

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

October 31, 2019

Conference Room, Taylor Electric Cooperative

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Rollie Thums, Mike Schaefer, Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Dennis Hinderliter and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: James Stokes and Melissa Seavers.

Other Attendees: Andria Farrand

Approve the agenda: Thums motioned, seconded by Zenner to approve the agenda with 8 items. Motion carried.

Approve the invoices: Thums motioned, seconded by Zenner to approve payment of Vantage Point invoice of \$7398.49.

Approve the minutes: Zenner motioned, seconded by Schaefer to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Conversation with Vantage Point over Business Plan: Shelby Pardy, Kristy Szabo and Lori Sherwood, all of Vantage Point participated in a conference call, as well as Russ Berg, formerly of WIN and John (?) to review the Taylor County Financial Feasibility Study: Middle Mile Network document with the committee. After much discussion it was determined that VP needs to provide the committee with a Middle Mile map and the county needs to have further discussions with the potential providers; Norvado, Nterra and Country Wireless. Mike to set up the calls in the coming week.

Next meeting date: The next meeting will be at the call of the Chair.

Adjournment: Zenner made a motion, seconded by Schaefer to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 10:02 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

October 17, 2019

Third Floor County Board Room-Courthouse

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Rollie Thums, James Stokes, Mike Schaefer and Melissa Seavers were present.

Members Absent: Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Dennis Hinderliter and Michelle Grimm.

Other Attendees: Dale Noel - Dairyland Power, Jenny Radcliffe - Dairyland Power, Tim Stewart - Clark Electric and Andria Farrand.

Approve the agenda: Thums motioned, seconded by Stokes to approve the agenda with 8 items. Motion carried.

Approve the invoices: None.

Approve the minutes: Thums motioned, seconded by Schaefer to approve the minutes from the August 22, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Review process to select an Internet Service Provider(s)/partner(s): Bub has been in touch with Lori from Vantage Point to discuss the project as well as the grant application deadline of December 19th. He stated they have all they need except a definitive answer of where the money is coming from and the identification of our ISP(s). Schaefer stated we need the business plan from Vantage Point before we can get financial commitments or interested ISP's. Discussion continued regarding the scope of the project, and the various options that have been discussed. Bub will contact Vantage Point and get a timeline for the completion of the business plan. The committee agreed it was important to reach out to all potential ISPs individually to gauge their commitment, and possibly get a letter of intent from them. The committee asked to receive the business plan prior to the next meeting so they have time to review.

Next meeting date: The next meeting will be at the call of the Chair.

Adjournment: Stokes made a motion, seconded by Thums to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

August 22, 2019

Taylor Electric Conference room

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, James Stokes, Mike Schaefer Dennis Hinderliter and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: Melissa Seavers

Other Attendees: Jeff Lee – COO-Norvado, Jeff Hallstrand – Price County Customer Network Manager- Norvado, Russ Berg – Chief Technology Officer for Wisconsin Independent Network (WIN), Leo Carlson - Chief Sales and Marketing Officer- Norvado, Kerry Groetsch-Dairyland Power, Dale Noel- Dairyland Power, Ben Porath- Dairyland Power, Jim Miller- Congressman Duffy's office, Lori Sherwood-Vantage Point and Andria Farrand.

Approve the agenda: Thums motioned, seconded by Stokes to approve the agenda with 7 items. Motion carried.

Approve the invoices: Zenner motioned, seconded by Knoll to pay the Vantage Point invoice of \$7352.50 leaving a balance of \$22,492.30.

Approve the minutes: Thums motioned, seconded by Zenner to approve the minutes from the July 29, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Meeting with Lori Sherwood of Vantage Point and representatives from Norvado Technology Solutions and Wisconsin Independent Network (WIN): Lori Sherwood of Vantage Point presented their findings from the Feasibility study as well as the survey of Taylor County residents and recommendations for next steps.

