RURAL BROADBAND EXPANSION COUNCIL

Minutes of Regular Meeting
10:00 a.m. on Monday, March 21, 2022
State Capitol, Room 112

1. **Call to Order / Welcome / Establish a Quorum**
   - Sen. Leewright called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., reminded all that the meeting is being recorded, and ordered the roll to be called.
   - Present: Cliff Agee, Drew Beverage, Darlene Brugnoli, James Leewright, Logan Phillips, Billy Staggs, Daniel Webster, Jerry Whisenhunt, Brian Whitacre, and Brandy Wreath.
   - Absent: Mike Berube, Mike Fina, Patrick Grace, Steven Harpe, and Roger Neal.
   - Chair recognized a quorum of the Council to be present.

2. *** Approval of Minutes of previous meeting(s)**
   - Tabled until next meeting.

3. **Remarks from Co-Chairs**
   a. Sen. James Leewright
      - Will give his remarks at the end of the meeting.
   b. Rep. Logan Phillips
      - Update on legislation. This is deadline week in the House. We have three broadband bills – the State Broadband Office bill (HB3363); the easement bill; and the pole attachment bill. All are expected to be heard this week.

4. **Presentations**
   a. Broadband Capabilities of WISP Networks – Mr. Steve Schwerbel [overview] of the Wireless Internet Service Providers Association (WISPA) and Mr. Scott Imhoff [technical expert on the technology] of Cambium Networks – 15 min.
   - Presentation.
      - Mr. Schwerbel: (see slide deck posted online). Consider all tools available to expand broadband. WISPA has 13 members in Oklahoma. Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) is a cost-effective solution and quicker to install than alternatives. Agriculture is getting "smart" technologies. FWA operates using Point-to-Point service, Point-to-Multipoint, and Hybrid network structures using a fiber/FWA combination. FWA offer 25/3 Mbps and 100/20 Mbps and is moving to 1 Gigabyte. Most consumers don't need 100/100 speed.
      - Mr. Imhoff: Cambium is based outside of Chicago, IL, and focuses on FWA. Operates worldwide. FWA can scale from a few households to more than half a million. Two key attributes that set FWA apart from wired alternatives: Speed to service and capital efficiency ("stretching the dollar"). The technology is proven and continues to evolve with investment. Four vectors support the technology and industry to deliver highly reliable, low latency service:

1. Standards.
2. Regulatory environment.
3. Spectrum.   No longer a great constraint because FCC has made more spectrum available.
4. Technology.

- Discussion.
  - Phillips: What speeds is FWA capable of providing?
  - Imhoff: From 25/3 on up.
  - Whisenhunt: We use wireless and fiber. Where are you going with upload speeds? At least 100/50 needed for video conferences, etc.
  - Imhoff: Yes & cloud storage. Bi-directional traffic is growing. TDE technology (most common today) enables symmetric service (100/100). 4G and LTE.

  b. <u>Bridging the Broadband Gap in Rural Oklahoma</u> – Mr. Johnie Johnson of coreNOC – 15 min.

- Presentation.
  - (see [slide deck](#) posted online). coreNOC is a telecom equipment and service provider. It is a Native American owned Oklahoma company, an end-to-end network provider with experience inside and outside the U.S. to bridge the broadband gap in rural areas. We assist clients through all the steps – start, concept, design, creative, and success. We offer self-contained sites with off-grid power tower and network setup in as little as one day.

- Discussion.
  - None.

5. *** Sub-committee reports with discussion and possible action on recommendations**
   a. <u>Geographic Boundaries</u> – Mr. Brandy Wreath – 15 minutes

- Report.
  - Stick with Commerce's broadband map. Renew earlier recommendation for newer data from CostQuest and Ookla.
  - FCC is moving forward with CostQuest. May be available in October.

