

Oregon Telecommunications Coordinating Council
Minutes
March 23, 2006

Attendees:

Council Members: John Irwin, Dan Bartlett, Pam Berrian, Agnes Box, Cathy Britain, Rob Myers, Ed Parker, Jon Dolan representing Curt Pederson, Brant Wolf, Paul Zastrow, Terry Edvalson, and Kim Hoffman.

Staff: Chris Tamarin of the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department, Eric Schmidt of the Association of Oregon Counties

Others: Brad Holden, Dr. Ken Usiak and Dr. Larry Bundy of Blue Mountain Community College, and John Sneed of Portland Community College.

Remote videoconference locations: The Dalles, Pendleton, Klamath Falls, Medford, Eugene, Condon, and Lincoln City.

Old Business:

Action Item:

It was moved by Cathy Britain that the February 23, 2006 minutes be approved as distributed. Paul Zastrow seconded the motion. The Council approved the minutes as distributed.

Speaker:

John Irwin introduced John Sneed, the Director of Distance Education for Portland Community College (PCC) www.pcc.edu to provide an overview of the Allied Health for Oregon: Seeking Solutions through Technology (AHOSST) project.

John Sneed indicated that the AHOSST project is funded by a Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) planning grant that was applied for by PCC. The funding of this project has enabled a statewide consortium of community colleges to be formed to design and plan the distance learning technology necessary to address the healthcare workforce crisis in Oregon.

John provided background with data on Oregon Health Services Employment projections that indicate the health occupation needs in Oregon. There are growing demands and unmet needs in all regions of the state. Though allied health programs are offered by community colleges around the state, gaps exist. This is not a new problem and there have been a number of initiatives to examine it and develop solutions including the Community College Healthcare Action Plan (CCHAP) ad-hoc group. CCHAP is partnering with PCC on this project.

John noted a 2003 recommendation by CCHAP: Create a “capacity valve” through statewide program designs that aggregate and distribute courses, resources and student cohorts. He also noted a 2005 recommendation by ORTCC: Promote and encourage continued development of distributed education programs to provide the essential training and educational capacity needed to meet the growing demands for healthcare workers and to meet future needs for healthcare throughout the state.

Oregon has many Distance Learning assets including the following:

- Almost all Community Colleges providing distance learning (PCC has over 26,000 enrollments per year)
- Learning management systems
- Broadband video systems
- Production and training
- Host/Provider system for sharing courses
- Regional SIM Labs
- Pilot projects under way

The AHOSST project is focusing on technology and the models for using it for program delivery, systems and processes for sharing, and student services for the distance learner in health occupation programs at a distance.

Planning assumptions include:

- Health Occupation Programs needed across the state
- Distance learning systems in place may not be adequate for health occupations delivery
- Health occupation education has unique characteristics that may not fit the traditional distance learning model
- Pilot projects will uncover some promising practices that we can capture as models

The AHOSST project methodology is to explore what is in place in Oregon and elsewhere, analyze and make recommendations, create models/templates that others can use, and widely disseminate the results through the community colleges. The project structure includes a PCC-CCHAP project team, steering committee with representatives from across the state and three workgroups. The output of the workgroups will be vetted by a number of stakeholder groups.

The project will be completed in June of this year. John would appreciate an ORTCC review of the report. One of the possible outcomes of the report could be technology enhancements.

Cathy Britain asked if there was a relationship with the new Oregon Healthcare Workforce Institute or the Oregon Institute of Technology. John responded that he has met with Martha Anne Dow of OIT regarding their plans. No connections have been established yet with the Healthcare Workforce Institute.

Cathy Britain asked if there was anything that John would like to see the ORTCC healthcare committee do? John said that he needs assistance in collecting a community college infrastructure inventory of distance learning facilities. John Irwin shared information on the survey conducted by the Telehealth Alliance of Oregon. John Sneed has also been encouraged by the availability of Internet access centers appearing in a number of the community colleges. Dan Bartlett observed that there is a shortcoming in the system that builds these centers and other facilities like videoconferencing systems through grants. They are built and then become outdated and unsustainable because there is no continuing funding to support them. John Sneed agreed.

