

Oregon Telecommunications Coordinating Council
Minutes
March 22, 2007

Attendees:

Council Members: John Irwin, Pam Berrian, Agnes Box, Cathy Britain, Rob Myers, Ed Parker, Curt Pederson, Michael Weidman, Art Hill, Onno Husing and Kim Hoffman.

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

Others: Ginny Lang of Qwest and Joe Franell of the City of Ashland

Videoconference sites included Klamath Falls, Medford, Eugene, Gleneden Beach and Pendleton.

Old Business:

Action Item

It was moved by Paul Zastrow that the February 22, 2007 minutes be approved as distributed. Curt Pederson seconded the motion. The Council approved the minutes.

Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network (OWIN):

John Irwin recounted that Mike Zanon had provided an update presentation to ORTCC on the OWIN project at the January meeting and asked for an ORTCC endorsement. An endorsement was not given at that time pending receipt of additional information. A copy of the Federal Engineering report was requested, but to date has not been received. However, two other documents have been issued and received since January, the "What If / Why Not Questions and Responses" paper issued by the SIEC Technical Committee http://www.oregon.gov/SIEC/docs/tech_comm/what_if_y_not_2-13-07.pdf and the "Business Case: - A Statewide Public Safety Radio Network" prepared by Federal Engineering, Inc. http://www.oregon.gov/SIEC/docs/OWIN_Business_Case_FINAL.pdf.

John asked for a report on the activities of the Association of Oregon Counties Interoperability Task Force. Eric Schmidt reported that the Task Force met and discussed the OWIN project and also met with Mike Zanon. The Task Force voted to endorse the "concept" of OWIN though not any specific network design, per se, and issued a letter of endorsement to the State Interoperability Executive Council Chair, Chief Jeff Johnson. Eric added that the AOC Legislative Committee met on March 12 and decided to take a neutral position on SB136, which would establish OWIN as a separate state agency. The Task Force is continuing its analysis of what the OWIN project will mean to and require of counties. Eric noted that the original OWIN plan called for initial network installations to be located in Eastern Oregon. He reported that Legislators on the Ways and Means sub-committee suggested that it might be more appropriate for initial installations to be located on the coast. Eric said that it was his impression that the pace of the OWIN project has significantly slowed from what was planned and presented to

ORTCC in January and may not move ahead with the RFP process in the near term. He said many open questions regarding the project remain and hopefully will be answered by the end of the Legislative session. The AOC Task Force plans to meet again in April.

John also made the observation that the pace of the project seems to have slowed. He anticipated that there would be additional investigation and study of the network architecture and network capabilities. John speculated that substantive legislative action regarding the OWIN project would probably not occur until the next session. John said that he heard that the initial installation might be located in the Willamette Valley.

Ed Parker suggested that if the state decides to proceed with just a pilot interoperability project that ORTCC should advocate for the pilot project to be in a rural county. He observed that it would be very valuable for OWIN to work through the cooperation process and related issues at the county level. Ed noted, for example, that Lincoln County found the identified OWIN tower site to be unsuitable for its local public safety needs because of lack of coverage. We need experience in how to work through these types of issues.

Agnes Box reported that several counties are moving forward individually with their own plans. She suggested that the various telecommunications organizations around the state might play a role in this area so that the “right” people are talking to the “right” people.

Art Hill added that before any commitment can be made by any county for any significant project, the issue of lost timber dollars to county budgets must be resolved. This is clearly the hot topic for discussion and the impact of the outcome will ripple across the state. Eric said that this problem was expressed to Mike Zanon at the AOC meeting and agreed that it will be very difficult for counties to participate in OWIN if the timber dollars are lost. John acknowledged that there are a lot of issues at play that will affect this project and that clearly it is very complex.

