, the Lake Powell pipeline could provide opportunity for other infrastructure installation in the right-of-way if the pipeline comes to fruition. Members noted that Water Conservancy Districts are not as easy to work with as UDOT to obtain

access to their conduit for fiber optics, but this is a possibility that should definitely be explored if the opportunity presents itself. The lack of standards with the conduits should also be listed as a challenge. Scott Hirschi asked how UDOT gets access to their cameras that are located in remote areas. Kelleigh Cole indicated that it is generally accomplished through a trade with a carrier that is located in the area or is interested in tapping into UDOT's conduit to expand the fiber optics in a particular area. UDOT allows access to their conduit to the provider in exchange for fiber optic connection. No other comments or suggestions were provided from the group; **6) Business Operations--** Levi Roberts again reviewed the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and challenges for this topic. Gary Zabriskie provided a correction under challenges to read: "If there is more bandwidth available, it will be used and more data will be consumed"; **7) Economic Development--** Levi reviewed the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and challenges associated with this topic. Scott Hirschi commented that the Utah backbone is a strength/opportunity for many of the focus categories where it is available. In addition, the FTV Long-Haul fiber optic line is also an asset to several of the focus categories in Iron and Washington counties. This line also runs through Beaver County and may provide some opportunity for connection there as well. It was noted that the Wi-fi hotspot availability was specifically mentioned in Kane and Garfield counties in connection with the tourism industry. Randy Cosby explained that this availability may also be considered a weakness in some areas because of the limited mobile data in some areas. Levi Roberts pointed out that social media is being utilized to promote many areas in the region. Heather Rankin indicated that Big Water utilizes their webpage, facebook and twitter to promote landscapes in the area in addition to Lake Powell. Several photographers in the area link to the town facebook and twitter to provide pictures of awesome beauty in the vicinity. In many instances, competing businesses are linking together to promote the area because they see the benefit to everyone. In addition, the Internet has become vital to tourists who instantly share photos and experiences after the day's travel has ended. This use, coupled with other social media uses in the area, overloads the capacity and shuts everyone down. It was noted that this is an issue in other areas as well because the system is being overloaded. Having sufficient bandwidth available is a problem and even further is the question how to get ahead of that curve. Randy Cosby suggested that perhaps this needs to be broken up into business development and travel tourism as separate topics. Levi Roberts indicated that it will be good to break these topics down to address the different dynamic and uniqueness; and **8) Agriculture--** Levi reported that this topic was discussed briefly at the beginning of the meeting. As indicated previously, the information for agriculture addresses Circle Four Farms feedback. Kelly Stowell indicated that he e-mailed additional contact information to Levi. Other individuals will be contacted for input and incorporation into agriculture. Circle Four Farms is a large-scale farm operation that provides approximately 500-600 jobs in Beaver County. Justin Fischer mentioned that monitor devices are located along the Sevier River throughout Garfield County to monitor water levels through use of an internet based link. This is an example of how broadband is used in some of the other areas in our region to automate processes.

Scott Hirschi asked about the purpose of the analysis presented and reviewed today in terms of the Broadband plan. Levi indicated that this information will be incorporated into the region's Plan. Information presented today is intended to move the group to the next step which is identifying the overall vision. The plan will then be more specific about strategies that will be addressed. The purpose today is to bring out all of the issues in different areas. The plan will focus on one area in many instances, while this provides the opportunity to look at things from different perspectives. Scott Hirschi suggested that perhaps the information is too detailed. For example, agriculture challenges and opportunities are very similar to those in rural service. It may be possible that some of the categories could be condensed. In fact, it is almost a rural versus metro. Opportunities and

challenges for Cedar and St. George are uniquely different as compared to the rest of the Five County area. If items were to be condensed, the analysis would be more meaningful. Levi Roberts noted that the intent after identifying commonalities is to make the plan information more condense. The next step is to identify key priority areas for the plan. It would be good to condense the topics to four or five sub-categories. Scott Hirschi suggested three sub-categories as follows: **1) Urbanized--** Areas that would not have much in the way of challenges and would provide mostly opportunity. The priority in these areas would mainly be infrastructure; **2) Rural--** This would include areas such as Kanab, Panguitch that do have service but it is either not redundant or universal. Kelleigh Cole pointed out that areas with good access likely have goals more along the economic development lines to bring in businesses utilizing services that are in place; and **3) Frontier--** Areas with extremely limited or no access. Towns such as Big Water, which is our biggest challenge, with little opportunity from a telecommunications standpoint. This would also include Circle Four Farms, hay operations in Escalante desert, etc.; and **4) Ideal--** Identification of ideal situations for all categories.

Economic Development would be an issue for every community regardless of size. Levi Roberts noted that topics such as schools, libraries, transportation, etc. could be incorporated into each of the abovementioned sub-categories. The issues for a business in Panguitch would be along the same lines as issues that residents would be experiencing. Scott Hirschi noted that redundancy at home may be aggravating, but not as critical as it would be to a business. The ability to have 24/7 access for a business is critical. Without this access, the company would likely have to locate where service is available and more reliable. Randy Cosby suggested that perhaps this could be done utilizing more of a grid with Urban, Rural, Frontier and then public education issues, economic development, transportation, utilities, business expansion, etc. moving up through the tiers trying to expand. In five years you would expect the guys at the bottom to be having the same issues as the guys at the top. Scott Hirschi liked the idea of finding out what the optimum today is that would be ideal. It would be good to add the ideal category to the analysis included with urban, rural and frontier. Then identify how to get from where we are to the optimum.