Terry Edvalson asked if AHOSST is looking at previous efforts like the Area Health Education Center in La Grande developed by Eastern Oregon University and Chemeketa Community College to deliver Emergency Medical Technical training statewide. This program ended with the discontinuation of the EdNet satellite network. This program has not been reviewed. Cathy Britain will provide additional information and contacts.

Cathy asked if they were planning to apply for an implementation grant to follow up on this effort? John Sneed said that might happen, but not necessarily through PCC. Cathy indicated that she would like to see that move forward and suggested that John contact the Oregon Healthcare Workforce Institute.

Jon Dolan asked what type of infrastructure information he was looking for? John Sneed replied that he is looking for information on how institutions connect to the Internet and their peering relationships. He is attempting to measure the existing ability to support advanced broadband applications. John recommended researching the Network for Education and Research in Oregon (NERO). Cathy Britain noted that networks used for this purpose also need to be HIPPA compliant.

John Irwin observed that the technological solutions might be the easy part of the project. Obtaining cooperation and coordination between all the parties is a difficult task and some centralized entity to keep it on track is needed. Agnes Box said that she would pass along some additional contacts from the Oregon University System who may have some advice and data to offer. Terry Edvalson said that he would pass along contacts as well.

John Irwin invited John Sneed to return and share the final report with the Council and thanked him for his presentation.

Public Input:

Terry Edvalson introduced Larry Bundy, Ken Usiak and Brad Holden of Blue Mountain Community College for a presentation and briefing on a proposed Wide Area Network planning project in Eastern Oregon.

The Eastern Oregon Collaborative Colleges Council (EOCCC) is a consortium of Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC), Eastern Oregon University (EOU), and Treasure Valley Community College (TVCC). The three colleges offer student access to

education and workforce training through a regional distance education system. EOU offers the most comprehensive programming though each institution has its own distance strategy and infrastructure including connectivity to some, but not all, high schools in their districts. Many communities and areas that have no remote access to any of the three institutions remain.

BMCC, EOU, and TVCC are working to increase student access to education and workforce training through the development of a collaborative, regional distance education and workforce training system. The Eastern Oregon Collaborative Colleges Council WAN planning effort seeks to expand educational and workforce training opportunities throughout the region and to leverage increasingly scarce resources the EOCCC. Interconnecting the three distance education systems is being considered. A planning grant will allow EOCCC to investigate various cost-effective technologies that could support an interconnected distance education system that also incorporates workforce development organizations.

The goal of this WAN Planning Project is to expand the geographic scope and the types of distance education services, increase regional access to postsecondary education, workforce training, and K-12 pathways to college for the rural, low-income, underserved population of Oregon.

- Phase 1 of the project is the development of a composite regional WAN needs assessment to be compiled from existing information and by updated assessments that were previously conducted by individual entities to determine regional needs for and the challenges of implementing an interconnected distance education system in Eastern Oregon.
- Phase 2 of the project is the development of a comprehensive inventory of existing functional capabilities to be compiled as the basis for establishing current capabilities.
- Phase 3 of the project will focus on the feasibility of various cost-effective technologies to support a possible interconnected system for Eastern Oregon.

This project is intended to address substantial and documented community needs with the long-term goal of expanding the geographical scope for increasing and improving educational and workforce training services to low-income and underserved populations in Oregon. The implementation of the recommendations will be subject to additional funding and will be a three-year project.

Contacts for the project are:

Larry Bundy, Chair, Oversight Group.	541-278-5892	lbundy@bluecc.edu
Ken Usiak, Project Coordinator.	541-278-5825	kusiak@bluecc.edu

John recommended that Larry and Ken follow the SIEC planning activities given the size of the potential investment in new communications infrastructure in rural Oregon. John Irwin invited Larry to return and provide an update on the project.

Reports:

Legislative Committee

Cathy Britain reported that a draft legislative policy statement regarding State and Federal Legislation prepared by the committee had been distributed to the Council and that she had received feedback from several Council members. Cathy reviewed the policy statement and invited comments and discussion.

