

BCN Advisory Council Minutes

June 17, 2010, 3PM - 4:30PM, UW Pyle Center

Attendees: Larry Bader, Bruce Reines, Tom Taibl, Joan Wade, Bob Bocher, Jay Jaeger, Marge Jeffers, Jamie Poindexter, Maria Alvarez-Stroud, Tim Schell. Phone: Matt Rains, Greg Barniskis, Tara Baxter

DOA BCN ARRA ("Stimulus") Grant Status Update

- The grant was originally submitted for consideration in August 2009, due diligence responses occurred during November 2009 thru January 2010. The notification of selection and announcement came in February 2009, and in March 2009 a confirmation letter was received. In April the NOAA grants online system had the grant award posted, there being a short delay due to multiple grants.
- Currently activities are waiting for the BCN contract extension to be finalized.
- There is a sequence of events that must occur before the grant work can proceed.
 - There must be an environmental assessment completed, which will be funded by the grant. It will take approximately 60 days for environmental assessment research and write-up, plus an additional 30 days for review and approval should be expected.
 - Thus the contract extension must be signed for this to occur. Tie to contract occurs in a couple of ways. One is that the grant request explicitly indicates extension to 2016 the other is that the request is based on the assumption that customer prices will be held to prices that TEACH can support.
 - Approval from JFC also required, on docket for June 23 (1310 quarterly meeting). This will likely be on the Legislative Fiscal Bureau website by Monday. (Ed. It did not seem to be present on 6/21). Preliminary discussions with JFC members have been encouraging.
- Earliest hope would be for construction to begin in October, but engineering is required, so odds are that no "last mile" construction will happen this year.
- The BCN Advisory Council members are very concerned about the delays.
- "Middle mile" work can probably still happen this fall. AT&T hopes for 30 - 60 days once work starts. Plan is to start at aggregation nodes and work outward.
- Separate consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service was initiated. There were only two sites that needed some map adjustments. Confirmation letter expected soon.
- Expectations are high. Libraries and Schools have purchased higher-end routers. Class planning is occurring. Alternatives were sometimes not pursued based on their expectations.

BCN Contract Status

- Meeting next week: Secretary, legal council, Oskar and AT&T. Progress is hoped for at that meeting. See above for discussion of the tie-in between the contract and the ARRA grant.

UW Extension CAN ARRA Grant Status Update

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- The UW / UW extension team is working on two grants concurrently. They are currently engaged in the due diligence process for both grants.
- One grant involves education and outreach. Outreach is of primary interest to the UW Extension.
- Five communities are involved in the grants. Of those, four are involved with both infrastructure and outreach: Superior, Wausau, Platteville and the Chippewa valley area. The fifth, the Menomonie Nation, involves outreach only, as the Menomonie nation is working with Charter, and has its own infrastructure grant.
- The UW Extension is working with the UW, Wisconsin DOT and CCI Systems for infrastructure for the four communities.
- Their slogan: "Building Community Capacity thru Broadband"
- Chippewa Valley has provided a model upon which to base other efforts.
- Hope to hear back on the results of the due diligence phase in three to four weeks.

Summer Planning Session Discussion

- Discussions regarding date settled on the last week of July, with Tuesday thru Friday preferred. The date chosen is Wednesday, July 28th. Tentatively the schedule is for the entire day.
- Catering will be provided if the UW can assist. Otherwise, it will be each member for his or herself.
- Jamie Poindexter requested that if A/V support is required, then to let her know. The Discussion identified that a projection system would likely be necessary.
- Possible agenda items identified so far
 - Develop a briefing document for the next administration
 - Develop a timeline for next generation network planning

Additional discussions regarding the contract extension then took place. AT&T representatives were requested to adjourn from the meeting at this point.

- Discussion occurred regarding delays, speculation regarding reasons for the delays, the impact of the delays and the general consternation that results.
- Discussion regarding possible more formal communications regarding the status of the contract extension were then discussed.

Resolved: The BCN Advisory Committee to send a one page letter to co-chairs of Joint Finance, CC: JFC, Governor, Mr. Bob Lang (Executive Director, Legislative Fiscal Bureau).

Resolved: A second letter: To Dan Schooff, Deputy Secretary (incoming Secretary, DOA), CC: Oskar Anderson, the content to be essentially that shared in draft form during the meeting.

Both motions carried unanimously.