

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
BROADBAND AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
June 6, 2016
Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building, Willmar**

Present: Travis Bonnema, Dean Bouta, Kathy Dillon, Scott Froemming, Linda Kacher, Michelle Marotzke, Brian Mort, Les Nelson and Donn Winckler

Excused: Mark Boesch, Donna Boonstra, Larry Handlin, Wes Hompe, Larry Kleindl and David Sisser

Absent: Bruce DeBlicke

Guests: JoAnne Johnson, Executive Director, Minnesota Public Broadband Alliance and Joe Buttweiler, Consolidated Telephone Company (CTC)

EDC Staff: Connie Schmoll, Business Development Specialist

Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Chairperson Dean Bouta called the meeting to order at approximately 12:03 p.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Linda Kacher, SECONDED BY Les Nelson, to approve the minutes of the May 2, 2016 meeting as emailed. MOTION CARRIED.

Self introductions were given.

Minnesota Public Broadband Alliance. JoAnne Johnson, Executive Director of the Minnesota Public Broadband Alliance, gave the history of the Alliance which was formed to share knowledge and for cohesive lobbying efforts and is operating as an unincorporated nonprofit organization. The Alliance currently has eight members—Dakota, Scott and Sherburne Counties; the cities of Monticello, St. Cloud and Windom; Southwest Minnesota Broadband Cooperative; Arrowhead Electric Cooperative, Inc., including CTC. Johnson provided information on Scott County's broadband efforts and its success in economic development and job creation. The Alliance works closely with the Minnesota Association of Counties and League of Minnesota Cities as to their lobbying efforts and supported the position of \$85 million for state broadband funding. The Minnesota Office of Broadband Development has sent a representative to each of their meetings. The Alliance meets on the third Wednesday of each month. Johnson invited Connie Schmoll to attend their next meeting at which Jane Leonard of the Minnesota Office of Broadband Development will discuss what happened in the legislature. Sherburne County received permission from The Blandin Foundation to use grant funds for its membership fees. If it joins, the EDC would be an aspirational member. Any entity with public monies qualifies for membership. The Alliance's motto is to work together to strengthen each other by sharing knowledge, sharing

networks, building an inventory of its member's fiber networks, supplies, advice and counsel and technical help, lobbying and updating. Joe Buttweiler mentioned the Alliance is also looking at small cells and how to access vertical real estate. Neo Networks structured a contract with Scott County on vertical real estate that will be copied by others. Neo Networks will market small cells and sell Scott County's vertical real estate to carriers that will install small cells. Johnson noted wireless is an important adjunct component to building a fiber network. Buttweiler indicated Kandiyohi County has vertical real estate that providers will be interested in using to enhance their wireless services. With vertical real estate, providers will improve their quality of service and county's or businesses will receive payment for their vertical real estate. There will be a need for more towers as the demand for more cell service increases. Committee members noted this committee has worked very hard to educate and convince legislators that wireless is not the answer so are hesitant to promote vertical real estate. Johnson indicated she made a presentation to Chisago County on broadband myths that she will get to Schmoll.

REPORTS

Blandin Hack₂0 grant. Schmoll reported Larry Handlin is moving the event forward for October 2016.

Blandin WiFi grant. Schmoll reported the last bills have come in for Central Community Transit so the grant should be closed by the end of June.

Feasibility study. Schmoll reported notes from the May 18 meeting were included in the meeting packet (see attached). MPower Consulting made 376 calls to residents for the broadband survey and approximately 10 people did the online survey, which is available until mid-June. The EDC and committee did a good job advertising the survey. The last half of survey calls included the question, "what are people willing to pay for just broadband?" MPower Consulting is working now to provide the market study. CTC (Consolidated Telecommunications Company) is looking at six services areas and determining transport locations.

Legislative subcommittee. Schmoll reported \$35 million was included for broadband funding in the state's supplemental budget for 2017 with \$5 million for underserved areas. The state will be updating its broadband maps. The state Border-to-Border Broadband Grant application will be available mid-July and due October 3, 2016. Schmoll will attend a grant training on June 23. It was noted the legislature passed that last mile projects do not have to adhere to prevailing wage requirements. Bouta noted the definition of served and underserved areas opened up the grant more for semi-served areas to qualify for the grant. The definition for unserved and underserved areas was changed with unserved being defined as less than 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up and underserved as 100 Mbps down and 20 Mbps up.