Cathy asked that ORTCC consider adopting the following policy regarding state and federal legislation:

1. All requests for the ORTCC position and/or for information regarding an issue or legislation will go to the Legislative Committee of the Council for initial consideration.
2. The Legislative Committee will prioritize the requests it receives.
3. The Legislative Committee may collect information that represents all aspects or points of view regarding the issue or legislation and compile it into a white paper to be presented to the full Council.
4. The Council will review and determine if it will make recommendations regarding the issue or legislation.
5. If the Council decides to make a commendation, the Legislative Committee will draft the recommendation report for Council approval *and will include any minority recommendations or concerns requested by Council members.*
6. In cases where the Council believes that state legislation is needed, the Legislative Committee will draft the concept paper for review by the Council.
7. Once the Council approves the concept paper the Legislative Committee will work with Legislative Counsel and staff to draft the bill.
8. The Council will present the bill draft to the Joint Legislative Committee on Information Management and Technology who may then recommend it for pre-session filing.
9. Individual Council members may present their personal opinions or their organization's views on issues, provided they make it clear that such views do not represent the position of the Council.

Action Item:

Brant Wolf moved that the policy be adopted. Ed Parker seconded the motion. The Council approved the motion. The policy will be posted on the ORTCC website on the "Policies and Procedures" page.

Cathy Britain asked the Council to identify the state and federal issues that the Council should follow and consider. The following issues were listed.

State Issues:

- Statewide franchising
- Taxes/fees not in accordance with state rules
- Local government authority to audit company tax and fee payments

- Advanced telecommunications facilities tax credit
- Public/private partnerships

Federal Issues:

- Statewide franchising
- Federal legislation

Eric Schmidt reported that the National Association of Counties considered many telecommunications issues at its recent conference in Washington DC, and that there is a lot of telecom bill activity at the national level. Cathy asked if NACO has produced any position papers. Eric responded that information may be found at www.naco.org.

Pam Berrian noted that several Oregon cities are currently involved in an audit of local franchise fees paid by Verizon and Qwest. Cities are also following federal legislation dealing with telecommunications.

Health Education Committee

Rob Myers reported that the committee will be developing a work plan.

Infrastructure Committee

Ed Parker reported that the Advanced Telecommunications Facilities Tax Credit issues was reviewed and discussed and there were no recommendations for substantive change.

Action Item:

Ed Parker moved that the Advanced Telecommunications Facilities Tax Credit proposal submitted during the 2005 Legislative Session as Senate Bill 11 be referred to the Legislative Committee for updates and submission to the 2007 Legislative Session. John Irwin seconded the motion. The Council approved the motion.

Chris Tamarin provided an update on the “From Silicon Forest to Internet Forest: A Vision for the Oregon Economy” project. The Open Source Technology cluster has incorporated the Internet Forest concept into its proposal being made to the Oregon Innovation Council Business Expansion Committee on April 11. This committee will be receiving presentations from other industry clusters as well. The Oregon Innovation Council will be making its recommendations in June of this year. John Irwin added that he has also been contacted by Duncan Wyse of the Oregon Business Plan for a meeting to discuss the concept.

Ed also noted that he will be meeting OPUC staff regarding broadband data gathering.

Public Safety Committee

John Irwin reported that he met with members of the State Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) finance committee and received information on the Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network (OWIN) project. John also met with public safety people in Josephine and Jackson counties regarding their plans for a microwave backbone network. John noted that there are a number of Public Safety initiatives underway in the state that

could benefit from some guidelines as they move forward. The committee will draft some guidelines. John hopes to have several speakers on these projects in the May meeting.

