**SC BAT Meeting Notes DRAFT**

**February2, 2017; 1-3 PM**

**Stevens County IT**

Participants:

Debra Hansen Mayor Dorothy Knauss

Bert Klimas Dave Klimas

Nathan Strege, Senator Cantwell’s Office Bryan Raines

Monica Babine, WSUE\* Robin Kennedy

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

Mark Curtis Andrew Engel, Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers’ office

\**Participated via phone*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/TL; DR (**Too Long; Didn’t Read)

* Adios, amigo, to Nathan Strege. Nathan is pursuing a career in law enforcement. We all wished him well and hope to only see him socially in the future.
* Robin and Mark spoke of the progress of the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) that they presented to the Tribal Council the day before; response was positive. Spokane County has a couple of items they want to address but these should be of minor concern. [See Item A]
* Robin shared that the Tribe will not be applying for the Community Connect grant this year. [See Item B]
* Bert provided an update to the CCI project which still appears to be on track for March. [See Item C]
* Monica provided a list of state and federal legislative activity. [See Item D]
* Bryan said that the new administration asked the governors for a list of projects. A Top 50 list was created and the only Washington State project included was the SeaTac upgrade. [See Item E]
* Bryan also mentioned a proposed infrastructure bill that included a $20 billion investment in broadband that would create an estimated 260,000 new jobs. [See Item E]
* Bryan, Nathan, and Andrew all acknowledged that the transition of appointed offices, staffing, etc., will mean things will be in flux for a short period.
* Mapping project is unchanged; hoping to meet (via phone) next week.
* Debra mentioned that a CERB grant is a no-go but TEDD member Kinsey Larsen may have found a grant that’s a better fit. [See Item F]
* Group discussion of the likely closing of the local Quadra Fire/Hearth and Home plant as well as the possible renovation/reopening of the former Alcoa plant in Addy. [See Item G]
* Brandon and Kevin are working on several projects with a huge positive long term impact on the Springdale/Mary Walker School District and surrounding community. [Item H]
* Engaging ISPs with BAT team will be our next big step and the topic of our next meeting on the **second** **Thursday, March 9th**. (Note that normal BAT meetings are the first Thursdays but Bert and Dave will be at a robotics competition.) [Item I]

**General updates**

The January meeting notes included attachments covering Senate and House broadband letters to President Trump, a letter to the National Governors Association from the NTCA, and Schools Health Libraries Broadband Coalition (SHLB, pronounced Shelby) Rural American Broadband Connectivity (ABC) Program information to the Trump transition team.

1. Robin and Mark presented the Inter Local Agreement to the Spokane Tribal Council yesterday. This is an agreement between the Stevens County Commissioners and the Spokane Tribe to use Scoop and Wellpinit Mountains to provide radio communication sites that can “see” Spokane. This agreement makes possible mutual aid, emergency services, VOIP, etc. It will also allow a signal to go from Wellpinit to Miller Mountain for Fire District 2 in Hunters as well as the Fruitland Bible Camp.

There is no exchange of funds, just support. This is a Win/Win. A meeting is scheduled with Spokane County Commissioner Al French to address some final details.

Once this is all in place the discussion can go to what other public entities may be served by this?

1. Robin reported that they will not be applying for the Community Connect grant this time around due to the short window for preparation as well as securing the funds. Monica mentioned that we can come up with letters of support when the time is right.
2. Bert and Monica spoke about the CCI project. The timetable is:

January/February: Identify Release 1 collaborators – Team Lead/administrator and community nameMarch: Release 1 Available and user testing kickoff

Virtual kickoff meeting

Logins available for team leads

NTIA points of contact

April/May/June: Community use, test, feedback

Local team uses tool to support planning processes

Bi-weekly calls for questions and feedback

NTIA point-of-contact available for support

July: Evaluation period ends

One-on-one debrief calls

NTIA produces summary of feedback with intended actions

Monica added that she and Will have a call scheduled with Karen Perry next week. Bert requested that the job titles used in the timetable be clearly defined.

1. Monica reported lots of legislative activity at both the state and federal levels.

WA State Updates

[SB 5139](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov_biennium_2017-2D18_Pdf_Bills_Senate-2520Bills_5139.pdf&d=DwMFAg&c=C3yme8gMkxg_ihJNXS06ZyWk4EJm8LdrrvxQb-Je7sw&r=mrwWcdIKloGHehJcyh4I3A&m=9Iu-KbP8BV2U9DfLM8gldbdMuThhPcH0wZkTGLPzLO4&s=US5VEpxSJB9_qmmlI27_hxxyDnnXSg9Xj12C_1u5SE0&e=) and [HB 1938](http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1938&Year=2017) Relating to ensuring economic development by authorizing public utility districts to provide retail telecommunications service.

