

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

December 17, 2021

County Board Room, Courthouse

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

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

Members Present via Zoom: James Stokes, Melissa Lind.

Members Absent: Mike Schaefer and Ken Ceaglske.

Other Attendees: Russell Berg, Mitchel Olson of Bug Tussel, Steve Deml, Butch Frischmann, Jeff Peterson, Larry Brandl, Steve Deml and Andria Farrand.

Other attendees via Zoom: Jen Strama, Jane De Staercke, Joe Liegl and Damian Jones.

Approve the agenda: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner, to approve the agenda with 12 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes of the December 7, 2021 meeting: Motion by Zenner, seconded by Thums, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Dennis Hinderliter arrived at 9:41 a.m.

Review proposal from Bug Tussel for Taylor County project: Mitch Olson of Bug Tussel was present to go through the answers to the questions submitted by the committee and discuss the overall proposal.

The committee may go into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(e) for the purpose of conducting public business with competitive or bargaining implications. (Topic: potential contract negotiation with an Internet Service Provider): Motion by Knoll, seconded by Thums, to go into closed session. A roll call vote cast, five (5) voting aye, zero [0] voting no, the motion carried. Motion by Zenner, seconded by Stokes to go back into open session. A roll call vote cast, five (5) voting aye, zero [0] voting no, the motion carried.

Grimm left at 10:43 a.m.

Decide if Taylor County should move forward to finalize an agreement with Bug Tussel: Motion by Zenner, seconded by Thums to move forward with Bug Tussel. Motion carried.

Update on equipment order needed for connections in County facilities & middle mile network, locations: Lind provided an update, they were currently finalizing the order and delivery is now 5 months, but they are aware we will take partial deliveries.

Construction update - Request timeline from WANRack for completion of network: WanRack will need 40-60 working days to complete the network once they start up again in spring. Bub asked for an end date in writing. They are currently finishing the connection of the initial sites and it is anticipated those will be done by the end of December.

Discuss/select the location for where we should apply for FTH grants: Working on a grant application with WanRack and Bug Tussel that is due March 17th. Bug Tussel will also submit grant applications for the Middle Mile Network.

Set next meeting date: Tuesday, January 4th at 9:30 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Zenner, seconded by Stokes, to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

December 7, 2021

County Board Room, Courthouse

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

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

Members Present via Zoom: James Stokes, Melissa Lind, Ken Ceaglske.

Members Absent: Mike Schaefer.

Other Attendees: Earl Hinkel, Larry Brandl, Steve Deml and Andria Farrand.

Other attendees via Zoom: Blake Mayfield, Russell Berg, Jen Strama, Roxy Kahan, Jane De Staercke, Steve Schneider and Mitchel Olson of Bug Tussel, Stanley Schmidt, Candice Grunseth, Bob Judnic, Ben Stanfley, Damian Jones.

Approve the agenda: Motion by Thums, seconded by Stokes, to approve the agenda with 15 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes of the November 2, 2021 meeting: Motion by Thums, seconded by Stokes, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Update on Ntera and the town of Aurora: Bub stated Ntera has not included connecting to our network in their contract. He will send a letter giving them 30 days to amend and sign the contract, or we will move forward with connecting Aurora to our network.

Supervisor Zenner arrived at 9:17 a.m.

Supervisor Knoll arrived at 9:21 a.m.

ISP selection: Bub stated that Charter is the best option for an ISP. We currently have 4 contracts with Charter through May 2023 and when we begin using our network, we will save approximately \$3000.00/ month. Motion by Zenner, seconded by Knoll to use Charter for our ISP for our 32 sites. Motion carried.

Proposal from Bug Tussel: Steve Schneider and Mitchel Olson provided a presentation to the committee via Zoom. They are proposing 2 different options which would add towers as well as a network that would complete the network loop in the county. Schneider stated that the towers with fixed wireless would serve a 4-mile radius and those with a cellular would cover a 7- mile radius. Some of the sections in between the towers would be connected with fiber to the home. Bug Tussel provided a lot of information to the committee and after much discussion there was no action taken.

Construction update: Blake provided a construction update; all crews have been pulled for the winter. They will resume construction in spring and will be finished by June.

In a separate handout it was stated:

380,000 feet of the 460,000 feet of conduit have been placed.