Oregon Connections Telecommunications Conference Planning Committee

Chris Tamarin reported that the 2006 Oregon Connections Telecommunications conference is scheduled for Thursday and Friday October 19 and 20 in Newport at the Best Western Agate Beach Inn and conference facility www.agatebeachinn.com. There will also be room access at the conference center on Wednesday afternoon from 1:00 – 5:00 PM, October 18. The planning committee has established work groups for facility/logistics/registration, outreach and marketing, and program development. Conference fees have been established. A conference theme has been adopted: ***“Oregon Telecom: The Next Wave”***

Telehealth / Telemedicine Committee - TAO

Kim Hoffman reported that the annual meeting of the Telehealth Alliance of Oregon (TAO) is scheduled on March 30, 2006 from 1:00 to 4:00 PM at the Public Service Building in Salem in the teleconference center. New TAO officers will be elected and the group’s priorities going forward will be identified.

Klamath Falls Telecommunications Task Force

No Report.

Eastern Oregon Telecommunications Consortium

Terry Edvalson reported EOTC will be promoting increased utilization of videoconferencing for meetings in eastern Oregon.

Gorge Teleconsortium

No Report

Frontier Telenet

No Report.

CoastNet

Ed Parker reported that CoastNet now provides connectivity between schools in Lincoln County. A 100 Mbps connection has been added between the school district and the Educational Service District in Albany. Connectivity is now established between schools, county government, health service providers, the Community College, as well as commercial users.

Tribes

John Irwin reported that Sal Sahme has resigned his position on ORTCC and has left Oregon to take a position with a Tribe in California. John invited recommendations for replacement candidates.

Fiber South and Regional Fiber Consortia

Pam Berrian reported that the Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking proposals from entities (businesses, corporations, firms or other legal entities) interested in leasing or otherwise obtaining a right to use two fiber optic cable (one pair) from the Consortia along some portion of (or all portions of) one or more routes controlled by the Consortia has been issued. Pam also reported that facilities are being made available to support a WiFi network in Cottage Grove.

Southern Oregon Telecommunications and Technology Council (SOTTC)

No Report.

Oregon Coastal Zone Management Association (OCZMA)

No Report.

New Business

Collaborative Economic Development project

John Irwin reported that ORTCC has an opportunity to support the Office of Rural Policy in its application for a grant from the US Economic Development Administration. John distributed a draft letter of recommendation addressed to Anne Berblinger in support of the proposed Collaborative Economic Development project.

The project proposal has four major components:

- Evaluate the coordination of resources (especially state and federal agency resources) for rural community development and the identify opportunities for increased coordination and effectiveness.
- Review the history of the Needs and Issues Process and develop a plan for restoration and improvement of the process.
- Design and implement a multi-agency, economic development data management system that meets the needs of communities, practitioners, and agencies.
- Continued investigation and tracking of place-based economic development planning including: telecom, water, waste water, transportation, access to leadership and innovation training for entrepreneurs and small business owners, education, public health, infrastructure, place-based cluster policy development, access to capital, workforce development; incentives to recruit and retain professionals, water resource planning, natural resource planning, the arts, energy generation, new farmer programs, new homesteading model, affordable housing, access to technology; bilingual small business management plan training, with the goal of removing barriers to promising approaches and broadly disseminating best practices.

Action Item:

Paul Zastro moved that ORTCC approve and send the letter of support. Cathy Britain seconded the motion. The council approved the motion.

SB17 Telecommunications Law Revision Task Force Presentation

John Irwin reported that ORTCC was invited to make recommendations to the SB17 Task Force by Senator David Nelson and by Rick Willis of the Oregon PUC and specifically requested input on universal service fund issues. Ed Parker prepared a draft set of comments, which was reviewed and discussed by the Council.

Action Item:

Paul Zastrow moved that the comments be delivered as discussed and agreed upon. Terry Edvalson seconded the motion. The Council approved the motion.

The resulting ORTCC comments to the SB17 Telecommunications Law Revision Task Force presented by Ed Parker are posted on the Council website Reports page www.ortcc.org/report.html.

Meeting Schedule:

The next meeting of ORTCC is scheduled on Thursday, April 27, 2006 in the Teleconference Room (Basement), Public Service Building, 255 Capitol Street NE, in Salem. The 2006 meeting schedule is posted on the meetings page of the Council website www.ortcc.org. John Irwin adjourned the meeting at 11:40 AM.

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