<http://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2017-18/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Bills/5139.pdf>

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1938&Year=2017>

[SB 5483](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov_biennium_2017-2D18_Pdf_Bills_Senate-2520Bills_5483.pdf&d=DwMFAg&c=C3yme8gMkxg_ihJNXS06ZyWk4EJm8LdrrvxQb-Je7sw&r=mrwWcdIKloGHehJcyh4I3A&m=9Iu-KbP8BV2U9DfLM8gldbdMuThhPcH0wZkTGLPzLO4&s=9sQcAC0VTsMyedh8FJRS9TIPw_OIuunz6PEJz0POuLc&e=) Relating to ensuring economic development through the provision of telecommunications services to underserved and unserved, and including the reestablishment of a broadband office.

<http://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2017-18/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Bills/5483.pdf>

[SB 5464](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__app.leg.wa.gov_billsummary-3FBillNumber-3D5464-26Year-3D2017&d=DwMFAg&c=C3yme8gMkxg_ihJNXS06ZyWk4EJm8LdrrvxQb-Je7sw&r=mrwWcdIKloGHehJcyh4I3A&m=9Iu-KbP8BV2U9DfLM8gldbdMuThhPcH0wZkTGLPzLO4&s=WgdmjFoiKfTEySNNTq_8vmotVo9lXyzSQjgiKC2CCwk&e=) Relating to establishing the Washington investment trust significant public infrastructure needs

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5464&Year=2017>

[SB 5679](http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5679&Year=2017) and [HB 1702](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__app.leg.wa.gov_billsummary-3FBillNumber-3D1702-26Year-3D2017&d=DwMFAg&c=C3yme8gMkxg_ihJNXS06ZyWk4EJm8LdrrvxQb-Je7sw&r=mrwWcdIKloGHehJcyh4I3A&m=9Iu-KbP8BV2U9DfLM8gldbdMuThhPcH0wZkTGLPzLO4&s=h6atbFX68ertAnp1E6anCK5F_IDoxdTmT_yFbbo-X8Y&e=) Concerning the authority of port districts to provide telecommunications services.

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5679&Year=2017>

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1702&Year=2017>

[SB 5711](http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5711&Year=2017) and [HB 1921](http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1921&Year=2017) Revises telecommunications services provisions (ROW, pole attachments, State USF change from telecommunications services to communications services).

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=5711&Year=2017>

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1921&Year=2017>

Monica added that last month she said the submittal from Washington State to the National Governor’s Association (NGA) didn’t include broadband. She noticed that a revised list was submitted yesterday; broadband was one of four items (on the list of 20) in the NO column.

National Updates

In addition to providing folks with a link to the [WH Broadband Opportunities Council (BOC) report](https://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/broadband_opportunity_council_agencies_progress_report_jan2017.pdf), Debra mentioned that a next step was a new group. Monica provided the official announcement about it:  “As we move forward, agencies will continue these coordination efforts through the Broadband Interagency Working Group, which will be led by NTIA’s BroadbandUSA program and USDA’s Rural Utilities Service (RUS). As part these efforts, NTIA’s BroadbandUSA program will held a webinar on January 18 featuring speakers from NTIA, RUS and the Treasury Department’s Office of the Comptroller of the Currency to discuss the Council’s progress and work.” <https://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/broadband_opportunity_council_agencies_progress_report_jan2017.pdf>

[Senate Blueprint to Rebuild America’s Infrastructure](https://www.dpcc.senate.gov/files/documents/ABlueprinttoRebuildAmericasInfrastructure1.24.17.pdf) (includes $20B for broadband)

<https://www.dpcc.senate.gov/files/documents/ABlueprinttoRebuildAmericasInfrastructure1.24.17.pdf>

[H.R.547](https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/547?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22broadband%22%5D%7D&r=12) – National Infrastructure Development Bank Act of 2017 to facilitate efficient investments and financing of infrastructure projects and new job creation through the establishment of a National Infrastructure Development Bank, and for other purposes.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/547?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22broadband%22%5D%7D&r=12>

[New Deal Rural Broadband Act of 2017](http://huffman.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/reps-huffman-pocan-and-nolan-introduce-new-deal-rural-broadband-act-to) –This is [H.R. 800](https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/800?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22HR+800%22%5D%7D&r=1) to establish the Office of Rural Broadband Initiatives within the Department of Agriculture, to preserve open internet requirements, and for other purposes.

<http://huffman.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/reps-huffman-pocan-and-nolan-introduce-new-deal-rural-broadband-act-to>

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/800?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22HR+800%22%5D%7D&r=1>

A current search on the <https://www.congress.gov> bill website identifies a dozen federal bills regarding broadband.   
https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/547/text?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22broadband%22%5D%7D&r=11

Mayor Knauss mentioned that a conference call of eastside mayors to the House and Senate takes place on the second Mondays of each month. Kevin added that school districts, too, can make calls.

1. Bryan said that the new administration asked the governors for a list of projects. A Top 50 list was created and the only Washington State project included was the SeaTac upgrade.