140,000 feet of fiber have been placed.

The following sites will be up by the end of the month:

- Medford Town Hall
- Holy Rosary School
- Taylor County Courthouse
- Frances L Simek Memorial Library
- Immanuel Lutheran School
- County Highway Department
- Medford City Hall
- Taylor County Commission on Aging
- Taylor County Human Services
- Taylor County Fair Grounds
- Medford Tower
- Taylor County Land Conservation
- Stetsonville Town Hall
- Deer Creek Town Hall
- Little Black Town Hall

Here are the weather-related issues causing the winter shut down.

- The weather currently is only allowing the crews to work from about 12 pm to 5 pm due to the temperature being below freezing for most of the day. Our machines can only run when the temp is above freezing due to water pumps. These pumps cannot run water through them when it's below freezing as water will expand and bust the pumps.

- Also snow multiple times a week is making it hard to stay on top of our locates. Which is causing crews to miss marked utilities causing potential damages.

-Working on the DOT Row during these muddy and cold times is causing the state ROW to become very disturbed and making the job stand out in a bad way.

We expect to have the network completed by June depending on the weather.

LIT Communities: LIT Communities is proposing to do an assessment of the county for fiber to the home. This would take 4-6 months at a cost of \$250,000.00. Details are needed in writing. No action taken.

Review status of equipment needed for connections in County facilities: Lind received a quote from Heartland Business Solutions for all equipment at a cost of \$299,000.00 with an additional \$59,000.00 for equipment at the Courthouse. This includes installation and 3 years of maintenance. Delivery at this time is March. Motion by Zenner, seconded by Ceaglske to order the equipment, not to exceed \$375,000.00. Motion carried.

Set next meeting date: Friday, December 17th at 9:30 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Knoll, seconded by Thums to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

November 2, 2021

County Board Room, Courthouse

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Rollie Thums, Gene Knoll, Kenny Ceaglske, Michelle Grimm and Dennis Hinderliter.

Members Present via Zoom: Melissa Lind.

Members Absent: James Stokes, Mike Schaefer.

Other Attendees: Larry Brandl, Claire Frischman, Ray Sackmann and Andria Farrand.

Other attendees via Zoom: Blake Mayfield, Russell Berg, Jen Strama, Roxy Kahan, Jane De Staercke.

Approve the agenda: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner, to approve the agenda with 15 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes of the October 5, 2021 meeting: Motion by Knoll, seconded by Zenner, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Update on PSC grant applications: Bub stated none of our grants were approved, they are looking for fiber to the home.

Responses from RFP for an Internet Service provider: Berg stated received answers back from WIN, Charter, Lit Communities and WisNet. He compared the responses for the committee but asked that they hold off from making a decision today. Lind confirmed the current bill with Charter is \$3800/month and we only have a 2-year contract, in anticipation of the middle mile network being completed. The contract will be up for renewal in spring 2022.

Kenny Ceaglske arrived at 10:27 a.m.

Bub and Berg will continue discussions and call a meeting as needed to make a decision.

Status of equipment needed for connections in County facilities: Berg and Lind have been working with Heartland Business Solutions to get us a quote on the necessary equipment. The money was set aside for equipment.

Review information from Lit Communities: no update.

Review proposal from Bug Tussel: no update.

Next round of grant applications: Waiting to partner with an ISP that will work with us on Fiber to the Home. Next grant cycle is in January.

Update from Russ on Ntera and Norvado: Berg stated he has spoken to both companies, and they had basically the same response. "We've got a lot on our plates without grant awards". Norvado also said it was unlikely they would lease our fiber.

Review status of partnership with towns and villages: No update.

Construction update: Still a bit behind due to weather.

Set next meeting date: Tuesday, December 7th at 10:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Thums, seconded by Knoll to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

October 5, 2021

County Board Room, Courthouse

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

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Rollie Thums, Kenny Ceaglske, Michelle Grimm and Dennis Hinderliter.

Members Present via Zoom: Gene Knoll, James Stokes, Mike Schaefer.

Members Absent: Melissa Lind.

Other Attendees: Larry Brandl, Debbie Fuchs, Claire Frischman, Earl Hinkel, Steve Deml and Andria Farrand.