First, she reviewed at a high level the results of the Stakeholder's meetings. The responses from all business segments were the same, we need to have more reliable internet available in the county. It is affecting our businesses, our schools, and especially our students.

Next, she reviewed the results of the survey. There were 664 residents that took the survey, 94% of whom purchase internet service. Of those, only 6% were satisfied. In addition to the majority being dissatisfied with their current internet service, they were also willing to change providers and felt the County should get involved in the solution.

Lori then presented two options for new build networks and the estimated pricing for each:

- Last mile (serving homes and businesses)
- Middle-Mile (serving community anchor institutions)

Finally, she provided information on different network operating model options and the pros and cons of each.

Discussion and approval of next steps to bring Broadband to the residents of Taylor County:

The committee agreed it was time to move forward with a Business Plan and Strategic Plan.

A motion was made by Stokes, seconded by Thums to have Vantage Point create the Strategic Plan and Business Plan for Middle Mile Fiber Ring that will include the original Pulse Map to include Taylor Electric's Substations in addition to the map provided by Vantage Point which will allow for connectivity to Dairyland substations within Taylor County. In addition, the plan will include a Hybrid Network Operating Model that includes an undefined Public-Private Partnership that may or may not include Taylor Electric, Dairyland, Norvado, and or WIN in addition to other public or private entities. All GIS Data must be provided to Vantage Point to ensure an accurate quote and Business plan. This motion is contingent on financing, which is not to exceed the original amount agreed upon by the county of \$50,000. Knoll asked the representatives from Dairyland Power, Norvado and WIN if they would be interested to sit down with the committee for additional discussions and they all agreed. Motion carried.

Next meeting date: The next meeting will be at the call of the Chair.

Adjournment: Knoll made a motion, seconded by Zenner to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

July 29, 2019

Taylor Electric Conference room

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, James Stokes, Mike Schaefer, Dennis Hinderliter and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: Melissa Seavers

Other Attendees: Chad Young, CEO-Norvado, Jeff Lee – COO-Norvado, Jeff Halstrand – Price County Customer Network Manager- Norvado, Russ Berg – Chief Technology Officer for Wisconsin Independent Network (WIN), Leo Carlson - Chief Sales and Marketing Officer- Norvado and Andria Farrand.

Approve the agenda: Schaefer motioned to add an update from the Marathon County Broadband meeting to the agenda, seconded by Zenner. Zenner motioned to approve the updated agenda, seconded by Knoll to approve the agenda with 6 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes: Thums motioned, seconded by Stokes to approve the minutes from the July 15, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Update of Marathon County Broadband Committee Meeting: Schaefer provided an update from the meeting he attended in Marathon County. They are also looking to improve their internet service to the “unserved and underserved” of Marathon County, without duplicating service from the existing providers. They are just in the early stages and working with Design Nine to do their feasibility study.

Meeting with Chad Young of Norvado Technology Solutions: Bub provided the team from Norvado and WIN with an overview of what has transpired since the inception of our Broadband committee. Chad Young, CEO of Norvado explained they are a Communication Cooperative that did a broadband project in Bayfield County laying 2400 miles of fiber to the home. They acquired Price County Telephone 2 months ago and are planning to do a similar project there. They are very open to discussing further how Norvado, WIN, Taylor Electric and Taylor County can work together and have agreed to attend our next meeting on August 22, 2019 with Vantage Point.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is August 22, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. at Taylor Electric.

Adjournment: Knoll made a motion, seconded by Stokes to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

July 15, 2019

Taylor Electric Conference room

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, James Stokes and Mike Schaefer were present.

Members Absent: Melissa Seavers, Dennis Hinderliter and Michelle Grimm

Other Attendees: Reggie-Star News intern and Andria Farrand.

