



RURAL BROADBAND EXPANSION COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes Approved, as amended, on 9/16/2020

Inaugural meeting - August 19, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Zoom Teleconference ID #: 939 0726 3797; Call-in: 312-636-6799

This virtual meeting was held consistent with the amendments to the Open Meeting Act, 25 O.S. 2011, § 301 et seq, signed into law by Governor Stitt on Wednesday, March 18, 2020. See [SB661](#), 2020 O.S.L. 3, § 3

The notice of this virtual Special Board Meeting was filed with the Secretary of State's Office on August 12, 2020. The agenda was posted at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting on the East entrance of the Oklahoma Department of Commerce building at 900 N. Stiles Ave., Oklahoma City as well as on the Oklahoma Department of Commerce Website at <https://www.okcommerce.gov>.

1. Welcome / Call to Order / Establish a Quorum

- Commerce Director Brent Kisling called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed all members and non-members. He thanked members. Commerce will staff the Council. He introduced Commerce staff members Holly Miller, Josh McGoldrick, Kirk Martin, Leslie Blair, Jon Chiappe, & Stacie Willis. As facilitator, he ordered a roll call of members. Thirteen (13) of fourteen (14) members being present, Director Kisling declared a quorum established. (The remaining member, Ms. Darlene Brugnoli, joined the meeting in progress at 10:10 a.m.)

2. Discussion: history, purpose, and intent of legislation the Rural Broadband Expansion Council

- Sen. Leewright: The legislative intent is to provide a comprehensive, long-term broadband plan for the state. Private-sector to lead with little to no public sector involvement. Ensure all stakeholders are at the table. Effective use of public & private resources; best use of state, local, & tribal resources. Tied to the legislative process in order to ensure success; develop a plan in time to file needed legislation.
- Rep. Phillips: Set foundation for the State of Oklahoma to move forward with a multi-year plan for broadband expansion. The approach in the past has been piecemeal. Provide growth opportunities; identify the weaknesses and roadblocks to bringing high-speed broadband to under-served areas. We'll define geographical areas of the state. Decide how to move internet capabilities into under-served areas. Our efforts will affect many aspects of development – economic, healthcare, and education.

3. Selection of Council leadership

- Director Kisling opened the floor for nominations to chair the Council. Secretary Ostrowe nominated as chair Patrick Grace. Jerry Whisenhunt nominated as co-chairs Sen. James Leewright & Rep. Logan Phillips. Rep. Phillips clarified that while the legislation creating the Council states that an elected official cannot serve as chair, legal staff of both the House & Senate said elected officials could serve as co-chairs. Nomination seconded by Patrick Grace. Mr. Grace withdrew his name from nomination and Secretary Ostrowe concurred. In a roll call vote, the nomination of Leewright and Phillips to serve as co-chairs was approved unanimously.

4. Discussion: Plan for conducting a study of rural broadband access in Oklahoma; separate geographical areas

- Director Kisling congratulated Sen. Leewright & Rep. Phillips on their election as co-chairs and turned the meeting over to them. Sen. Leewright deferred to Rep. Phillips to conduct business.
- Rep. Phillips opened the meeting to questions, comments, and concerns.
- Dr. Whitacre – Several other states have already attempted to put together their own maps of rural broadband availability. FCC Form 477 data is available, but flawed. Look at other states to learn from their approaches. Georgia is a good example. He volunteered to pull together some of this information.
- Mr. Whisenhunt – Providers need to verify data for OK map. Follow-up/coordination might be done by Oklahoma Corporation Commission.
- Mr. Wreath – OCC will help in this regard. We have staff who are expert in this matter.
- Mr. Grace – What was the legislative intent of separating the state into different geographical areas? Rep. Phillips (who authored the legislation) explained the theory was to identify regional characteristics determined by the Council (e.g. positive population growth) which would enable the pursuing legislation and funding opportunities more appropriate to certain geographical areas.
- Ms. Brugnoli – It may be helpful to consider how USDA defines “rural” given that they have funding opportunities for rural areas.
- Secretary Ostrowe – We have ordered new maps since the 2010 maps and can share them with the Council.
- Dr. Whitacre – Our folks closely monitor the USDA and we can share that information (e.g. funding opportunities, definition of rural, etc.).
- Sen. Leewright moved to create a sub-committee to recommend boundaries for geographical areas. Roger Neal seconded the motion. In a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.
- Sen. Leewright asked the following Council members to serve on the sub-committee: Ms. Brugnoli, Mr. Grace, Secretary Ostrowe, Mr. Whisenhunt, Dr. Whitacre, and Mr. Wreath.
- Mr. Whisenhunt – The Council should check on upcoming USDA grants under the ReConnect program.
- Sen. Leewright moved to nominate Mr. Wreath to chair the sub-committee. Motion seconded by Secretary Ostrowe. No vote being required, the motion and second were accepted by the presiding co-chair, Rep. Phillips.

5. Discussion: Future agenda items

- Rep. Phillips invited members to suggest future agenda items and presenters.
- Agenda Item: Ms. Brugnoli suggested Secretary Ostrowe summarize **previous work and accomplishments**.
- Agenda Item: Dr. Whitacre volunteered to review **research findings** on policies, legislation, and funding mechanisms from other states.
- Agenda Item: Mr. Whisenhunt suggested Mr. Wreath to update on **funding and the Oklahoma Universal Service Fund (OUSF)**.
- Sen. Leewright suggested scheduling 20 minutes per speaker, to allow some time for Questions & Answers.
- Rep. Phillips observed that many tribes are working to expand broadband. Who has connections that can educate us about these efforts?
 - Secretary Ostrowe – Tribes have been very involved in the Broadband Council and I’m happy to reach out to them.