Other attendees via Zoom: Russell Berg, Tammie Blomberg-Rib Lake Library, Josh Klingbeil-WVLS, Rob Oyler-WANRack, Carla Huston-Stetsonville Library, Damian- Great Northern Cabinetry, Blake Mayfield- WANRack, Maxx Handel-Medford Library, Alex Iseri.

Approve the agenda: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner, to approve the agenda with 13 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes of the September 7, 2021 meeting: Motion by Zenner, seconded by Thums, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Update on PSC grant applications: Bub stated some of the applications were eliminated, but not ours. We should find out by early November if we are awarded any of the 5, we submitted; 4 with WANRack and 1 with Bug Tussel.

Review RFP being sent out for an Internet Service provider: Berg stated he has the RFP ready to go out today or tomorrow with a due date of October 22nd. It was originally going to include the installation of equipment, but it was decided to have Melissa get the equipment through Heartland Business, so all have the same. The equipment will also be purchased by the County. Motion by Thums, seconded by Ceaglske, to have Russ send the RFP. Motion carried.

Equipment needed for connections in County facilities: Berg has been speaking with Josh Klingbeil-Wisconsin Valley Library Services about the 5 libraries. They are connected with WISNET and BadgerNet. Town Halls will have a switch, offering 2 separate connections, one is secure for the Town Officials and the other will be Wi-Fi so they can be a hotspot for residents.

Next round of grant applications: Since there is a preference to grant applications with fiber to the home, Bub stated we need to get a partner for the next round. Rob Oyler-WANRack mentioned there is a potential third party that cannot be disclosed at this time due to an NDA, but they would like to meet with Taylor County. Oyler and Bub to set up a meeting.

Discussion with Ntera, Bug Tussel and Norvado:

Ntera: Berg stated he has spoken to Russ and is waiting to hear back. Bub also stated he is looking for the agreement between Ntera and the Town of Aurora.

Norvado: Berg spoke with Chad Young asking if he is interested in applying for a grant with us and is waiting to hear back.

Bug Tussel: Berg stated they are waiting to see where the grant dollars are awarded. Berg also stated that Charter now wants to talk to us.

Steve Deml-Town of Hammel Chair mentioned that they had a survey done of a 4-mile radius of the County's Esadore tower. There are 800+ addresses although not all addresses represent a residence. He is wondering if that would be a good candidate for fiber to the home.

Next steps with County and Towns/Villages for tower partnerships: Still working with Corp. Counsel. Also, we need to determine what are the requirements to connect to our network?

Construction update: Bub stated that over 200,000+ feet of conduit has been laid and the fiber has started to arrive and is being put into the conduit. The only permit we are waiting for is one from the railroad in the western part of the county. There have been several complaints of land not being restored properly and they have been addressed.

Set next meeting date: Tuesday, November 2nd at 10:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

September 7, 2021

Third Floor Meeting Room, Courthouse

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, Kenny Ceaglske and James Stokes.

Members Absent: Dennis Hinderliter, Michael Schaefer and Melissa Lind.

Other Attendees: Larry Brandl, Ben Stanfley and Andria Farrand.

Other attendees via Zoom: Michelle Grimm and Russell Berg.

Approve the agenda: Motion by Thums, seconded by Knoll, to approve the agenda with 12 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes of the August 10, 2021 meeting: Motion by Zenner, seconded by Ceaglske, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Update on PSC grant applications: Bub stated we submitted 4 requests with WANRack and 1 with Bug Tussel. The one submitted with Bug Tussel states we will only accept the grant dollars if Bug Tussel uses our network. No definite date of award, but it should be before year end.

Next round of grant applications: Bub stated for the next round, we need to partner with an ISP willing to do Fiber to the home.

How to connect County sites: It was discussed we need to move forward, working in parallel with the construction phase, if we want to be ready to go by the end of the year. The next step is to create an RFP for an ISP and the purchase and installation of the necessary hardware, as WANRack is only responsible to lay the fiber. Motion by Zenner, seconded by Thums to approve Bub and Berg to begin talks with ISPs and create an RFP. Motion carried.

Next steps with County and Towns/Villages for tower partnerships: Several committee members will meet with Corp Counsel to draw up an agreement with townships regarding partnering for tower construction, utilizing County and Municipal ARPA money and proposed revenue structure. No action taken at this time.