Marketing/Community awareness of projects. Michelle Marotzke reported she, Les Nelson and Schmoll met and discussed sample letters and an information sheet, "What the Internet can do for YOU!" (See attached.) Letters of support will be needed for the study. They discussed options for community awareness, including a booth at the county fair, local festivals, farmers markets, petitions and presentations at Township Board meetings. Nelson drafted a proposed resolution to be adopted by the Township Boards (see attached). The community needs to be made aware of

why they need broadband and what broadband can do for them. The subcommittee requested help in reaching the right people and asked each committee member to provide six contacts to Schmoll by June 17. Schmoll will review the contacts, eliminate any duplicates and return the names to the committee members asking them to obtain letters of support. Nelson distributed a draft letter of support that may be used (see attached). Letters of support for specific areas will be sought as well. Johnson recommended speaking with banks. Swift County suggested going to the Veterans Service Office and others suggested the Corn Growers Association. A deadline for obtaining the letters of support will be given at the July meeting. A booth at the county fair is \$250 plus entrance fees for those who would staff the booth. Swift County obtained 300 letters from its citizens. A petition was done at FarmFest for “Are you in the red zone?”

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Broadband goals. Schmoll presented draft goals for consideration (see attached).

IT WAS MOVED BY Donn Winckler, SECONDED BY Kathy Dillon, to approve the goals as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

Broadband funding. Schmoll reported she and Larry Kleindl met with RS Fiber and she met with Gardonville Cooperative Telephone Association about a small-scale project. Schmoll also met with Warner Connect representatives who are interested in partnering on a project for the Willmar Industrial Park. The county is pleased to have CTC doing a large project in the county. Maximum state grant funds is \$5 million and Buttweiler noted it is a one-to-one match and recommended making it more competitive by doing more than the one-to-one match. Kandiyohi County is a large county and only one or two areas will be covered in the project. It is believed the state apportions the funds by Regional Development Commission (RDC) regions with each region receiving funds. The county can apply for the grant each year. Our RDC covers Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker and Renville Counties. Johnson believes there are nine regional divisions. Bouta and Schmoll met with Buttweiler prior to this meeting and it is hoped CTC will be the grant applicant. A letter of engagement may be entered into with CTC. The committee will need to work with the county on funding and possibly bonding. Schmoll will work on understanding the application process.

NEW BUSINESS

July meeting date. The July 4 meeting date was changed to Monday, July 11, 2016.

NEXT MEETING—The next meeting is **12 noon, Monday, July 11, 2016**, in Room 2057, Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building, Willmar.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Kandiyohi Feasibility Study 5-18-16 Meeting Agenda

Notebook: Kandivohi

Created: 5/17/2016 5:18 PM

Updated: 5/17/2016 5:36 PM

Author: Blake Griffin

- Design Status (CNE)
 - ◊ The serving areas were finalized
 - 6
 - ◊ Rough cable routes and sizing has been complete.
 - ◊ Design is currently being implemented into CAD
 - Most mainline has been drawn and now working on subscriber drops.
 - These cad lines will provide our mileage estimates that will be used to calculate construction costs.

 - Survey Status (MPower)
 - ◊ Final scripts (after review) went to the call center on 5/5
 - ◊ Worked with EDC on the power cooperative data seperating business from residential
 - ◊ Calls commenced on 5-12
 - ◊ Call lists were obtained by census block.
 - ◊ Survey calling expected to take two weeks. Approximately completed on May 26th.
 - MPower is this accurate?
 - ◊ Online survey was to go live 5/13
 - Mpower, is this complete?
 - What is URL?

 - Market Study / Financial Status (Kiesling)
 - ◊ almost complete determining the levels of broadband service available.
 - ◊ currently working on researching the profiles of the existing providers
 - ◊ also working on identifying providers' current opportunity sets, market

 - Open Questions
-

What the Internet can do for YOU!

(reasons/ideas to include with your letter of support for our broadband grant application)

Economic Growth & Quality Jobs

- Access to high speed connections enables business development by providing new opportunities for innovation, expansion and e-commerce.
- Connected communities attract businesses that want to locate in areas with a strong broadband presence.
- Connected communities attract workforce that want to locate or “come home” to areas with a strong broadband presence.
- Access to broadband has become as essential to individual and community economic prosperity as electricity and roads.