- Agenda Item: Report from the sub-committee on **geographical boundaries** (20 minutes).
- Mr. Whisenhunt asked to hear more about the vision of the co-chairs. Sen. Leewright: private-sector driven task to produce solutions. Rep. Phillips: Bring bright people together and use real data to create a state plan.
- Rep. Phillips inquired about **content for the Webpage** to be hosted by Commerce. Director Kisling said he thinks the range of content will reveal itself as the Council's work progresses. He stated that the Commerce Research division will help with this.
- Agenda Item: Ms. Valentino suggested the Council look not only at *access* to broadband, but also **adoption of broadband services** throughout the state.
 - Ms. Brugnoli – Unserved, under-served, & served. Access vs. adoption. We don't want to overbuild a system.
 - Dr. Whitacre – Research indicates that both access and adoption affect economic development. In Oklahoma, the Digital Inclusion Alliance is addressing adoption issues, like cost, lack of adequate hardware, etc.
 - Secretary Ostrowe – OMES has commissioned a study on adoption; it's out on RFP.

6. Discussion: Future meeting dates for the Council

- Sen. Leewright recommended meeting at least monthly. After discussion, Mr. Neal moved that the Council meet on the third (3rd) Wednesday of each month. Mr. Webster seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed **unanimously**.
- Roger Neal moved that monthly Council meetings begin at 10:00 a.m. Darlene Brugnoli seconded the motion. In a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.
- Rep. Phillips: Special meetings remain an option.

7. Announcements

- Sen. Leewright suggested that meetings will likely last 1.5 to 2 hours.
- Mr. Wreath recommended using Teams or SharePoint or DropBox as a means for the Council to share files. Director Kisling agreed that Commerce staff will assist with this task.
- Co-chairs Sen. Leewright and Rep. Phillips thanked all members for agreeing to serve on the Council.

8. Adjournment

- There being no further business, Rep. Phillips invited a motion to adjourn. Sen. Leewright moved and Mr. Neal seconded. By voice vote, the motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

The following individuals joined this virtual meeting:

Voting members

Ms. Darlene Brugnoli	Verizon
Mr. Michael Berube	Terex USA
Mr. Roger Neal	Duncan Regional Hospital
Mr. Billy Frank Staggs	Chickasaw Holding Company
Mr. Patrick Grace	Oklahoma Electric Cooperative
Dr. Brian Whitacre	Oklahoma State University
Mr. Jerry Whisenhunt	Pine Telephone Company

Mr. Daniel Webster	Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative
Mayor Jack Smiley	City of El Reno
Ms. Sammie Valentino	AT&T Corp.
Secretary David Ostrowe	Office of the Governor

Non-voting members

St. Sen. James Leewright	Oklahoma State Senate
St. Rep. Logan Phillips	Oklahoma House of Representatives
Mr. Brandy Wreath	Oklahoma Corporation Commission

Non-members

Barry K. Moore	BKM Group
Baylee Williams	Governor's Office
Bruce __ (Bruce's iPhone)	unknown
Chris Meyers	Oklahoma Assn. of Electric Cooperatives
Cathy Van Hoy (ODL)	Oklahoma Dept. of Libraries
Chad Segress	Terral Telephone Company
Cheryl Boothe	Oklahoma State Senate staff
Chris Bengé	Tulsa Regional Chamber
Cliff Agee	Chickasaw Nation
David Goodspeed	Oklahoma Electric Cooperative
Dean _____	unknown
Hunter Robinson	Central Electric Cooperative
James Lightfoot	ACRS 2000 Corp.
Jami Longacre	Longacre, Inc.
Jeff Risley	Saxum Strategic Communications
Jennifer Swearingen	Oklahoma State Senate staff
Jill _____	unknown
Jill Daugherty	Chickasaw Nation
Jim _____	unknown
Jim Reese	Oklahoma Assn. of Electrical Cooperatives
John Budd	OMES
Josh Holt	unknown
Kevin Nelson	unknown
Lindsey Greenwood	Saxum Strategic Communications
Malia Bennett	Oklahoma State Senate staff
Mark Argenbright	Oklahoma Corporation Commission
Matt Latham	Latham Consulting Group
R.D. Wright	unknown
Robbie Squires	Cox Communications
Sandra Harrison	Oklahoma Hospital Assn.
Scott Tohlen	Oklahoma Hospital Assn.
Shawn Ashley	eCapitol
Sonja Wall	OCAN & OneNet
Steve Teubner	unknown
Ted Osborn	Nextlink

Thomas Cohrs	Oklahoma House of Representatives staff
Tim _____	unknown
Tony ____ (Tony's iPhone)	unknown
Travis Noland	Cherokee Nation
Trish Ranson	Oklahoma House of Representatives
Tyler Powell	CSS Partners
"oklahoma"	unknown
580-468-2355	unknown (# from Guymon #)
620-845-5655	unknown (# from Caldwell, KS)
972-467-6811	unknown (# from Grand Prairie or Carrollton, TX)
Brent Kisling	Oklahoma Dept. of Commerce
Holly Miller	Oklahoma Dept. of Commerce
Jon Chiappe	Oklahoma Dept. of Commerce
Josh McGoldrick	Oklahoma Dept. of Commerce
Kirk Martin	Oklahoma Dept. of Commerce
Leslie Blair	Oklahoma Dept. of Commerce
Stacie Willis	Oklahoma Dept. of Commerce