Approve the agenda: Thums motioned, seconded by Zenner to approve the agenda with 9 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes: Knoll motioned, seconded by Thums to approve the minutes from the May 6, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Review invoices and bills paid: Bub reviewed the bills recently paid, \$13,998.71 for Lori Sherwood's trip to Medford and the drafting of the Strategic Plan, as well as the latest invoice for \$5950.00 for feasibility study and project design. Knoll made a motion to approve with a second by Tums. Motion carried.

Survey update: The Broadband survey was made available to all Taylor County residents for 6 weeks, and Vantage Point was "blown away" by the response. They originally wanted to do a mailed survey, thinking they would get better results, but we received over 650 responses which they said was "just incredible". We should be getting the survey results at our August meeting with Vantage Point.

Update from Rural Broadband and Partnership Opportunities Seminar: The conference held in Eau Claire on June 14th was attended by Chuck Zenner, Rollie Thums, Mike Schaefer and Michelle Grimm. It was hosted by the Wisconsin Electric and Telephone Cooperatives and provided a great opportunity for our committee members to meet with several potential ISP's as well as get information on funding and other successful partnerships.

Discuss next steps with potential partners: Thums to coordinate a meeting with Chad Young, CEO of Norvado Technology Solutions and the Broadband Committee within the next several weeks. Bub to set up a meeting with Lori from Vantage Point on August 22, 2019.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is August 22, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. at Taylor Electric.

Adjournment: Zenner made a motion, seconded by Thums to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

Andria Farrand

County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

May 6, 2019

Taylor Electric Conference room

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, James Stokes and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: Mike Schaefer and Melissa Seavers

Other Attendees: Dennis Hinderliter and Andria Farrand.

Approve the agenda: Zenner motioned, seconded by Thums to approve the agenda with 6 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes: Thums motioned, seconded by Stokes to approve the minutes from the April 8, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Finalize plans for Stakeholder meetings: All business segments have been sent invitations and Grimm and Farrand provided list of attendees. Several committee members as well as Farrand are going to make follow up calls. Grimm is going to create an agenda for both day's meetings and send to the committee.

Bub mentioned the contract is now signed with Vantage Point and includes the requested "not to exceed" language.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is June 10, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. at Taylor Electric.

Adjournment: Zenner made a motion, seconded by Thums to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

April 8, 2019

Taylor Electric Conference room

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, James Stokes, Mike Schaefer and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: Chuck Zenner and Melissa Seavers

Other Attendees: Dennis Hinderliter, T.J. Podmolik-Price County IT Director and Andria Farrand.

Approve the agenda: Thums motioned, seconded by Knoll to approve the agenda with 10 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes: Knoll motioned, seconded by Thums to approve the minutes from the March 25, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Set dates for Vantage Point meetings: Bub provided details from his correspondence with Vantage Point and the next steps. Corporation Counsel reviewed the contract and requested a few changes which were amended and Vantage Point also provided a "not to exceed" cost.

Vantage Point provided several dates to hold the stakeholder meetings and the committee chose May 8/9. The committee put together a list of the various stakeholders to attend each of the segments. Stokes advised he would take this information to the Medford Economic Foundation meeting he was attending later that day and reach out to Andrea at the Chamber office for business contacts. Grimm and Farrand will work on getting the invites emailed and include an RSVP as well as ask for the number of people planning to attend from each

Review meeting with Public Service Commission and next steps: Bub reported a good meeting with Angie Dickison from the Broadband Office of the PSC. Dickison has connections with TDS and has helped to facilitate a conference call with them on Friday, April 12 at 10 a.m.

Discuss role of Taylor Electric and Dairyland Power: Schaefer mentioned that Taylor Electric held their annual meeting on March 30th and he received positive comments and feedback regarding the Broadband project.

Possible finance options: Bub received a call from Senator Petrowski, and the Senator is proposing an addition to the State budget, asking the State to match our 2 million dollars with a grant. This would give us a total of 4 million dollars to start the backbone while we wait for the next grant cycle.

Approve possible finance options: Nothing to approve.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is May 6, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. at Taylor Electric.

