**SC BAT Meeting Notes DRAFT**

**January 12, 2017; 1-3 PM**

**Stevens County IT**

Participants:

Debra Hansen, WSUE Mayor Dorothy Knauss, Chewelah

Bert Klimas, CCI Coordinator Dave Klimas, SC Fire

Wes McCart, SC Commissioner Trevor Sellars, SC IT

Melinda Lee, TEDD Bryan Raines, Senator Cantwell’s Office\*

Monica Babine, WSUE\* Sue McIsaac, MWSD\*

Kevin Jacka, Mary Walker School District Brandon Raney, MWSD Consultant

\**Participated via phone*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/TL;DR**

* Welcome to new BAT member Kevin Jacka, superintendent with Mary Walker School District (MWSD) in Springdale; Sue McIsaac, business manager at MWSD; and Consultant Brandon Raney.
* Trevor will be speaking with the mapping software team next week. He gave a brief demo of how it is currently working.
* Bert spoke briefly about the CCI project and that it looks like March will be hands on to the initial phase.
* Robin was not present to speak for the Spokane Tribe but several members spoke to their Promise Zone accomplishment and their ISP plans for both on and off the reservation.
* Commissioner Wes McCart updated the team on the NoaNet handoff due in April.
* Debra recapped the CERB grant.
* Monica’s December meeting in Seattle with AT&T about their AirGig project was canceled due to snow.
* Engaging ISPs with BAT team will be our next big step. Letter to be drafted inviting them to the table.
* The BAT team bids a fond farewell to Melinda Lee. She has done an amazing job representing TEDD and has been a key player on the BAT team. Kinsey Larsen will be filling her BAT shoes until the position is filled permanently. Thanks, Melissa, and enjoy Arizona!

**General updates**

**a.** The BAT team welcomes Kevin Jacka, Superintendent with the Mary Walker School District (MWSD) in Springdale. Kevin meets periodically with administrators from other school districts – a Rural Alliance. He was accompanied by Brandon Raney, a consultant with telcom/ISP experience. Also attending via phone was Sue McIsaac, business manager for MWSD.

Brandon spoke briefly about his experience with T-Mobile’s Band 12 upgrade. Using microtowers and cell tethering seems to work ok for internet in this mountainous region. It is capable of streaming video, but he has seen some throttling at peak times as well as some dropping of the signal.

**b. Trevor: Mapping** Trevor will be speaking with the mapping software team next week to give them edits to the provider list and other tweaks. We are still not sure what the mapped data shows or how frequently it is generated. He gave a brief demo of how it is currently working.

**c. Bert: Community Connectivity (CCI) Initiative**

Bert spoke briefly about the CCI project. It looks like March will be hands on to the initial phase. January 13th Bert, Debra, and Monica will be on a conference call/webinar with the developers to give more Stevens-County-specific feedback to the work in progress.

**d. Robin Kennedy** was not present to speak for the Spokane Tribe but several members briefly described the Tribe’s Promise Zone accomplishment and their ISP plans. Their broadband buildout will be Tribal first, then offering service off the reservation, too. It will start with microwave then progress to fiber. Introducing Kevin to Robin and Mike Tedesco (Economic Development Director for the Spokane Tribe) will be beneficial.

**e. Commissioner Wes McCart** updated the team on the NoaNet handoff due in April. The PUD’s plan was to give the Stevens County Broadband ownership to NoaNet. The Commissioners are looking for a way to keep local control.

**f. Debra: CERB (Community Economic Revitalization Board) Grant**

Debra and Commissioner McCart spoke about the concept of pre-positioned fire camps and the attempt at a CERB grant for a feasibility study, but there was not an economic development angle (as required by the CERB board). The only economic community in the Highway 20/Princess Pines area of the county is in home-based businesses/cottage industry which does not meet the criteria for CERB.

Debra, the commissioners, and Robin will be meeting with Mike Tedesco and Rick Anderson (Fire District 2 manager). They may be able to make an economic development case for Two Rivers and the Fruitland Bible Camp. They may also include Northport because it’s near an airport.

**g. Monica**:

* Monica’s December meeting in Seattle with AT&T about their AirGig project was canceled due to snow. Mayor Knauss repeated her offer of Chewelah for a pilot study. (Chewelah controls their own electric utility!)

AirGig  <http://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2016/09/atts-airgig-uses-power-lines-for-multi-gigabit-wireless-broadband/>

* The Trump administration has people talking about what might happen in broadband. A panel discussion that will take place mid-month will be interesting to follow. Some of our federal political staffers on the BAT Team might be able to get us more information, too. President-Elect Trump stated during the campaign that infrastructure is going to be an important investment. We are working to be sure that everyone considers broadband as an important part of infrastructure.

Many of the rural broadband groups Monica is working with are working hard to help the Trump administration remember where there was such strong support for the campaign.

Perhaps letter writing can help further the broadband cause, but the potential recipients are not yet known; Monica is monitoring for that opportunity and all should be aware of watching for that.

Wes added that the National Association of Counties will be meeting in Washington D.C. during the last week of February to talk about broadband and technologies.

A USDA cabinet nominee had not been named as of the meeting date.

**h. Engaging ISPs**

* Engaging ISPs with the BAT team will be our next big step. The team discussed whether to engage them one at a time or just invite them all to a meeting.

Monica has been through this process before with other teams and providers. One team chose the one on one approach but all others chose to do it en masse. She also pointed out that many provider/attendees have working discussions after the meetings break up.

Providers were encouraged to share whatever information and challenges as they felt comfortable. Monica also noted that “meetings after meetings” often took place; discussions outside of the official meeting turned into accomplishments reported in later meetings.

Mayor Knauss added that she engaged several providers at once at a meeting at Chewelah golf course.

Consensus: Invite them all. Bert will draft a letter inviting them to the table and Monica will provide some keey phrasing she’s used in the past.

Bert will work on an invitation letter to inform them about the BAT team, where we are headed, and what they can offer. Monica will supply her with examples of how she has engaged providers in the past

**i. Other notes of interest**

* The good news: The NTIA asked the National Governors Association to address broadband in their communication with the new administration. The bad news: The only mention of broadband in the report was “Pursue efforts to enhance the deployment and adoption of broadband networks, including for rural communities.”

<https://resources.nga.org/cms/wethestates/infrastructure.html>

* The BAT team bids a fond farewell to Melinda Lee. She has done an amazing job representing TEDD and a key player on the BAT team. Kinsey Larsen will be filling her BAT shoes until the position is filled permanently. Thanks, Melissa, and enjoy Arizona!
* Mayor Knauss referred to the Association of Washington Cities Guide. She’ll have more information on it at a later meeting.
* BAT Fun Fact for the Month: There is a 3G mobile broadband station in the remote town of Gorak Shep located just miles from Everest at an altitude of 5,200 meters; the station has provided a much needed signal to [hikers along the Everest Base Camp trek](https://www.mountainiq.com/guides/trekking-in-nepal/routes/everest-base-camp-trek/) since 2010.

http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-11651509