Health Care

- Connections to high speed internet technology are critical to ensuring access and quality health care in rural areas like Swift County.
- Connections allow for transmitting of medical data and imaging in real-time
- Connections remove geographic barriers and link patients to providers for direct consultation and allow people to receive the medical care they need when and where it’s needed.
- In the face of rising medical costs, high speed internet connections can provide for adoption of cost-cutting efficiencies available with telemedicine.

Pre-K – 12 Education

- High Speed Internet enhances every level of education from Pre-K through High School to college to graduate school.
- High Speed internet connections means education is no longer confined to the classroom
- Broadband enabled educational tools allow for remote collaboration among fellow students on projects, videoconferences with teachers, and real-time video exploration of faraway places.
- Broadband connections are indispensable for preparing students for the 21st century workforce
- Students without access to high speed internet connections have less access to information and are falling behind their peers with access to high speed technologies.
- In the “information age” Information is power, without access to information, you have less power

Distance Learning

- Broadband connections allow for distance learning by eliminating geographic barriers to the classroom.

- Broadband connections allow adults to gain vital skills training to secure employment and move beyond entry-level jobs with flexibility, whether a college degree online or completing an online worker training program.
- Busy people may learn online at their own pace and for less money than they would spend on an in-person course
- Broadband connections allow industry specialists in remote areas to impart their knowledge to wider audiences eliminating geographic barriers.

Senior Citizens

- High speed internet can help senior citizens live independently, improve their quality of life, increase participation in economic and civic life and reduce costs of medical care.
- High speed internet can enable elderly people to share their knowledge through social media and stay in touch with loved ones.

Energy and Environment

- Affordable high speed internet connections create new opportunities to address energy problems through smart grids.
- Universal high speed internet connections are an essential part of our future energy plan and can help to build a green economy, reduce energy use and green house gas emissions and spur economic growth by creating environmental jobs.

E-Government and Civic Participation

- High speed internet connections allow citizens to participate in civic life more fully and interact with government agencies with greater ease
- E-Government solutions can make navigating government services more efficient, improve the quality of services, and increase transparency.
- High Speed Internet enhances public employees' abilities to supplement high quality in-person delivered services.
- As Federal, State, and local governments increasingly rely on the Internet to provide information, forms, and services (or compliance) for... (name your government programs), the need for universal, affordable access becomes critical.
- Being just a click away, high speed internet connections can lower the barrier between citizens and their elected representatives, (especially for diverse populations, LMI populations...)

Public Safety

- Access to high speed internet technologies for public safety initiatives ranging from emergency services to homeland security can save countless lives by improving on current responder-to-responder voice networks.
- Broadband networks enable police, fire and emergency medical personnel to react to crises more quickly while facilitating cooperation between multiple safety agencies.

- Advance two-way, public networks allow safety officers to quickly access online resources, connect to network-enabled devices, and rapidly transfer critical video and data files during crisis situations
- High speed Internet promises to improve victim-to-responder communications by enabling digital transmissions to and from the broadband enabled public, like detailed public safety announcements sent over broadband networks.
- Expanding affordable broadband connections will let more people reach the help they require, and allow safety workers to provide emergency services of a high caliber in less time.

Enabling People with Disabilities

- Access to high speed internet empowers people with disabilities to become more independent.
- Broadband connections to allow for two-way voice, data, and video transfer can remove barriers that keep people with disabilities from participating in everyday activities such as employment, education, civic responsibilities and social connection

Personal

High Speed Internet is a tool with endless potential!

- Live Well – find health and medical information
- Do-It-Yourself – Information for home improvement and auto repair
- Work From Home – more employers are offering this option to workers, but you need high speed internet access
- Employment – find a new job or a better job
- Education – earn your GED, go to college, learn a new language, or learn to play guitar – without traveling to a classroom
- Send Messages – communicate with friends, businesses and relatives
- Share Information – photos, events, recipes and more
- Be Informed – sports, weather, news, current events.
- Be Entertained – online TV shows & movies
- Get Social – use Facebook, Twitter and other communication tools to connect with many people, groups and businesses
- Access Government Services – car registration, business license, tax returns – without going to a government office
- Shop – Find the best price before going to a store or buy online
- Pay Bills or Do Your Banking – without mailing checks or going to the bank
- Start a Business Right at Home
- Find Information on Personal Interests – family, church, hobbies, travel, groups & clubs.