Adjournment: Thums made a motion, seconded by Stokes to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

March 25, 2019

Courthouse-Third floor County Board room

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 11:26 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, James Stokes, Mike Schaefer, Chuck Zenner and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: Melissa Seavers

Other Attendees: Dennis Hinderliter, Kevin-Vantage Point and Andria Farrand.

Approve the agenda: Thums motioned, seconded by Stokes to approve the agenda with 9 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes: Thums motioned, seconded by Knoll to approve the minutes from the March 11, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Review County Board meeting results: The \$50,000.00 request for funding was unanimously approved by the Board. The next step will be to partner an ISP, as that will be needed in order to apply for the grant. The committee feels it is best not to rush and apply by the May deadline, while still being cognizant that Taylor Electric cannot wait 2 more years.

Discuss Contract with Vantage Point: The contract is currently being reviewed by Corporation Counsel.

There was discussion with Kevin from Vantage Point regarding the grant application process and how to get the most points for rurality.

Approve contract with Vantage Point: Zenner motioned to approve phase 2, pending Corporation Counsel approval of the contract. Knoll seconded, and the motion carried.

Discuss/Approve next step: There was discussion regarding the next steps, including partnering with an ISP and determining the administrative structure.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is April 8, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. at Taylor Electric.

Adjournment: Knoll made a motion, seconded by Stokes to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

March 11, 2019

Conference Room, Taylor Electric Cooperative

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: James Stokes, Mike Schaefer, Chuck Zenner and Melissa Seavers

Other Attendees: Dennis Hinderliter and Andria Farrand.

Approve the minutes: Thums motioned, seconded by Knoll to approve the minutes from the February 21, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Approve the agenda: Knoll motioned, seconded by Thums to approve the agenda with 8 items. Motion carried.

Discuss proposal from Vantage Point: Bub presented the contract he received from Vantage Point, but had concerns since it had no specific amounts, instead it listed hourly rates. He suggested it should have a "Not to Exceed" amount and rather than the full contract, he is going to contact Vantage Point to send us a contract for just Phase 1.

Review plans for March 25th County Board session: Bub presented the outline for the Board meeting and Grimm will create the Power point slides. Bub has had good response from the people he contacted to attend the session. We plan to have representation from; Tammy Baldwin's office, Ron Johnson's office, Jerry Petrowski, James Edming, Sean Duffy's office and Thums is reaching out to Governor Ever's office.

Funding for the project: The initial request for funding is on the agenda for the March 18th Finance Committee meeting.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is March 25th, immediately following the County Board session.

Adjournment: Thums made a motion, seconded by Knoll to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

February 21, 2019

Conference Room, Taylor Electric Cooperative

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:59 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, James Stokes, Mike Schaefer, Chuck Zenner and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: Melissa Seavers

Other Attendees: Jim Metz, Dennis Hinderliter and Andria Farrand.

Approve the minutes: Thums motioned, seconded by Stokes to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Approve the agenda: Zenner motioned, seconded by Knoll to approve the agenda with 10 items. Motion carried.

Review proposal from Vantage Point: Vantage Point proposal was reviewed by the committee.

Determine if we should move forward with VPS: A motion was made by Zenner to move forward with Zenner, seconded by Thums. Motion carried.

Funding for project: Submit a request to the Finance committee for powerline funding so the money is available as needed throughout Phase One of the project.

Discuss how to move forward to limit meetings: Schedule monthly going forward.

Next meeting date: Bub to call next meeting.

Adjournment: Zenner made a motion, seconded by Thums to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

February 14, 2019

Conference Room, Taylor Electric Cooperative

Call Meeting to Order: Bub called the meeting to order at 9:56 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Rollie Thums, James Stokes and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: Gene Knoll, Mike Schaefer and Melissa Seavers

Other Attendees: Jim Metz, Dennis Hinderliter and Andria Farrand.