Other items: Farrand to send an update letter to all Municipal Chairs regarding the progress of the project as well as moving forward with Corp Counsel to create an agreement regarding towers.

Set next meeting date: Tuesday, October 5th at 10:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Thums, seconded by Stokes to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

August 10, 2021

Third Floor Meeting Room, Courthouse

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

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, Kenny Ceaglske and Michelle Grimm.

Members Absent: Dennis Hinderliter, Michael Schaefer, James Stokes and Melissa Lind.

Other Attendees: Larry Brandl, Shawna Konieczny-Star News and Andria Farrand.

Other attendees via Zoom: Russell Berg, Blake Mayfield- WANRack, Joe Svejda, Damian-Great Northern Cabinetry, Roxy Kahan.

Approve the agenda: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner, to approve the agenda with 11 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes of the July 22, 2021 meeting: Motion by Zenner, seconded by Thums, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Update on PSC grant applications: Bub stated there was \$100 million available in grant dollars with \$420 million in requests. We submitted 4 requests with WANRack and 1 with Bug Tussel. The one submitted with Bug Tussel states we will only accept the grant dollars if Bug Tussel uses our network. August 20 is the deadline to file objections; August 27 is the deadline to respond to the objections and the money should be awarded in early fall.

Next round of grant applications: There is a new round of PSC grants, with \$250 million available. The PSC is pushing fiber to the home for this round, so the thought is to start submitting applications to get FTH in municipalities throughout the county.

Discuss options from meeting with townships: There were approximately 25 people that came to the meeting held at the Community Center on August 5th. There was good discussion about how to pool the ARPA money to build towers and receive a percentage of the revenue based on dollars contributed.

Partners for towers/expansion of our network: Berg stated he would reach out to Norvado and Ntera to re-engage them and ask them to provide us with a proposal. Bub provided an update on construction, stating it is on track. The unloading of equipment has been a challenge so WANRack will be leasing a portable loading dock and forklift to unload their own equipment. There have been some delays with all the rain we've had in the past weeks as well as in the locates. Ntera is working on the contract with Aurora and Corp Counsel will review. 80% of the engineering is done.

Update on funding for Russ: There is \$14,804.18 of the \$20,000.00 budgeted remaining for Russ Berg's consultation services.

Other items: none

Set next meeting date: Tuesday, September 7th at 10:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

July 22, 2021

Third Floor Meeting Room, Courthouse

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, Kenny Ceagske, Russell Berg, James Stokes and Michelle Grimm.

Members present via Zoom: none

Members Absent: Dennis Hinderliter, Michael Schaefer and Melissa Lind.

Other Attendees: Larry Brandl, Ben Stanfley and Andria Farrand.

Other attendees via Zoom: Russell Berg and Blake Mayfield- WANRack.

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

Approve the minutes of the July 7, 2021 meeting: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Review progress on construction: Construction is going well, with about 10 miles of conduit laid to date. The project is on schedule.

Update/approve grant application: The grant applications are being compiled by Blake Mayfield, Mike Bub and Russell Berg. It has been decided that a grant application would be submitted for each of the four municipalities separately. In addition to the four PSC grants, we will also be applying for four NTIA grants. NTIA is National Telecommunications and Information Administration and has 288 million set aside to support broadband infrastructure deployment to areas lacking broadband, especially rural areas. All committee members were encouraged to write letters of support to be submitted with the applications.

Update on Town of Aurora: Aurora has now agreed to the terms of the lease agreement with Ntera, which will allow Ntera to put a building by their Town Hall for \$3000.00.

Possible Towers with municipalities and county: Bub stated that 4 municipalities have approached him wanting to invest their ARPA money in constructing towers. This would be a win win for all as the towers would be wired to the middle mile network and the ISPs would lease fiber from Taylor County. Bub scheduled a meeting with the Town Chairs and Village Presidents on August 5th at 6:00 p.m. at the Community Center to begin the discussions. Letters to be sent to the Chair/Presidents of all towns and villages.

