**SC BAT Meeting Notes**

**December 8, 2016, 1-3 PM**

**Stevens County IT**

Participants:

Debra Hansen, WSUE Will Saunders, WA State OCIO\*

Bert Klimas, CCI Coordinator Dave Klimas, SC Fire

Don Dashiell, SC Commissioner Mark Curtis, SC IT

Monica Babine, WSUE\* Robin Kennedy, Spokane Tribe\*

Chris Ritzo, OTI@NewAmerica\* Georgia Bullen, OTI@New America\*

Andrew Engell, Congresswoman McMorris-Rogers

\**Participated via phone*

We’re trying out a new format for our meeting notes: I’ll try to start each month’s meeting notes with an Executive Summary/TL;DR (Too Long, Didn’t Read) for the highlights followed by the traditional detailed notes for those who need them for reference. —Bert

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/TL;DR**

* Spokane Tribe’s Promise Zone and Community Connect grant. Stevens County may have opportunities in the spring.
* Stevens County may run a speed/reliability trial with Password (new service provider for Ecliptixnet) for consideration as a backup source.
* Open Technology Institute (OTI) gave some background and status update on the mapping project.
* Debra updated the status of the pre-positioned fire camp idea. It’s not CERB material, but there are other options to discuss in the future.
* The Tech Expo will probably be repeated in spring of 2018 with improvements based on lessons learned. Overall it seemed to be a winner.
* Engaging ISPs. It will be part of CCI but there are benefits to connecting with them before that.

**General updates**

Welcome to Andrew Engell who is representing Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers. He is from the Colville office.

**a. Mark:** New business in Colville. ABCOffice Equipment and small business support (networking, IT, office equipment sales/support, etc.). Located in the former Army Recruiting storefront on Main St. They will initially be open a couple days a week.

**b. Robin:** Spokane Tribe’s new Promise Zone is a 10 year designation showing availability for business, grants, initiatives, etc**.** Broadband made it to the list of their priorities**.**

Robin is applying for the Community Connect grant but she hasn’t heard the response yet. The 15% match would be $450,000 on a $3,000,000 grant. It’s probably a cash match, not in-kind, but it needs to be clarified. There is a lot of infrastructure in place in case an in-kind match is possible.

The general route is Wellpinit to Highway 25, and on Highway 25 from about the Bible Camp to Two Rivers. Towers could be placed at Wellpinit and Miller Mountains similar to the facility at Scoop Mountain. Consideration has to be given to Ecliptixnet’s coverage footprint. The Scoop Mountain facility could be duplicated (with site customization).

Letters of support for the grant from the BATeam and others (DNR, etc.) would be helpful.

Mark mentioned that the county has received the official notification that the PUD’s plan is to give the Stevens County Broadband ownership to NoaNet once the 5 year contract is up in April. The commissioners are thinking of another option since the county put in $435,000 as a match for the grant – the broadband/infrastructure is worth about $1.2 million. Why give up local control? The County, the PUD, and the Spokane Tribe will talk about this some more.

Mark mentioned that Rod Bacon is with Password (the new service provider on Ecliptixnet towers). Stevens County is sending a letter of all SC sites and asking about specs (speeds, bandwidth) to see if Password can support county needs for redundant backup sites. Once Password responds, the county will chose one or two sites and put up some monitoring equipment for 30 days to see if service can be reliably maintained. Mark will have Robin review the list before it goes out next week to see if her needs can be addressed in the letter, too.

**c. Monica: Mapping**

Chris Ritzo and Georgia Bullen: Open Technology Institute (OTI) is a part of New America, a non-profit civic enterprise think tank in Washington D.C. Our mapping project uses data from Measurement Lab which is an open source platform.

The goal is to produce on open source project that could be contributed to/used by others.

The project is almost ready to be pushed out to the public. The Tech Expo gave an initial push for them to work on and they have a couple things to work on before getting it out in the new year. Trevor and OTI will be working on tweaks and updates; the software has been set up to be easy to customize (drop downs for providers, costs, etc.).

Location sharing is important for accuracy but privacy is important, too; this application allows them to collect specific information. Measurement Labs won’t keep the geolocation info but it can be matched up later for accuracy. Census blocks appear to be the best way to pinpoint it. Some browsers require HTTPS be used when asking for location information, so that is being addressed, too.

Bandwidth does not appear to be an issue since testing takes place on the Measurement Labs platform, not the host.

Will provided background and context that when the state of Washington, the FCC, and the NTIA were doing broadband testing state- and nationwide they had to have custom Java applets, an exemption to the public record act, and jump through other hoops only to achieve inaccurate mapping points in rural Washington. Since 2010, cloud technology and open source trends have made it possible to do—at the county level with a couple of staff people and a non-profit think tank on the other side of the country—what took the state of Washington $5.5 Million over five years in a way that was not sustainable. It’s an important step for the entire region and it’s exciting for him to see the fabulous progress.

Documenting this process will help other counties like Asotin who have expressed interest. The project can be further customized with each lesson learned like towers on mountains vs grain silos. NTIA and the Community Connectivity Initiative will make good use.