Approve the minutes: Zenner motioned, seconded by Stokes to approve the minutes from the January 22, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Approve the agenda: Zenner motioned, seconded by Thums to approve the agenda with 9 items. Motion carried.

Discuss options to work with TDS: At this time TDS is not interested.

Review Vendors to create business plan: Bub lead a discussion via conference call with Vantage Point, a consulting firm from South Dakota. Lori Sherwood, Director of Broadband Development for Vantage Point lead the discussion on their end. After much discussion it was agreed that Vantage Point would deliver a proposal to Bub which will include a business plan and business model.

Select partner for Business plan and possible Broadband development: Awaiting proposal from Vantage point. Lori committed to delivering to Bub in the next few days.

Other discussion-Funding: Vantage Point can help to determine our eligibility for grants through the USDA Reconnect Loan and Grant Program.

Next meeting date: Bub to call next meeting.

Adjournment: Zenner made a motion, seconded by Stokes to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

January 22, 2019

Conference Room, Taylor Electric Cooperative

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Gene Knoll, James Stokes, Mike Schaefer, Chuck Zenner and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: Rollie Thums, Melissa Seavers

Other Attendees: Andria Farrand.

Approve the minutes: Schaefer motioned, seconded by Zenner to approve the minutes from the January 10, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Approve the agenda: Zenner motioned, seconded by Schaefer to approve the agenda with 7 items. Motion carried.

Feedback from discussions with potential consultants: Update from Schaefer: **Pulse** talked to Rudy who advised he will call back with the appropriate people to discuss developing a business plan. **Dairyland** they do not help in the development of the business plan but provided options. Jenny Radcliff who is new to Dairyland may be able to help with writing the grant requests. Schaefer also provided an example of another success story in Cook County, Mn. that ran 800 miles of fiber to the home (FTTH). They have a 50% subscription rate and 75% of the homes have FTTH. Schaefer stated he has several additional calls set up in the coming week and invited the rest of the committee to attend. Update from Grimm: **Packerland** wants us to send what we need from them... Grimm will reach out to other contacts at WISNET.

New Business: Grimm and Stokes presented a PowerPoint they put together which will be presented at the County Board session on January 28th.

Next meeting date: Bub to call next meeting.

Adjournment: Stokes made a motion, seconded by Knoll to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

January 10, 2019

Conference Room, Taylor Electric Cooperative

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, James Stokes, Mike Schaefer, Chuck Zenner and Michelle Grimm were present.

Members Absent: Melissa Seavers

Other Attendees: Mayor Wellner, Jim Metz, Dennis Hinderliter, Greg Knight, John Marshall, Pat Sullivan and Andria Farrand.

Approve the minutes: Thums motioned, seconded by Zenner to approve the minutes from the November 29, 2018 meeting. Motion carried.

Approve the agenda: Zenner motioned, seconded by Thums to approve the agenda with 9 items. Motion carried.

Introduction of attendees: Bub led the introduction as there was representation from several other groups including Mayor Michael Wellner-City of Medford, Jim Metz-County Board Chair, Greg Knight-Medford City Council, John Marshall - Dixon Greiner Realty and Pat Sullivan -Medford School District.

Review progress of committee: Bub provided a summary to the group as to how/why this committee was formed and stated that yes internet is currently available to most of Taylor County, but is it affordable? A lengthy discussion continued regarding the importance of high-speed broadband for our schools, businesses, and residents; attracting new businesses, preventing loss of business, offering work at home opportunities as well as online education and online medical care.

Discussion among City, County and School District of needs going forward: It was suggested that a presentation be made to the City Council, County Board and School Board.

The committee will contact potential consultants to identify from them what they need from the committee to move forward. Schaefer to contact Pulse and Dairyland Power and Grimm to contact Packerland and report back at the next meeting.

Next meeting date: Next meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2019 at 11:00 a.m.

Adjournment: Knoll made a motion, seconded by Schaefer to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk