Utah Broadband Advisory Council

Thursday, August 16, 2012
10:00 a.m-12:00 p.m.
Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development

Attendees:

Tara Thue, Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development
Kelleigh Cole, Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development
Winston Wilkinson, Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development
Bert Granberg, Utah Automated Geographic Reference Center
Christy Heaton, Utah Automated Geographic Reference Center
Sean Fernandez, Utah Automated Geographic Reference Center
John Harvey, Utah Public Service Commission
Rep. V. Lowry Snow, Utah State Legislature
Chris Parker, Utah Division of Public Utilities
Kevin Rose, Utah Department of Technology Services
Lynne Yocom, Utah Department of Transportation
Donna Jones Morris, Utah State Library
Don Albrecht, Western Rural Development Center, USU
Dennis Sampson, Utah Education Network
Sabrina Scott, Utah Education Network
Glenn Ricart, US Ignite
Dean Cox, Washington County

Steve Proctor, Utah Communications Agency Networks
Bill Harry, Valley Emergency Communications Center
Kira Slawson, Utah Rural Telecom Association
Steve Taylor, All West Communications
Ryan Marriott, Americom Technologies
JaCee Bullock, Americom Technologies
Eric Isom, CenturyLink
Diane Bradshaw, Direct Communications
Michaela Mezo, Hewlett Packard
David Gray, SAIC
Dave Ryan, Strata Networks
Jeff Goodrich, Strata Networks
Todd Marriott, UTOPIA
Roger Timmerman, UTOPIA
Ed Naranjo, Confederated Tribes of the Goshute
Joseph Wavra, Enterprise Technologies/Goshute
Charles Baldwin, BitStream Communications/Goshute

Summary:

The Utah Broadband Advisory Council announced that it is accepting nominations for its new Executive Committee, which will be charged with setting action items for Advisory Council members to advocate and discuss; initiating outreach strategies for partnerships and membership; creating and approving working groups and subcommittees; approving working group proposals from the membership; and developing content and approving meeting agendas. Nominations are due on September 1, 2012 and Advisory Council members may also volunteer to serve on the Executive Committee. The Advisory Council has also decided to change its meetings to a bimonthly schedule to allow time for Executive Committee meetings, working groups, and subcommittee meetings.

During the meeting, the Advisory Council discussed future items for discussion. Members suggested that future Council discussions focus on the progress of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPBSN) and its impact on Utah; sustaining the Utah Broadband Advisory Council beyond 2014 by securing funding and establishing the Council as a statutory body; creating and supporting adoption efforts throughout the State; educating individuals and businesses on cybersecurity; and encouraging the development of advanced applications to utilize Utah's extensive infrastructure.

Kevin Rose, with the State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC), gave the Advisory Council an update on the NPSBN. The U.S. Department of Commerce is in the process of establishing the FirstNet Board which will oversee the implementation and operations of NBSN. Approximately $7 billion will be raised through incentive auctions to fund the network and $135 million will be allocated to support state and local efforts to plan for the implementation of the network.   SIEC has established a Broadband Subcommittee to advise the State of Utah on this effort. FirstNet will publish an RFP for the construction of the network and states will have 90 days to decide whether to opt into the

network. States who opt out will have 180 days to publish an RFP for the buildout of a state network which must be interoperable with the national network and will also be responsible for 20% of the construction costs. States will be required to assess the availability of existing infrastructure and work with commercial carriers to determine the best way to establish the network, incorporating both new and existing infrastructure. Once established, the network will allow public safety agencies to transfer vital data such as medical records, building blueprints, facial recognition, and criminal histories across jurisdictions.

John Harvey, with the Utah Public Service Commission (PSC), gave the Advisory Council an update on the PSC's efforts to determine the impacts that federal changes to the Universal Service Fund (USF) will have on telecommunications carriers in Utah. With fewer consumers subscribing to traditional telephone service and federal support likely to decrease, the State will need to decide what changes will need to be made to the State USF, which is currently designed to supplement basic telephone service and does not currently support broadband service. The PSC is encouraging providers to participate in educating the legislature on the impacts that the changes to federal USF will have on telecommunications carriers so they can develop a policy that will meet the needs of both consumers and carriers. Several Advisory Council members have presented to the Public Utilities and Technology Interim Committee and the Council plans to continue educating the legislature on the impacts of USF reform in Utah.

Sean Fernandez, with the Utah Automated Geographic Reference Center (AGRC), presented the July 2012 Map of the Month, which analyzed how broadband coverage impacts users of The Utah Reference Network for GPS (TURN GPS). TURN GPS is a network of survey-grade GPS receivers permanently located across Utah. It is used for a range of precision GPS applications including surveying, engineering, construction and GIS data collection. The network is heavily reliant on broadband access and provides a much higher level of precision for GPS receivers in the field than traditional GPS. AGRC created maps that examine the current footprint of the TURN GPS network in relationship to the major wireless broadband providers (AT&T, Leap, Sprint, Strata, T-Mobile, and Verizon). The maps show the strengths and weaknesses of both TURN GPS and the mobile provider networks, allowing TURN GPS users to determine the best carriers for their region and prepare for work before heading into the field.

Bert Granberg presented the August 2012 Map of the Month to the Advisory Council, which highlights the relationship between market challenges and broadband capacity throughout both urban and rural areas of Utah. The map compared factors such as rurality and economic need, to the highest available wireline speed in each community. The map showed some correlation between market challenges and broadband speed but also indicates that other factors such cost (distance, permitting requirements, terrain etc.); the existence of public institutions and private sector firms that serve as anchor tenants; and the use of state-operated microwave backhaul links may also play a role in determining available speeds in a community. The map may be helpful in identifying some of the factors inhibiting communities from getting high-speed broadband service.