THE STATE OF UTAH
BROADBAND PROJECT

UTAH BROADBAND ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wednesday, October 9, 2014

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Ballard Spahr Board Room

Attendees:

Kelleigh Cole, Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development
Amie Parker, Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development
Heather Webster, Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development
Bert Granberg, Utah Automated Geographic Reference Center
Jessie Pechmann, Utah Automated Geographic Reference Center
Joshua Gregg, Utah Automated Geographic Reference Center
John Harvey, Utah Public Service Commission
Jeff Egly, Utah Education and Telehealth Network
Dennis Sampson, Utah Education and Telehealth Network
Sabrina Scott, Utah Education and Telehealth Network
Melinda Brereton, Utah Education and Telehealth Network
Donna Jones Morris, Utah State Library
Lynne Yocom, Utah Department of Transportation
James Toledo, Utah Division of Indian Affairs
Bill Duncan, Utah Division of Public Utilities
Rick Gaisford, Utah State Office of Education
Sharon Bertelsen, Ballard Spahr, LLP
Kira Slawson, Blackburn & Stoll, LC
Amy Ivie, United States Department of Agriculture
Madeleine Greymountain, Confederated Tribe of Goshute
Charles Baldwin, Bitstream Communications
Gary Zabriskie, Five County Association of Governments
Tara Thue, AT&T
Jared Anderson, Emery Telecom
Eric Isom, CenturyLink
Diane Bradshaw, Direct Communications
Lynn Beecher, Skywire Fiber
Chad Sundloff, T-Mobile
Ryan Marriott, Americom Technologies, Inc.
Angie Ramsay, Americom Technologies, Inc.
Michael Lane, Sprint
Bryan Scott, Beehive Broadband
Scott Wilson, Beehive Broadband
Jake Warner, Beehive Telephone
Brian Barrow, Beehive Telephone
Chari Chambers, Zayo
Brad Smeath, Comcast
Michael Merrill, Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce
Denise Villa Tully, Level 3 Communications
Carl Cornista, CentraCom
Sarah Nunn, Digis (call-in)
Angie Welling, Google (call-in)
Alisa Faatz, CentraCom (call-in)
Tami Goetz, STEM Action Center

Tami Goetz, Director of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Action Center, gave the Council an overview of the STEM Action Center's goals and initiatives. The STEM Action Center is working towards getting Utah's students interested in STEM-related fields to support the needed workforce in those related areas. The goal is to educate students at a young age through curriculum in schools and teacher professional development to provide exposure. The STEM Action Center also partners with industry in the STEM fields to help students gain an understanding of how what they learn in the classroom can relate to jobs in their future. With these goals and initiatives Utah plans to develop a workforce of strong candidates who will want to continue in STEM-related fields of expertise.

Rick Gaisford, Education Technology Specialist for the Utah State Office of Education (USOE), presented to the council about the relationship between broadband and education. The purpose is to make educational opportunities equal for all students in both urban and rural areas. Digital learning is used more widely in today's education with technology being used to facilitate new ways of learning. Gaisford stressed three main areas of importance in digital learning which include access to technology, professional development for teachers and sustainability. Gaisford also spoke about one-to-one initiatives in schools, which are becoming more prominent. These initiatives need sustainable funding, which is critical to keeping technology in schools.

Dennis Sampson, Associate Director for the Utah Education and Telehealth Network (UETN), gave an update on the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) E-Rate Order. UETN is concerned with is the way urban and rural schools and libraries will be classified by the Order. Previously, school districts in 25 counties were classified as rural. With the new classification, school districts in only five counties will now classify as rural. This means that in these areas, schools and libraries will receive less funding. UETN has a submitted a Petition for Reconsideration to the FCC and is encouraging all stakeholders to submit a letter of support for the petition. A follow up email will be sent with a list of states and language of what should be in the letter of support. Sampson also added that in the upcoming year, E-Rate funding will be also going towards providing Wi-Fi in schools (Category 2). The FCC is allocating $1 billion to Category 2 funding for 2015 and $1 billion for following years. The E-Rate program is phasing down all voice services by 20 percent per year starting July 2015, with all traditional voice services, VOIP and cell-phone services being phased out of E-Rate funding.

Sabrina Scott, E-Rate Coordinator at UETN, stated that UETN is asking for more detail and language clarification to understand the classification changes. Scott also spoke about the changes to Category 2. For example, the FCC changed the maximum discount from 90 percent to 85 percent. Funding will still need to be prioritized starting with the highest discounts first. This may affect many of the libraries and schools in the state. Applications are submitted to the Universal Service Administrative Company usually in January through March.

Bert Granberg, Director of Utah's Automated Geographic Reference Center (AGRC), presented the Map of the Month for September and October. The September map focused on rural and urban classifications for school districts in Utah, based on the FCC's E-Rate Order. One part of the map uses median income data to determine if an area is rural or urban. The second part of the map shows rural and urban areas based on the data received by AGRC versus the FCC. This map shows discrepancies between urban and rural designations that may affect future funding.

The October Map of the Month displays the change from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) broadband mapping model to the FCC's Form 477 data collection. The current mapping system shows a different footprint than what the Form 477 will show. This map is an interactive map which takes a look at the differences in reported coverage areas by technology type. Data collected by Form 477 is through census blocks. If a census block contains any broadband within the boundary, the entire census block is considered covered. Utah has some census blocks which are very large. This type of data collection can cause a misconception of what the broadband landscape looks like in Utah.

Kelleigh Cole, Manager of the Utah Broadband Project, announced the completion and release of the Utah Broadband Plan to the council. The plan was released to the public on Wednesday, October 8, 2015, and has received some media coverage. As a follow up, the Emigration Canyon Council has drafted a proposal including the best practice of deploying empty conduit during the road construction.

Notification will be sent of the public comment period for the proposal and stakeholders are encouraged to comment. The Rural Broadband Experiments webinar was changed to October 9, 2014, as well as the application deadline. As soon as more information is provided, information will be released in the Utah Broadband Project website and blog.