- Discussion.
  - Phillips: $2.2 million approved from state ARPA funds. Going to Commerce.
  - Wreath: Customer-level decisions recommended. Map as decisioning tool.
  - Leewright: The state's ARPA committee is holding submitted broadband requests until we get updated maps.
  - Whitacre: What are we buying with that money?
  - Wreath: I haven't seen the breakdown.
  - Leewright: The $2.2 million is earmarked to purchase data for 5 years; the Legislature can later decide to extend that.
  - Beverage: [couldn't make out his comment/question]
  - Phillips: We will use the data we buy.
  - Wreath: We won't know the quality of the new FCC data until it comes out
  - Phillips: Don't wait on Feds too much. Stay on plan.
  - Wreath: Data may not be able to integrate into our maps.
  - Martin: The map Commerce is developing supplements the free data (from FCC, Census, etc.) with purchased, proprietary data (from CostQuest and Ookla). Each

place is assigned a score based on a variety of factors and these scores can be shared both with decision-makers and the public for transparency. This process permits us to enhance the accuracy of the maps without violating the contractual conditions of using the proprietary data.

- Agee: I'd like to request an updated demo of what we have so far on the map.
- Wreath: Our committee saw one a few weeks ago.
- Phillips: We'll add it to an upcoming agenda.

- Motions.
  - None.

b. <u>Adoption Rates</u> – Dr. Brian Whitacre – 10 minutes
- Report.
  - (see <u>file</u> posted online). Enrollment updates for Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).
- Discussion.
  - Phillips: [a question about a particular county on the map presented]
  - Wreath: Where the Lifeline program is strong, enrollment in ACP is strong.
  - Whisenhunt: Now that providers know that ACP is long-term, they'll be willing to invest in promoting this program.
  - Phillips: Have tribes gotten involved?
  - Agee: They're aware, but more outreach from this Council will help.
  - Whitacre: Oklahoma slipped from Top 5 to 19th.
  - Leewright: When did Oklahoma begin to lag?
  - Whitacre: Since Dec. 2021. [something about the Digital Navigator program with libraries]
- Motions.
  - None.

c. <u>Policy Impacts</u> – Ms. Darlene Brugnoli – 10 minutes
- Report.
  - HB3363. State Broadband Office (SBO). Lofty goal of 95% coverage in state.
  - Pole attachment bill. Remove barriers to deployment.
  - Easement bill.
- Discussion.
  - Whitacre: The State Broadband Office bill has a sunset provision after 5 years. Adoption takes longer, so I'm concerned.
  - Leewright: Sunset provisions are a regular feature when creating a new entity in state government, to force re-evaluation of the office on a regular basis. The Legislature can later extend its existence.
  - Phillips: The SBO is modeled after ODOT's 8-year plan. Review before sunset date, make modifications, etc. It's common to extend sunset dates at that time.
  - Whitacre: We published a study on Dig Once policies that show a positive impact.
- Motions.

- **Motion #1**: Leewright moved to approve the 2020 annual report, as presented; second by Webster. No discussion. Roll call vote. Chair declared the motion approved unanimously.
- **Motion #2**: Leewright moved to approve the 2021 annual report, as presented; second by Beverage. No discussion. Roll call vote. Chair declared the motion approved unanimously.
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d. <u>Advisory</u> – Director Steven Harpe – 5 minutes
  - Tabled until next meeting.

6. **Discussion of possible agenda items for next meeting**
   - Presentation on State Purchasing Processes; Director Harpe suggested in Feb.
   - Presentation on HB3363 and the new State Broadband Office; Dr. Whitacre requested in Feb.
   - Presentation from CTIA; Ms. Brugnoli requested.
   - Broadband Mapping update; Mr. Agee requested.
   - Partnering on Broadband and Digital Inclusion; Dr. Whitacre requested.

7. **Announcements**
   - Leewright: My remarks were going to address ARPA funding for ORBEC, but it has already been discussed.
   - Next regularly scheduled meeting: 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, Apr. 20, 2022, in Room 112, State Capitol. [Members must attend in-person to count toward quorum, speak, and vote.]

8. **Adjournment**
   - Rep. Phillips adjourned the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

* Indicates anticipated action.

Prepared by: Kirk Martin, Oklahoma Department of Commerce

Approved by Council, as presented, on 04/20/2022.