**_____ TOWNSHIP GOVERNING BOARD RESOLUTION FOR THE SUPPORT OF AN
APPLICATION, FOR A BORDER-TO-BORDER BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT FOR THE
INSTALLATION OF BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE TO THE STATE OF MINNESOTA.**

WHEREAS, the Governing Board of _____ Township, in Kandiyohi County, in the State of Minnesota, does and hereby find as follows:

WHEREAS, the Governing Board of _____ Township believes and is committed to providing an excellent Quality of Life to residents and businesses residing and located in the township;

WHEREAS, the afore mentioned Board, realizes that robust broadband connections and speed is associated with an increased quality of life;

WHEREAS, the internet, and connection to it, will continue to increase exponentially in the areas of health care, education, e-government and public safety along with other important areas;

WHEREAS; the connectivity, redundancy, and speed to the internet is based on the quality of broadband infrastructure in place;

WHEREAS; many premises in the township do not have the needed internet connection infrastructure in place and are considered unserved or underserved, however it will be the decision of each premise owner to subscribe to any new service available.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, by the Governing Board of _____ Township, that the Governing Board does fully support the grant application, to the State of Minnesota, for broadband infrastructure installation this _____ day of _____, 2016.

Signed _____

Chairperson

Attest _____

Clerk

DATE

Danna MacKenzie
Office of Broadband Development
MN Department of Employment and Economic Development
1st National Bank Building
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Ms. MacKenzie,

Please accept this letter as an expression of strong support for the _____ application to the Border-To-Border Broadband Grant Fund. This project would bring long needed, reliable broadband connections to the under-served and unserved areas in Kandiyohi County. This project will positively impact this greater Minnesota region by helping to close the digital divide.

The following are all reasons why quality internet connections are important.

- Economic Growth and Quality Jobs in Rural Kandiyohi County
- Health Care internet options for patients
- Educational opportunities and distance learning for all individuals
- Reduce energy use and assist with environmental concerns
- Assist with public safety issues
- Help senior citizens stay connected with friends and family
- Poor internet connections are linked to lower property values

This list, of course, is not all inclusive however, it provides a spectrum of ways the internet assists people on a daily basis. Many residents of Kandiyohi County do not have reliable, consistent and fast internet connections and it is negatively affecting their Quality of Life.

Due to limited rural access to the internet we may be losing citizens to other regions or states where the internet access is better or we may be losing people who decide not to live here at all with poor connectivity.

In conclusion, Kandiyohi County needs an effective fiber-based broadband infrastructure that is suitable not just for today, but for our community's needs in the future. The use and uses of the internet are increasing exponentially and will continue to do so in the future. Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

C:\Users\LesN\Desktop\DATE.docx

(Printed on company letterhead if applicable)

September 1, 2016

Danna MacKenzie
Executive Director
Office of Broadband Development
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
332 Minnesota Street
Suite E-200
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Ms. MacKenzie and Selection Committee:

I would like to express strong support for Consolidated Telecommunications Company and Kandiyohi County Fiber to the Premise Project.

I oversee Emergency Management in Kandiyohi County. In recent years this has encompassed everything from a tornado warning and touchdown response, to dealing with a train derailment and anhydrous leak, to assisting in the coordination of bio-security efforts to combat the spread of bird flu. The scope of public safety is wide, and quality, high-speed fiber broadband connections can enhance public safety in the following ways:

- Strong broadband connections enable fire, police and emergency medical personnel to react to crises more quickly while facilitating cooperation between multiple safety agencies.
- Broadband advances two-way, public networks allow safety officers to quickly access online resources, connect to network enabled devices and rapidly transfer critical video and data files during crisis situations.
- Broadband will improve communications like safety announcements sent over broadband networks and allow for sirens to be triggered remotely.
- Strong broadband connections will improve responder to responder voice networks.

I am currently serving in an area with no and very slow broadband speeds. Slower broadband speeds put a constraint on my ability to respond to emergencies and ensure public safety.

Kandiyohi County needs an effective fiber-based broadband infrastructure that is suitable not just for today, but for our community's needs in the future.