Other items: none

Set next meeting date: Tuesday August 10th at 9:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Zenner, seconded by Thums to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

July 7, 2021

Sheriff's Training Room, Courthouse

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, Kenny Ceagslske, Dennis Hinderliter and Michelle Grimm.

Members present via Zoom: Russell Berg, Mike Schaefer and James Stokes.

Members Absent: Melissa Lind.

Other Attendees: Jim Metz, Scott Mildbrand, Larry Brandl, and Andria Farrand.

Other attendees via Zoom: Blake Mayfield- WANRack, Ben Stanfley

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

Approve the minutes of the June 15, 2021 meeting: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Potential grants with WANRack and Bug Tussel: Bub explained that the current Public Service Commission (PSC) grant cycle is happening now, with grant applications due by July 27th. There are two applications we have been asked to partner on, one with WANRack and one with Bug Tussel.

WANRack wants to apply for a grant to expand the middle mile network. This would include adding fiber to the following Town Halls: Hammel, Goodrich, Grover and Jump River. Farrand to provide the addresses of these town halls to Mayfield so WANRack can determine the cost to add. No decision made at this time.

Bug Tussel submitted a proposal to Taylor County to apply for grant money to construct 6 communications towers in the county. These towers would be fitted with fixed-wireless broadband equipment. The Bug Tussel application doesn't provide enough detail at this point for the committee to approve moving forward.

Contract amendment from WANRack for POP (point of presence): Bub stated we will be receiving the contract amendment from WANRack in the next few days to re-route the fiber originally going from Gilman to Aurora and apply those 3 miles to the POP. This will be cost neutral. We are still waiting on a quote from WANRack to be a part of the remaining 6 miles to the POP.

Re-routing of network along Hwy DD: Mayfield stated he will discuss this further with Stanfley. Once this is decided, WANRack will be able to provide the quote to connect the Holway Town Hall.

Use of ARPA money: There was a brief discussion about the money and the process to utilize it. This will be discussed further at the Finance meeting on July 22nd.

How do we handle short term decisions: Bub stated there are times a quick decision is needed with regard to the laying of the fiber, or other construction-related issues. It would be costly to get the committee together for every decision that needs to be made, as well as difficult to schedule.

There was a motion by Zenner, seconded by Ceaglske, to approve the following:

- Bub can approve anything up to \$5,000.00.
- Bub and 2 committee members, that are County Board Supervisors, can approve anything up to \$50,000.00.
- Full Broadband Committee is needed for anything over \$50,000.00.

Motion carried.

Set next meeting date: Thursday July 22nd at 11:30 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

June 15, 2021

Third Floor Board Room, Courthouse

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

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

Members present via Zoom: Russell Berg and Melissa Seavers.

Members Absent: Mike Schaefer, Kenny Ceaglske and James Stokes.

Other Attendees: Larry Brandl, Joe Liegl-Town of Cleveland Clerk and Andria Farrand.

Other attendees via Zoom: Blake Mayfield- WANRack

Approve the agenda: Bub added the Town of Holway to item #5. Motion by Zenner, seconded by Knoll, to approve the amended agenda with 10 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes of the June 8, 2021 meeting: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Discuss/update the possible reroute of Network to Gilman, Town of Ford, and Town of Aurora: Due to the fact that Ntera received grant money to lay fiber through Aurora and into Gilman, the committee discussed the possibility of reallocating the money that will pay for the 3 miles of fiber from Gilman to Aurora. One option was to allocate it towards three of the 9 miles of fiber going to the POP in Thorp. The county would then receive revenue for that 3-mile stretch. If this is re-allocated, Aurora will still be able to get internet through Ntera, although not until 2022. Motion by Knoll, seconded by Zenner, to remove Aurora from the fiber network as long as they have an available connection. Motion carried. There was continued discussion about whether or not to connect the county buildings to the Ntera network or the county network. Berg reminded the committee that Ntera is running fiber to the home, this doesn't include the county buildings, but they may add businesses after the fact for additional revenue. Motion by Knoll, seconded by Zenner, to build to the county sites as planned in Gilman. Motion carried.

