

Panelists:

Jim Northrup ✓
Catharine Rice ✓
Doug Noell ✓
Earl McKee ✓
Kathy Zopfi ✓
Sally Kadle ✓
Sally Greene ✓
Todd Broucksou ✓
Terri Buckner ✓
Anna Richards
Vasu Kilaru
Victoria Deaton ✓
Patricia Hull ✓
Travis Myren ✓
Paul Cardillo ✓
Erica Bryant ✓
Ryan Miller – OC Public Schools ✓

Attendees:

Jason Barile ✓
Katie Loovis ✓

Please note my question about the 6:05 PM item.

DRAFT AGENDA February 2, 2022 @ 5:30 PM AGENDA

5:30 PM Welcomes and introductions - Greene/McKee
5:33 PM Approve Minutes (Dec 8 15, 2021) - Greene/McKee/Group – defer to next meeting
5:35 PM Eval Comm Update Update - Myren/Northrup
5:40 PM Neighborhood Listening Sessions / Ag Summit Agendas - Greene/McKee/Buckner/McGee?
6:05 PM Broadband Grants Analysis – Rice/Northrup/Myren/
6:30 PM Old Business / New Business
6:35 PM Adjourn

Welcomes and introductions - Greene/McKee – Welcome all, let's jump right in.

Listening Sessions

- Todd McGee did send out a news release as discussed saying that making progress and will hold sessions as soon as we can meet in person – Orange County homepage under news announcements
- [Ag Summit](#) is 2/15 8:30-11:30 AM Tues, Feb 15, Weds Feb 16, Thurs Feb 17

Eval Comm Update Update - Myren/Northrup/Broucksou

- Now entering into the reference checking stage. Once that's complete - assuming outcome is favorable - will head into negotiations with the finalist. Really all that we have to share at this point.

Broadband Grants Analysis – Rice/Northrup/Myren (PowerPoint attached)

- Catharine doing PowerPoint presentation – helping get FTTH funded; questions been floating about what options are available; talk about ARPA and how it breaks out between local recovery funds versus state recovery funds; want something to be under our control that we don't have to compete with other municipalities; gives the power to the locales
- \$350 billion; money not competitive; goes straight into local recovery funds OR state recovery funds; direct so don't have to compete; what guides the use of the funds – guide comes through Dept of Treasury final rules; look straight to Treasury for rules; SB105 – state funding rules
- Want to review difference between Treasury Dept rules and the limitations that the State grant programs are facing because of SB105.
- Local (\$5 million possibly more) – deterrent of where funds can be used “identifiable need” for additional broadband infrastructure investment => if an area doesn't have 100/100mbs, that's an identifiable need; any area where there's existing service but you decide it's unaffordable for those residents; areas where there's existing service but the service is unreliable; who gets to decide if these are unidentifiable needs? The local community!!
- Separate pot of ARPA funds have been sent to NC State – State CAB grant (GREAT grant still in there – pretty restrictive/prescriptive); CAB, though thought it would be less restrictive, it's still restrictive; what are limits? Eligible areas – only areas with less than 25/3 Mb/sec; exclude areas identified for state and federal broadband funds; small pools of areas without 25/3; no proposed area can't have more than a 10% bleed; who gets to decide – the State BB Infrastructure Office; state puts out an application, private companies make a proposal to the state, competitive, challenge process, BIO has final say; incumbents will have opportunity to file for protected areas and those can be eliminated from the proposal
- NC BIO maps are still using old Census Block data (very flawed – if one home has service then census block considers all homes in block covered), under CAB program far left map (pink) are only areas eligible; RDOF areas are no longer eligible for ARPA funds
- Discussion of rules of who controls timeline, technology, etc
- 100x20 is going to let cable technology in
- Who controls the county contribution money?
- State will only match up to \$4million per county/year; if we apply for CAB grant OC will have to put up 35%

Questions:

- EM: Our board already set aside \$5million for internet; Legislature kind of slapped the hands of counties who're spending their own funds – could apply to GREAT grant and CAB but ***not*** to Stop Gap program even if spent own (ARPA) money on own project; EM: it was specifically ARPA

money that was set aside (\$5mil); EM have set aside \$5mil, if we set aside another \$5mil out of our next ARPA draw, would still be able to apply for state funds? CR: Yes, believes we could go back and apply for another round of GREAT and/or CAB grant but those funds are very limited because of the bad maps or convince legislature that restrictions are

- CR: legislation not well written, to NC BIO's credit they've gotten \$300million; CR: providers want to cover the dense areas because that's where the money is for providers
- ToddB: what happens to funds if State doesn't use it all? CR: broached topic with Nate Denney, his answer was will see how this round goes and depending on how it goes, will go back to the Legislature to ask for rule changes; State has to encumber funds by end of 2024 and spend it by end of 2026 or else it has to go back to the Federal govt;
- ToddB: which maps need to be fixed? FCC maps – working on maps so hope they'll be more accurate; NCDIT set aside \$1million to generate new maps
- SG: we're spending a lot of taxpayer \$ so we want a long term solution rather than just a solution just for a couple of years; PC: a lot of areas being served by 25/3 are served by providers unwilling to maintain equipment (ie, DSL), legislature seems to be missing this
- ToddB: back in 2015 is when Fed said 25/3 was passable
- CR: Fed acknowledged that during pandemic 100/100 was the speed everyone needed
- EM: if we use our own funding (do it on our own), does that not make the maps a moot point? SG: yes; EM: seems like we're being funneled into one track by providers, don't have a lot of options;
- Terri: what providers do we have in OC who even offer 25/3 other than Spectrum? JN: CenturyLink, AT&T, Frontier and MebTel all offer DSL service (providers claim service is 25/3 – but often doesn't meet that promise); JN: maps aren't good maps
- CR: what we learn from some residents is that AT&T isn't offering DSL anymore; JN: CenturyLink isn't offering DSL anymore – they sold in NC; JN: MebTel and Frontier will only offer services in their own region – can't cross over CenturyLink or AT&T
- CR: if you look at state funding, they've given up on AT&T and CenturyLink so that would leave Spectrum; much of existing infrastructure is copper versus fiber (CenturyLink)

Old Business/New Business

- Terri moves to adjourn, Todd seconds

Meet again in two weeks? And will we hear another update from the scoring committee? ToddB: yes, should be ready

Terri sending out schedule for Ag Summit

Adjourn 6:30