Rob Myers agreed with the view that it would make more sense for initial installations to take place on the coast rather than Eastern Oregon due to more imminent threats of a tsunami, storm, and other natural disaster risks. He noted that Phase I for the OWIN project for Eastern Oregon was budgeted at \$308 million. He further observed that between the activities of Frontier Telenet and the building of other network infrastructure projects, approximately 15,000 square miles of Eastern Oregon will be covered with communications capacity equal to or exceeding the OWIN requirements at an aggregate cost of around one thousand dollars per square mile or \$15 million. If you assume the same costs for the entire 70,000 square miles of Eastern Oregon, and then double it, you still are at less than half the OWIN Federal Engineering projected cost. The wide disparity of OWIN cost estimates has not been well received by the Legislature. Rob thinks there is significant resistance to the project as currently conceived.

Agnes Box suggested that a statewide roundtable, similar to the Internet Forest Roundtable that ORTCC held last month, might be useful to help resolve these issues. She has heard many people express opposition strictly on the cost issue, but she is

concerned that we still need to address the infrastructure needs. She also echoed Art Hill's observations noting that Jackson County is shutting down seventeen libraries due to the timber fund crisis.

John Irwin expressed the concern that the documents that have been issued refer to a network data throughput rate of 9.5 Kbps. He is concerned that this network specification will not support mobile video applications, which are already being deployed around the country. He asked, "If other countries and states are deploying higher data capacity systems and are supporting higher-level applications, why shouldn't we be able to do the same?" There seems to be many complex issues yet to be resolved. He is concerned that we are still suffering from "siloed" thinking. Rob responded that there has to be a way to acknowledge the clear and compelling need for network interoperability without endorsing the OWIN project in its present form. ORTCC needs to at least acknowledge that need. Eric responded that he also thinks that it is important for ORTCC to be supportive of the work of SIEC. He added that many county commissioners would like to see OWIN separated from the Oregon State Police for independence.

John said that he will draft a letter of encouragement for the next ORTCC meeting. Michael Weidman asked if it would be reasonable to include in this letter an ORTCC vision of what is needed? John agreed and referred to the ORTCC paper, "Public Safety Telecommunication Legislation Guidelines for Oregon Policy Makers" that has already been provided <http://ortcc.org/PDF/PublicSafetyTelecommunicationsGuidelines.pdf>. John indicated that it is important that the dialogue continues and that these very important issues be resolved for the benefit of Oregon.

Internet Forest:

Ed Parker said that he thought the Internet Forest Roundtable was an excellent exchange of views. Ed noted that the February 22nd minutes provide a good overview of topics discussed and positions taken. Since that meeting, the focus has been on legislative proposals. Cathy Britain reported that SB470 was passed out of the Senate Business, Transportation, and Economic Development Committee with no recommendation. Cathy suggested that additional efforts will be required to educate the legislators in the Ways and Means Committee about this bill and that information packets are being prepared. Ed added that the "dash-one" amendments to SB470 hopefully have addressed the objections to the bill that were raised in the Roundtable.

Cathy reported that Senate Joint Resolution 19 that declares a state policy relating to Internet Protocol networks has not yet had a hearing. It is currently in the Senate Business, Transportation, and Work Force Development Committee. Ed reinforced that this proposal is a resolution and not a bill. Ginny Lang indicated that Qwest was neutral on SJR19.

Cathy reported that Senate Joint Resolution 20 was assigned to the House Government Accountability and Information Technology Committee and that a public hearing is scheduled for Thursday, March 29th.

Cathy reported that SB577 has not yet had a public hearing. She indicated that the telephone companies have expressed opposition to this bill, and so it will be treated as a low priority.

Legislative Session:

Cathy reported that the ORTCC Legislative Committee is also watching the following bills with interest.

- SB519, which mandates reimbursement and rules for telemedicine. This bill has not yet had a public hearing.
- SB136, which establishes an “Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network Department.”
- SB137, which authorizes Office of Emergency Management to site radio towers and related facilities needed for wireless interoperable public safety communications.
- SB982, which Provides definition of “telecommunications” and modifies definition of “telecommunications service” for purpose of laws governing regulation of telecommunications. Chris Tamarin added that he believed that municipalities were reviewing that bill for any possible limitation of their future options.
- SB539, which states that the OPUC has primary responsibility to resolve customer complaints. This bill is similar to Senate Bill 86.
- SB86 would authorize the Oregon Public Utility Commission to assume primary responsibility for resolving consumer complaints relating to consumer authorization for telecommunications services charges and related charges.