Discuss if Taylor County should join the fiber to the "POP" location: The committee discussed whether or not to allocate the fiber to the 9 mile stretch to the POP in Thorp. There were additional questions whether or not we should contribute the additional \$180,000 to be a part of all 9 miles, thus earning 11.25% revenue on the whole stretch. Mayfield stated we do have a little time to decide on the full 9 miles as they are moving forward with it regardless of if we contribute to it. Motion by Zenner, seconded by Thums, to re-allocate the funds from the Aurora town hall to the 3 miles of POP connection. Motion carried. There was then discussion about the Holway Town Hall as it is not on the list of county buildings to connect to the network. It was agreed it was simply an oversight and Mayfield will advise what the additional cost will be to add it. There was continued discussion about using ARPA money or borrowed money to contribute to the remaining 6 miles. Bub also mentioned that some of the townships are looking for some guidance from the county on how to spend the ARPA money they will be receiving. Knoll suggested adding towers to the land around town halls where it makes sense. Mayfield said he would reach out to the wireless providers they work with so do a study where they would put additional towers. Bub suggested having a meeting with all Town Chairs to discuss options on the ARPA money.

Set next meeting date: Monday July 12th at 9:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Knoll, seconded by Thums to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

June 8, 2021

Third Floor Board Room, Courthouse

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

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, Kenny Ceagske, Dennis Hinderliter and Michelle Grimm.

Members present via Zoom: Russell Berg and James Stokes.

Members Absent: Melissa Lind.

Other Attendees: Larry Brandl, Steve Schneider – Bug Tussel, Joe Liegl-Town of Cleveland Clerk and Andria Farrand.

Other attendees via Zoom: Blake Mayfield- WANRack, Ryan Hartzell-Ntera

Approve the agenda: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner, to approve the agenda with 14 items. Motion carried.

Approve the minutes of the May 11, 2021 meeting: Motion by Knoll, seconded by Thums, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Network construction update/Update from WANRack: Blake Mayfield of WANRack was in attendance via Zoom and stated that ground has been broken!! They would like to have a groundbreaking ceremony, press release and photo op in late June.

Mayfield also stated that WANRack is researching areas to build a Point of Presence or 'POP' in the area. This is the area of consolidation for the ISP's and the main internet connection. They are looking at Thorp for the POP and Taylor County has the right of first refusal to participate in one way or another. If we contribute financially, we will receive revenue. We could remove the 3 miles from Gilman to the Aurora Town Hall and re-route that to the POP. Whatever we decide has to be by the end of June.

Update from PSC meeting/New grant money available this summer: Mike and Russ met with the PSC regarding Taylor County not receiving grant funding. The Commissioner didn't want to fund a wireless broadband network. The state is also looking to change the requirements from 25/3 to 100/100. There is another grant period open until July 27th. Dennis added there is 7B available for emergency connectivity for schools they will be pursuing which may help with connecting the Hammel tower. Bub stated we will pursue every opportunity.

Discuss Gilman/Ford/Aurora connections/Options from Ntera: Ryan Hartzell of Ntera was in attendance via Zoom. Bub said that Ntera received grant funding to put fiber to the home in Gilman, Aurora and Ford, in 2022, so we need to decide if we want to run our fiber to these areas, otherwise our County buildings would not be on our network, and we would be trading revenue for expense. Knoll suggested we don't run the 3 miles to Aurora and go north towards Jump River. Bub added that Charter won the census blocks in the western and northern part of the county. Steve Schneider of Bug Tussel confirmed this and said he is working on it with them.

New possible partner in Bug Tussel for fixed wireless: Steve Schneider of Bug Tussel was in attendance and presented his strategy for Taylor County, which includes improved cell phone service. He is interested in dropping conduit in our trenches. When asked if wanted to lease some of our fiber, he stated that his contract with AT&T and FirstNet requires them to have their own fiber. Bub suggested we partner with Bug Tussel to get some grant money to build towers. Steve was in agreement and said he would commit to doing a tower and fiber extension grant application with us. Blake will also reach out to Steve for collaboration.

Updates on:

Milwaukee Rural partners: Bub attended their webinar. This is where he met Steve Schneider.

Milwaukee Journal/Sentinel interview: Bub was interviewed by the paper for a series on Broadband.

Counties requesting information: Four counties have reached out for information as they start looking to improve their broadband. Zenner, Hinderliter and Berg attended the first meeting of the Monroe County Broadband Committee via Zoom and provided a timeline of our committee's activities.

