



Utah Broadband Advisory Council

Wednesday, January 17, 2017

2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Governor's Office of Economic Development

Attendees:

Kelleigh Cole, Governor's Office of Economic Development
Ray Timothy, UETN
Jeff Egly, UETN
Barbra Hollister – DWS
Sean Sperry – Comcast Business Development
Seth Coddle – Comcast Business Development
Eric Isom – MIB Partners
Jennifer Somers – CenturyLink
Kari May – Utah State Library
Dave Ryan – Strata Networks
Damion Hinckley – Codale Electric Supply
Tara Thue – AT&T
Lynne Yocom – UDOT
Michael Strchitus – EDCUtah
Lance Jackson – Zayo

Lynn Beecher – Go Fiber
Roger Timmerman – Utopia Fiber
Emilee Cooke – Governor's Office of Economic Development
Bert Granberg – AGRC
David Teitjen – Rocky Mountain West Telecom
Randy Parker – USDA Rural Development
Jamie Welch Jaro – USDA Rural Development
Heath Price – USDA Rural Development
Jack Walkenhorst – All West Communications
Diane Bradshaw – Direct Communications
Natalie Randall – San Juan County Economic Development
Tim Blackburn – Millennium Technology Partners
Brian Christensen – Horrocks Engineers
Gordon Coles - UCA

December 2017 Map of the Month: Address Points; January 2018 Map of the Month in Utah's Legislative Districts,

Bert Granberg, with AGRC, announced that he will be leaving his position at AGRC to work for the Wasatch Front Regional Council. Bert reflected on how much he has done with the Broadband Outreach Center, including producing almost 70 maps that were able to be created with data that the center and his office was able to procure. He then talked about the focus of the January Map of the Month that pinpointed how many broadband providers are in each legislative district, just in time for the 2018 general session. The Map of the Month article included providers by house and district based on the availability of broadband. There is an average of about 11.6 broadband providers that serve at least part of their district and the Senate averages about 13.3.

The December Map of the Month focused on the work with counties to create a statewide database of all address properties throughout the broadband project. All 29 counties participated in this and all of them are voluntarily maintaining this program, giving about 5 updates a month per each county. Bert discussed that this project has been good for city planning and other related issues, as well as 9-1-1 systems due to the preciseness of the map, and will furthermore be helpful for the 2020 census.

USDA State Director Introduction

Randy Parker, the new Director of USDA Rural Development, discussed his brand new position at the organization. Parker is looking to focus mostly the opioid crisis and broadband outreach, which the president gave an executive order to promote agriculture and rural prosperity by streamlining and expediting requests for better broadband facilities in rural America. His plan is to establish a taskforce that would look at issues such as removing barriers from rural prosperity, including broadband. The report came out from the White House stating the very first call to action is to achieve e-connectivity in rural America, making it no longer an amenity but an essential commodity.

Lifeline Update

Barbara Hollister in the Department of Workforce Services gave a brief outline and update of the Lifeline's National Verifier Program through USAC. The National Verifier is used to determine individual's availability of federal assistance with programs such as SNAP and food stamps. The program will start in Utah and eventually go national. The program is currently being tested and is now into the security phase. The soft launch will be up from March 1st through March 13th, and the hard launch will go into effect from March 13th to the 31st.

Digital Inclusion Efforts and Partnerships

Kelleigh announced that Donna Jones Morris has retired from the State Library and they are currently looking for a new librarian to take her place. Kari May, from the state library, discussed the libraries Overdrive Initiative that gives opportunity for online information to be available to the public, either with subscription databases, state publications, or e-books and audiobooks. UETN is working with almost half of the libraries in the state to try to give access to broadband and help find the best amount of bandwidth they need for availability. They are also working on creating digital hotspots, devices for families to use and training for staff and patrons alike. The library also uses a Book Mobile throughout rural Utah that travels to 11 counties and drives over 100,000 miles per year.

The Digital Inclusion Project, by Stacy Vincent also with the Utah State Library, is a project that is trying to create better access to devices and the broadband to use them as well as the skills to utilize both the devices and broadband. Although the project does not have a name, they are trying to create better access to broadband so people don't get left behind for online school work and projects, business sites or blogs, or being able to file taxes. The ssssss organization will have a number of voluntary partners including the state, county and city libraries, HUD, Google Fiber and Mobile Beacon, to name a few.

State FirstNet Update

Gordon Coles, with the Utah Communications Authority, gave a brief update of where FirstNet is in relation to Utah. He announced that we were the 31st state to Opt-In to FirstNet on November 6. AT&T has a contract of 25 years with FirstNet and will be working on understanding where there are gaps and where better coverage is needed with Committees in the seven regions throughout the state. A map has been constructed, that Gordy showed the council, which pinpointed where the build sites will be. There will be 16 throughout the state, 5 of them along I-70. These will be located on various sites including private sites, and BLM and Forest Services land.

Utah Education Network Update

Ray Timothy of UETN explained the role of the organization has a state entity that is charged with networking schools, universities, libraries and hospitals throughout Utah in nearly 1600 locations. They are a large advocate for broadband and have been getting requests for two 10 gigabit connections throughout the high schools located on the Wasatch Front. Jeff Egly and Dennis Sampson also discussed the recently finished project toward 100 gig connections from their downtown data center to St. George and have turned much of their focus on Dagget and San Juan County, which is on the second phase of telecom deployment. UETN has directly met with Chairman Pai of the FCC to help move these projects along.

The UETN team also updated the board on Senate Bill 222, the Digital Teaching and Learning Program, which works with K-12 schools and charter schools to conduct an annual inventory with 100% success from these schools. Lynn Beecher asked about the Pornography issues within the schools and the UETN team briefly gave an outline of monitoring and parental education on these issues that affect K-12 students.

San Juan County Broadband Discussion

The Economic Development Director of San Juan County, Natalie Randall, Discussed the top initiatives within the county with the 25K jobs program. One of the big moves is to add the deployment and adoption of broadband to their 25K plan, since many industries that expressed interest to relocate to the county require broadband. Within the Spanish Valley, a newer development just south of Moab, is redeveloping its infrastructure and would be a perfect opportunity to put in broadband. The county is also working on a connection with STEM, how to keep kids in rural areas, and exploring telecommuting jobs. When asked what does the county see happening in the next year for broadband, Natalie responded that they are still at the beginning stages but redundancy and having multiple providers and lines will be the focus.

Broadband Outreach Center

Val Hale, the Executive Director of GOED, announced and discussed the sunset decision of the Broadband Outreach Center starting in June. He explained that Representative Handy gave state funding to the department for an extra three years after federal funding was finished after being granted five years prior. GOED officers are currently going through downsizing efforts, including the broadband department, but some activities will still continue to function such as mapping and the broadband advisory meetings. Kelleigh also expressed that she will be helping with the transition and will be available for any further concerns and questions.