Name

Title

Business/Department

Email

August 19, 2015

Danna MacKenzie
Office of Broadband Development
MN Department of Employment & Economic Development
1st National Bank Building
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Ms. Mackenzie:

I live Willmar, MN and have worked for Jennie-O for 34 years. Kandiyohi County needs broadband connections now!

I have seen the changes that technology has brought to turkey operations over the years, but the lack of internet connections never was so apparent than the spring of 2015, when we were battling avian flu.

I work with farms in three counties and there is a lot of data and information to be shared. If we are going to be able to stay on top of bio-security we need to be able to share data about what is happening at farms when it is happening. We can't do that if farm communities don't have a way to connect to the internet.

I live in rural Kandiyohi County so of course I support this grant. But if we continue to be passed over, I fear that we will lose innovative people and jobs to other communities that do have internet available. Please support the Kandiyohi County and Consolidated Telecommunications Company's Border to Border Broadband grant application.

Thank you,

(Printed on company letterhead if applicable)

September XX, 2016

Danna MacKenzie
Executive Director
Office of Broadband Development
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
332 Minnesota Street
Suite E-200
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Ms. MacKenzie and Selection Committee:

I would like to express strong support for Consolidated Telecommunication Company's Kandiyohi County Fiber to the Premise Project.

By providing strong, quality fiber-based broadband connections throughout Kandiyohi County this project will improve responder to responder voice networks. It will enable our personnel to react to crises more quickly while facilitating cooperation between our partner safety agencies.

Broadband advances two-way, public networks, which allow my safety officers to quickly access online resources, connect to network enabled devices and rapidly transfer critical video and data files during crisis situations.

This project will improve communications like safety announcements sent over broadband networks and allow for sirens to be triggered remotely.

We are currently serving in an area with no and very slow broadband speeds. We desperately need an effective infrastructure that is successful so that we can better ensure the public safety in Kandiyohi County. We need this infrastructure to be suitable not just for today, but for our community's needs in the future.

Slower broadband speeds put a constraint on to our ability to protect and serve and this broadband project will remedy that.

Name

Title

Business/Department

Email

September 1, 2016

Danna MacKenzie
Office of Broadband Development
MN Department of Employment & Economic Development
1st National Bank Building
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Ms. Mackenzie:

Please accept this letter as an expression of strong support for Kandiyohi County & Consolidated Telecommunications Company's Border to Border Broadband grant application. This project will bring long needed, reliable broadband connections to the unserved areas in Kandiyohi County and will positively impact the greater Minnesota region by helping to close the digital divide.

Currently there are areas of our county & school district that have no internet connections or very slow internet speeds. As a local *educator*, I can assure you of the benefits of broadband internet connections for our students:

- Broadband Internet enhances every level of education from Pre-K through High School to college to graduate school.
- Broadband internet connections mean education is no longer confined to the classroom
- Broadband enabled educational tools allow for remote collaboration among fellow students on projects, videoconferences with teachers, and real-time video exploration of faraway places.
- Broadband connections are indispensable for preparing students for the 21st century workforce
- Students without access to high speed internet connections have less access to information and are falling behind their peers with access to high speed technologies. In the information age, information is power.

This project will create an education tool that increases the likelihood of our students' success now and into the future which is why I fully support Kandiyohi County and Consolidated Telecommunications Company and their Border to Border Broadband grant application.

Best regards,

Kandiyohi County Broadband and Advanced Technology Committee
EDC – Kandiyohi County – Vision 2040
Goal Statements

May 2016

1. Expand a robust high-speed broadband network, utilizing fiber to the premise (FTTP) networks wherever possible and a mix of other communication technologies where fiber is not possible, to attain broadband access to every home, farm and business in Kandiyohi County.
2. Continue to identify specific needs for broadband access and speed including current and future communication needs because of evolving technologies such as those in the area of precision agriculture.
3. Obtain letters of support from business representatives and residents of the un-served and underserved areas of Kandiyohi County to include in funding requests.
4. Advocate for state and federal legislative action that secures helpful policies and adequate funding to support robust high-speed broadband development.
5. Identify and secure funding sources to proceed with implementation of broadband in Kandiyohi County.
6. Secure partnership with one or more broadband provider(s) to move forward with broadband network deployment in Kandiyohi County.