Bub asked who would be available to do site visits with MCE this week. Zenner and Grimm to coordinate.

Set next meeting date: Bub stated we need to meet in a week to finish discussions on what to do with Ntera. Meeting set for Tuesday, June 15th at 9:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Zenner, seconded by Thums to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

May 11, 2021

Third Floor Board Room, Courthouse

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

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

Members present via Zoom: Dennis Hinderliter, Mike Schaefer and Russell Berg.

Members Absent: Chuck Zenner, Kenny Ceagske, James Stokes, and Melissa Lind.

Other Attendees: Larry Brandl, Brian Wilson-Star News, Damian Jones- Great Northern Cabinetry and Andria Farrand.

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

Approve the minutes of the April 6, 2021 meeting: There was a question from Knoll, whether the per diem issue was resolved for Bub attending other meetings, etc. Bub advised it was resolved. Motion by Knoll, seconded by Thums, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Update on Marketing/potential users to the Taylor County Network: Bub reported that he emailed Mike Briggman and Blake Mayfield for their marketing plan and he did not get a response. He also stated they have been facing challenges finding ISPs wanting to connect. WANRack is looking to lay 8 miles of fiber at their expense to connect to the nearest POP (point of presence). On the Engineering/Construction side there are no issues, they are on schedule. Bub and Berg attend a bi-weekly status meeting on Thursdays at 9 A.M. and will provide an update after the next meeting on May 20th.

Grimm is working with Damian Jones to put together a website that will provide updates on the project.

Bub and Berg have a meeting with the PSC on Friday to talk about why we were not awarded a grant. Bub said he was told by the PSC it is because we are planning to do fixed wireless not fiber to the home.

WANRack plans to begin laying fiber the end of May/early June and plans to lay 8 miles a day. They have made several deliveries of conduit spools to the fairgrounds. Berg suggested to the construction team that we should have a groundbreaking event as we need to start proactively communicating the project status.

Update on developments/changes in how to fund the Middle Mile Network: Since Ntera will be providing service to Gilman, Ford and Aurora, the committee is talking about doing a change to the contract and reallocating the money that was going into the fiber in those areas to connect the towers.

How to connect additional towers: Bub asked what the committee thought about using some of the American Rescue Plan Act money to connect the towers since we did not get the PSC grant. The plan calls out Broadband as one of the things it can be used towards. After some discussion the committee agreed to pursue using some of the money allotted to the county.

Other items from the Committee: Bub asked if any committee members would be able to attend, via Zoom, the first meeting of the Monroe County Broadband Committee on May 25th. Their new committee chair reached out and asked for us to provide some guidance to their committee from our experience. Farrand to send an email to the committee members so they have a chance to check their schedules.

Set next meeting date: The next meeting is set for June 8th. Farrand to advise the time based on availability of the county board room.

Adjourn: Motion by Thums, seconded by Knoll to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

April 6, 2021

Third Floor Board Room, Courthouse

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub, Chuck Zenner, Gene Knoll, Rollie Thums, Michelle Grimm and Kenny Ceaglske.

Members present via Zoom: Michelle Grimm, Dennis Hinderliter and Russell Berg.

Members Absent: Mike Schaefer, James Stokes, and Melissa Seavers.

Other Attendees: Larry Brandl, WKEB, Damian Jones- Great Northern Cabinetry and Andria Farrand.

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

Approve the minutes of the January 7, 2021 and January 26, 2021 meetings: Motion by Zenner, seconded by Knoll, to approve the minutes from both meetings. Motion carried.

Give update on project: Bub gave the committee an update stating there was a change to the fiber due to availability and we will now be getting 24-count fiber vs. the 12-count fiber at no additional cost. The engineering company has been hired and is one of the other companies that sent a bid for the RFP. WANRack is working with Buildings and Grounds on the storage of their equipment and they will help with equipment and manpower to unload when it arrives.

We did not receive PSC grant: Bub stated we did not receive an award through the PSC grant we applied for, but of the 124 applications, 58 were funded and Ntera received two. There were several other companies that received more than one. This is very disappointing as we would have serviced the underserved and the unserved people of Taylor County. One of the grants that Ntera received is for western Taylor County, including the Aurora Town Hall and Gilman, so Bub and Berg met with them to work together but got no commitment from Ntera. Bub questioned whether we should meet with WANRack to discuss further as there is an advantage to us and Ntera to have another connection. After some discussion it was decided that Bub and Berg would talk to WANRack.

