Utah Broadband Advisory Council

Thursday, January 12, 2012
8:00-10:00 a.m.
Valley Emergency Communications Center (VECC)

Attendees:

Tara Thue, Governor's Office of Economic Development
Kelleigh Cole, Governor's Office of Economic Development
Spencer Jenkins, Automated Geographic Reference Center
Jeff Egly, Utah Education Network
Dennis Sampson, Utah Education Network
Donna Jones Morris, Utah State Library
Stephen Fletcher, Utah Department of Technology Services
Stan Stoll, Utah Rural Telecom Association
Sharon Bertelsen, Ballard Spahr
Bill Harry, Valley Emergency Communications Center
Steve Proctor, Utah Communications Agency Networks
Brock Johansen, Emery Telcom
Eric Isom, CenturyLink

Steve Taylor, All West Communications
Dave Ryan, Strata Networks
Tyler Rasmussen, Strata Networks (call in)
David Gray, Comcast
Don Albrecht, Western Rural Development Center/USU
Steve Corbato, University of Utah (call in)
Justin Stewart, Utah League of Cities and Towns
Joseph Wavra, Enterprise Technologies/Goshute (call in)
Charles Baldwin, Enterprise Technologies/Goshute (call in)
Jamie Brotherton, UTOPIA
Steve Johnson, SAIC
Gib Sorebo, SAIC
Greg Wagner, ATT (call in)

Summary:

Tara Thue reviewed the mission and objectives of the Utah Broadband Advisory Council with the Council for updates or modifications. The Council did not recommend major changes to the mission and objectives but had recommendations for the implementation of some of the objectives. Members of the Council sited digital literacy, affordability (both for individuals and community anchor institutions) and access as barriers to adoption and deployment and recommended discussing these issues in future meetings (objective 1). The Council also recommended identifying community anchor institutions within unserved areas as a part the strategy of identifying unserved areas and developing strategic guidance for deployment efforts (objective 2). The council suggested identifying and addressing local and regional needs by having subgroups, such as public safety, assess their needs and present their findings to the Council. These findings may be used to develop a coordinated strategy for adoption and/or deployment (objective 4).

The Council also discussed future recommendations to support as a group. The Council agreed to support the continuation of the Broadband Advisory Council meetings into the future. They also recommended supporting the continuation of the UDOT fiber partnership and trade model; the UEN model for aggregated utilization of E-Rate funding; and the Utah Telehealth funding model to continue to deploy broadband infrastructure. They recommended educating the legislature on the distinct funding vehicles and sustainability of each of these models.

Council members recommended assessing the availability of broadband by mapping business and community anchor institution availability, in addition to the existing residential map, in order to determine funding needs for broadband deployment in each area. The Council discussed supporting the transition of the state Universal Services Fund (USF) from supporting traditional telephone service to supporting broadband. Council members recommended waiting until the Connect America Fund (CAF) is implemented to determine recommendations for USF on a state level, either by a direct

transition or by recommending the creation of a broadband specific fund. The Council will also discuss developing a strategy to sustain statewide broadband mapping and planning efforts and to promote the availability of high-speed broadband access for economic development purposes.

Steve Proctor, with the Utah Communications Agency Networks (UCAN), gave the Council an overview of UCAN, which provides public safety communications services and facilities on a regional or statewide basis for the benefit and use of public agencies. UCAN services 147 public safety networks in 25 counties and is the only network of its kind in the nation. In addition to the recommendations above, the Council will add a recommendation to support the development and expansion of public safety broadband systems, including recommendations to address funding issues associated with the transition to an IP-based system.

Bill Harry, executive director of the Valley Emergency Communications Center (VECC), lead the Advisory Council on a tour of the facility. The center houses the largest of 36 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in Utah. PSAP operators answer 9-1-1 calls and route these calls to police and fire dispatchers. The PSAP located at VECC responds to 1,200 to 4,000 calls per day and supports nine fire agencies and eight police agencies within Salt Lake County. The center has an extensive emergency preparedness plan and is equipped to support 100 people for 7 days with food and water. It also houses a generator that can provide power to the facility for 14 days. In the case of an evacuation, operators have access to mobile supply kits that allow them to answer and dispatch calls at an alternate location.