Kelleigh Cole reported that UEN has connected up most of the schools with high speed connections. There is a lot of talk right now about what to do with E-rate funding. UEN submitted significant comments on E-rate funding indicating that the standard that is being set is too low. The amount of bandwidth required per student may not be enough based on the E-rate standards. It is important to look at the people that are on the higher end of the spectrum and what is needed to get to the next level.

IV. IDENTIFY KEY PRIORITIES AND VISION

Levi Roberts indicated that the group could discuss the key priorities and vision today or wait until the chart has been reorganized for discussion at the next meeting. Committee members indicated that the optimum should be established by the state of Utah because the group does not have the expertise to make those types of determinations. Gary Zabriskie pointed out that economic development would mean two different things for Iron or Washington counties. There would be a big difference in economic development in Garfield County which might be another large hotel. The number of employees would also differ depending on the type of business and scope. Economic development needs are varied between urban and rural. Randy Cosby suggested that the top headings be narrowed down to include the following: 1) Education; 2) Economic Development; 3) Public/Residential Access; 4) Utilities/Infrastructure. This would include transportation, ISP, and all other infrastructure such as the Lake Powell Pipeline, water districts, UDOT, city municipal power systems, etc. Infrastructure needs would be unique versus schools

who are depending on the Utah Education Network to supply what is needed.

Scott Hirschi explained that the main goal of Washington County is to retain and expand existing and primary industry. The recruitment of new business is the second goal. From a broadband standpoint the needs would be exactly the same for each of these goals. Infrastructure has to be in place to support existing businesses. Without this basic infrastructure, you do not have what it takes to recruit new businesses.

Levi Roberts summarized key priority areas as Urban, Rural, Frontier and Ideal for each of the categories. The categories include education, economic development, residential access and infrastructure. He pointed out that medical was not included on the chart. Kelleigh Cole agreed that medical makes sense because certain rural medical facilities would qualify for subsidies and discounts. This could be used as a tool to expand broadband access to the more rural areas. It was noted that education would cover all of the schools, including public and private, higher education, ATC, etc. The Utah Education Network (UEN) would generally provide services to all of these institutions. Kelleigh Cole commented that the Tele-hub network can work with some of the private non-profit hospitals. It was suggested that the title be changed to health and education to include medical. It was noted that additional categories can be added as necessary throughout the process.

Levi Roberts suggested that the goal for the next meeting could be to identify what would be ideal for each of the categories. Scott Hirschi commented that it is important to determine how the ideal will be identified. This will likely include assignments for people to become involved with necessary research. It may be possible for the IT officer of Provo to assist with this task based on their experience. Kelleigh Cole noted that this region is dealing with multiple carriers and the ideal may be creating a scenario with access to all carriers to freely complete and not be limited by access to conduit. This would include multiple carriers utilizing conduits and cities helping to create access for people to operate their own networks. Scott Hirschi suggested by obtaining a survey from UTOPIA and Provo/Google, it may be reasonable to say that this is today's ideal. Levi Roberts indicated that staff would contact these entities and present the findings at the next Broadband Council meeting. Further discussion would include the direction to take with the goal of meeting the needs of this region. Randy Cosby indicated that their weaknesses and challenges should also play into the discussion, including challenges with funding. Kelleigh Cole mentioned that ideal likely means more than a particular entity and should include speed, infrastructure, etc. This would not have to follow a UTOPIA model. The goal may be to assist carriers in obtaining the highest speeds on their particular network. Levi Roberts suggest that the group first identify the goal based on what is currently in the region and then discuss how to achieve that goal. This would include the opportunity of what could be tied into. Kelleigh Cole noted that there are carriers throughout the state that are doing fiber to home deployments right now. Higher speeds are important in order to allow users to deploy higher applications. Scott Hirschi outlined his vision for ideal to include broadband speed and capacity for each of the categories and then determine how to supply the infrastructure. This may include use of the UTOPIA model, Google model, some other model and/or multiple models. The business model in downtown St. George will look a lot different than it does in areas such as Big Water. Randy Cosby indicated that this will always be the case because there will not be six carriers expand services to Big Water. Kelleigh Cole noted that it is important to determine how to leverage the infrastructure that these existing carriers have and help them to be able to make the case to expand services to an extremely rural area. The hard part will be implementation of standards that are developed.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

Gary Zabriskie mentioned that this is not a body that will formally adopt minutes. Meeting notes will be utilized to reflect discussion of the group. This will provide information in the future including how the group reach specific conclusions, discussion, background throughout development of the Regional Broadband plan. Concerns with any of the meeting notes should be forwarded to Levi Roberts.

Heather Rankin thanked everyone for their willingness to commit the amount of time and effort required to participate in this type of process.

It was determined that the process currently being utilized to schedule meeting is working well for participants. It was suggested that the revised matrix be provided to council members prior to scheduling the next meeting for sometime in January.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.