How to manage the project going forward: WANRack wants to have weekly status meetings once things get started. There was much discussion around whether we hire a project manager to attend the weekly meetings, get information that WANRack requests, take the increasing calls from businesses and residents and manage the project tracking reports. Zenner asked Berg if he was interested, and he stated he has the time and can represent the county at the meetings. The question arose whether Bub can get paid for attending the weekly meetings, so it will be taken to the Executive Committee, for a short-term solution. Long term it should be part of IT. It was agreed that we should coordinate with the Highway and Buildings and Grounds departments for assistance on the ground inspections. Berg is currently researching how to apply for more grants. Hinderliter stated that WANRack won the school; e-rate contract.

How often should we meet/Next meeting date: The committee agreed to meet monthly on the morning of the second Tuesday of the month. Next meeting is scheduled for May 11, 2021 @ 9:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Motion by Knoll, seconded by Ceaglske to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

January 26, 2021

Schmiege, Graf & Koch Law Office

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

Members Present: Michael Bub and Gene Knoll

Members present via phone: Chuck Zenner, James Stokes, Michelle Grimm, Russell Berg and Kenny Ceagske.

Members Absent: Rollie Thums, Mike Schaefer, and Melissa Seavers.

Other Attendees: Courtney Graff

Approve the agenda: Motion by Knoll, seconded by Zenner, to approve the agenda with 5 items. Motion carried.

Closed session: A motion was made by Knoll, seconded by Stokes to go into closed session at 9:05 a.m., pursuant to Wisconsin State Statute 19.85(1)(e), for the purposes of reviewing, negotiating and entering into a contract that involves the investment of public funds. Negotiating in closed session is necessary to preserve the competitive bargaining process. A roll call vote cast, five (5) voting aye, the motion carried.

Open session: A motion was made by Zenner, seconded by Ceagske to return to open session at 10:00.

A motion was made by Zenner, seconded by Ceagske to instruct the Taylor County Corporation Counsel to make the modifications to the contract, requested in closed session. Motion carried.

Adjourn: Motion by Knoll, seconded by Zenner to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk

TAYLOR COUNTY BROADBAND COMMITTEE

January 7, 2021

County Board Room, Courthouse

Call Meeting to Order: Michael Bub called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Members Present: Michael Bub and Rollie Thums

Members present via phone: Chuck Zenner, James Stokes, Gene Knoll, Kenny Ceaglske.

Members Absent: Mike Schaefer, and Melissa Seavers.

Other Attendees: Russell Berg, Michelle Grimm, Dennis Hinderliter, Courtney Graff, Larry Brandl, Damian Jones-Great Northern Cabinetry, Brad Dahlvig-WIGM, Brian Wilson- Star News.

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

Approve the minutes of the December 14, 2020 meetings: Motion by Thums, seconded by Stokes to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Review WANRack contract: Bub asked the committee for their comments and most had turned them into Courtney Graff, Corporation Counsel. Graff stated she would like to rewrite the contract so that it defines the scope, ownership, and matched the RFP more closely. It was suggested that Graff get a similar contract to compare to, so we aren't missing anything. After further discussion, Graff will draft a new contract.

Take action on WANRack contract, list sites: Berg reviewed the list of 30 sites with the committee. This brought up the question as to whether or not all town halls would be listed, and they currently are not, at least not in the first phase. Stokes suggested we send a letter to all Town Chairmen and Village Presidents to see if they are interested in having internet to their town halls, noting that they would need to pay the connection and monthly fees. Bub and Grimm to draft a letter to be sent out next week. Gene Knoll left the meeting at 3:30.

Review questions about possible tower connections: Berg stated he has been in contact with the company in Baraboo that manages the 6 public safety towers in the county. Berg stated it will benefit us to connect the towers to improve the quality and reliability of the county's public safety and highway department radio systems."

Other business for discussion: None.

Set next meeting date: At the call of the Chair.

Adjourn: Motion by Thums, seconded by Zenner to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Andria Farrand
County Clerk