Senator Cantwell took part in the unveiling of a proposed Blueprint to Rebuild Infrastructure. Among other things, it proposed a $20 Billion investment in broadband that would create an estimated 260,000 new jobs. It would be applied to fund the build out of high-speed broadband in unserved and underserved areas. This funding will be available to projects currently eligible under programs at both the Department of Commerce and the US Department of Agriculture.

It also proposes expanding the programs to enable grant recipients to use grant funds to deploy various types of infrastructure capable of offering, middle-mile, last-mile wired and wireless broadband access, and adding evaluation criteria in the awards process to ensure that the funding goes to the most effective and efficient uses.

A one page description as well as a full text version are at the following links.

<https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/A%20Blueprint%20to%20Rebuild%20America's%20Infrastructure%20One%20Pager.pdf>

<https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/A%20Blueprint%20to%20Rebuild%20America's%20Infrastructure.pdf>

1. Debra mentioned again that the CERB grant for pre-positioned fire camps was a no-go since it did not meet the criteria for CERB, but that our new TEDD representative Kinsey has found another grant opportunity that may be a better fit. Stay tuned!
2. The Quadra Fire/Hearth and Home plant in Colville is closing. Mayor Knauss and Commissioner McCart went to Olympia to show support for HB 1403 in hopes that the former Alcoa plant in Addy could be brought back to life as a silicon smelter; Hi Test Sand (Alberta) is looking at the possibility. This could mean 300 construction jobs for 18-20 months followed by 130-150 full time jobs. Mayor Knauss and Commissioner McCart testified to the impact on the community, the county, and schools.

State Senator Shelly Short is one of the co-sponsors of HB 1403.

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1403&Year=2017>

1. Brandon and Kevin are heavily involved in their extended communities. Brandon was kind enough to provide his own words:

Last school year, Mary Walker School District adopted the Summit Learning Program for grades 6-12. This was made possible through the leadership of MWSD, Superintendent Kevin Jacka and a grant from the Gates Foundation. The Summit curriculum uses Chromebooks which are heavily dependent on broadband access. In an effort to ramp up the district’s network to accommodate the massive influx of new systems, obstacles presented by very limited broadband availability in our district became obvious.

Currently, I am consulting for Mary Walker School District for infrastructure optimization and a technology apps program which will include a tier 1 Maker’s Space. This project began with a thorough audit of the district’s network architecture and infrastructure. Almost immediately, we identified several internal and external issues that would prevent future plans for adding the desired resource-hungry systems components. Internally, the backbone is being redesigned and upgraded. Externally, limited broadband allocation to the district and extremely limited coverage in the area we serve remains unsolved and is a considerable problem.

Conversations centered on the local broadband issues of Springdale led to broader conversations with surrounding school district representatives. The last week of January, I had the privilege to attend a Rural Alliance conference which was mainly comprised of superintendents and representatives from 66 rural school districts in Eastern Washington. While at the conference, I had the opportunity to meet many superintendents and discuss some of the issues surrounding broadband in rural schools. It was quickly discovered that a majority of the districts are struggling with the same types of issues. However, the primary concern as it relates to B.A.T. is the ever increasing demand for broadband in expanding technology dependent education platforms.

A few weeks later, I attended a CRPE (Center on Reinventing Public Education) conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This gave me a broader platform to discuss and learn what issues other districts around the country are dealing with, though most attendees represented large urban districts with stable infrastructure and few related broadband concerns. However, it did give me better insight as to where technology in education is headed in order for our rural schools to stay competitive with our urban counterparts. Ultimately, the need for improved broadband in our rural communities became greatly exaggerated.

Having the opportunity to participate in multiple forums such as B.A.T, Rural Alliance, and CRPE has led me to believe the need for improved broadband is becoming a critical issue for most of Eastern Washington, if not throughout rural America. More access to stable broadband would not only benefit our schools and communities, it would greatly boost our potential to attract employers and professionals, thereby growing our local economies and reducing our residents’ dependency on state and federal assistance programs. Unfortunately, progress seems to be tied directly to politics and the perceived needs of the masses (urban) versus the needs of the relative few (rural).

As the anchor point of many of our small communities, the schools may have the single biggest voice and the greatest leverage for effecting change. Coupled with Equity of Access type initiatives, that voice becomes greatly amplified through unification. Therefore, it is my belief that the Rural Alliance and its 66 member districts representing 48,000 students, maybe the greatest single leverage point we possess in our region. After all, the belief in equality of education for our youth spans all political, demographic, and socioeconomic platforms and should be universally equitable.

It is my intention to continue conversations with as many districts within the Rural Alliance which have interest or need for improved broadband in their respective areas. As a resident of Springdale, Stevens County is my primary focus, but advocating for our neighbors may prove to be advantageous as well. Ultimately, I believe if we can couple the needs of local and regional school districts with state, local, and regional organizations, we stand a much improved chance of effecting positive change for all parties concerned.

1. 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 key 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.

Engaging ISPs will be the topic of our next meeting on the **second** **Thursday, March 9th**. (Note that normal BAT meetings are the first Thursdays but Bert and Dave will be at a robotics competition.)

**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