Monica wondered about how best to document the process? Perhaps as a compare and contrast with rural and urban areas? Georgia answered that it’s something they already track and publish (via blog posts); it would be an interesting story to capture. Software changes are being tracked as code is updated; the “product” is refined each time with each new location. Stories about outreach, promotion, and generally what happened make it more interesting.

Mark offered that lessons learned during installation (cloud services in particular) are being documented (good job, Trevor) and those things can be shared with other installations. A technical installation guide is always helpful; Georgia also pointed out that every installation is different so there will always be more to document.

Georgia stated that data will be accessible when/how Stevens County wants it. Perhaps they will be discussing it with Seattle for a final answer. Will has been using the data to compare west side towns with similar Stevens County locations and it’s interesting, but it will probably make a lot more sense once the NTIA/CCI project Bert will be working on gets moving.

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

Debra, Commissioner McCart, and Commissioner Parker heard from Janea Eddy/CERB. Janea thought the concept of pre-positioned fire camps was a good idea, but she could not find an economic development angle. The only economic community in the Princess Pines area of the county is in home-based business/cottage industry which does not meet the criteria for CERB.

Debra and the commissioners will be regrouping and meeting with Robin as well as Mike Tedesco (Economic Development Director for the Spokane Tribes) and Ric Anderson (Fire District 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.

Janea will be coming to Stevens County for a follow-up meeting to look for other ideas how to make the pre-positioned fire camps a reality.

**e. Tech Expo**

NoaNet suggested a keynote speaker that would draw in more people from outside the tech world to come in. Sports figure, celebrity, etc.

Some people thought spring would be better, so spring 2018 might be a good idea.

We learned a lot about organizing, promoting, communicating, and budgeting. We came out about zero (breaking even) but more income would have given us more advertising budget.

Other options include having the next Tech Expo someplace else. Is there a venue in Chewelah that could support (size and wifi for vendors) the Tech Expo?

**g. Community Connect Initiative update**

Debra: Will be getting Bert hired for the CCI position and creating an empty website for sharing some of this information with the county, who we are/why we care, etc.

Bert: Bert was able to participate on the CCI webinar. It illustrated the Catch 22 that the people who could most benefit from webinars are the people who don’t have the broadband because they are in a rural area. It was thanks to Stevens County having provided a laptop, a wifi connection, and cell phone that she was able to participate. Bonus: Bert and Stevens County got a shoutout during the webinar.

The webinar was audio over the phone and the power point presentation via the internet. It was primarily getting information from the 49 participants about preferences in the questions. The CCI program itself appears to be headed for a March rollout.

Debra: There will be other things Bert can do along the way. The website, of course, and things like a flyer about the BATeam members and projects, etc. That flyer will be a good introduction to others as to what the team is about.

Final comment: Engaging ISPs? It is part of the CCI plan, but perhaps the BATeam can invite some of them to a meeting. Mark would particularly like to have better communications with key players including NoaNet/”the fiber guys” so he can stay on top of plans and updates. The county needs to know who is laying fiber, etc.

**g. Other notes of interest**

* Monica: 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 official staffers on the BATeam might be able to get us more information, too. President-Elect Trump has already stated that infrastructure is going to be an important investment; broadband is 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 but the potential recipients are not known yet; Monica is monitoring for that opportunity and all should be aware of watching for that. Mark 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. Mark will participate in a webinar and report back.

* Mark suggested considering meeting every two weeks instead of monthly with constant updates on action items. It will be looked at after the holidays.
* Debra commented that future meeting notes will probably include an executive summary followed by details. This should help with people actually reading the notes.
* Seymour Channels has a new point to point wireless service from the American/Verizon tower on Colville Mountain. Andrew has just signed up with them. $48 a month (including modem rental) gets him 4+ M up and 1 down.
* AT&T is hoping to have their AirGig project ready for a pilot rollout sometime next year. Brief description: AirGig will be a Broadband over Powerline (BPL) program that — unlike previous versions of BPL — does not appear to send out spurious emissions that interfere with other frequencies like radio, airport communications, etc. The plan is ideal for rural use due to its high speeds and low cost. Those are relative terms, of course, and more specifics are not yet available.

Monica has been in touch with AT&T offering this area as a pilot location.

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

* Elon Musk of Tesla and SpaceX fame has filed an application with the FCC to launch a network of 4,425 satellites into low earth orbit that would provide high speed, low latency internet at a relatively (that word again) low cost — globally!

SpaceX  [http://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2016/11/spacex-plans-worldwide-satellite-internet-with-low-latency-gigabit-speed/](http://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2016/09/atts-airgig-uses-power-lines-for-multi-gigabit-wireless-broadband/)

* CenturyLink is joining others in instituting a bandwidth cap. It’s still really high; 300-600 GB depending on the speed.

<https://consumerist.com/2016/07/19/centurylink-joins-att-comcast-in-charging-you-for-going-over-your-data-cap/>

**BAT Thought for the Month:**

***Before you marry a person you should first make them use a computer with slow internet to see who they really are.***

**— Will Ferrell**