Ginny Lang informed the Council that Qwest and Verizon have been working with the Oregon Public Utility Commission Chair and staff to develop a deregulation bill that would affect Qwest, Verizon, Embarq, and Century Tel and balance that deregulation with some new authority for the PUC to resolve customer complaints in the areas of wireless and voice over IP (VoIP). The PUC is currently acting in this area under an inter-governmental agreement with the Oregon Attorney General’s Office (AG) related to a voluntary compliance agreement between the AG and most of the wireless carriers signed several years ago. This bill would be an extension of and a legislative confirmation of authority to resolve customer complaints in this area. It would not authorize the PUC to act in the area regarding rates, terms, or conditions of service. It is in Legislative Counsel now and will be introduced in April as a “dash-one” amendment to HB2621, which was introduced by Representative Tom Butler, who was also a member of the SB17 Task Force. Ginny added that Verizon, however, has since indicated that it would not support the bill because of concerns about the PUC’s involvement in areas in which it does not have regulatory jurisdiction. Consequently, the position of the Oregon Telecommunications Association will be neutral since Embarq and Verizon are both members. Ginny has been pleased with the process of working with the PUC on this legislative concept.

John Irwin asked about any Universal Service Fund proposals coming out of the SB17 Task Force. Ginny responded that a bill proposing a change in the statute has been

introduced. This was the other change on which the SB17 Task Force reached consensus. Cathy said that more information on this bill would be distributed.

Oregon Health Network:

Kim Hoffman reported that significant progress is being made in the Oregon Health Network (OHN) project. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) set an application deadline of May 7, 2007. One OHN committee is developing a Business Plan in preparation for the application. A technical committee is reviewing twenty vendor responses to the Request for Information it issued. Ed Parker added that he is very pleased with the responses that have been received. A Washington, DC consultant, e-Copernicus, has been hired to assist with application development and the application process. Kim said that a big challenge will be finding the required 15% user contribution and developing a sustainable business model. Michael Weidman asked if the planning committee had followed up with an invoice to collect on fund raising pledges? Cathy Britain responded that invoices would be issued as needed. Cathy Britain also thanked Curt Pederson and Jon Dolan for all the assistance that he and the Oregon State University Open Source Labs have provided to the planning effort.

Oregon Connections Telecommunications Conference:

Chris Tamarin reported that the 2007 Oregon Connections Telecommunications Conference is scheduled on Thursday & Friday, October 25 and 26, and will be held at the Best Western Agate Beach Inn in Newport. The conference website is live at www.oregonconnections.info. It is planned that there will be conference sessions on technology, applications, and public policy. Chris asked for volunteers to join the planning committee and for session topic, presenter, and keynote speaker suggestions.

Open Seats:

John Irwin was pleased to recognize that Joe Franell was attending the meeting today and that his Executive Appointment Interest Form has been submitted to the Governor's office to be a Council member representing cities. In looking at the vacant seats, John said that there is no indication that the North Coast Telecommunications Consortium is still active. He is also concerned about the status of the Eastern Oregon Telecommunications Consortium. John indicated that a critical vacant seat to be filled is the one representing the Oregon Tribes. Joe Franell responded that he has been working with representatives of the Cow Creek Umpqua Indians and asked if he should see if there is any interest? Art Hill reported that he has made several inquiries to representatives of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla. John asked that all prospects be pursued.

SOTTC:

John Irwin reported that SOTTC has dissolved its 501(c)(6) corporate status, and has become a less formal organization. SOTTC distributed approximately \$10,000 between Southern Oregon University, Rogue Community College and the OSU Extension 4H Technology Program. John added that there is a group in the Medford area that is talking about developing a Southern Oregon technology industry cluster covering territory as far north as Eugene and south into California.

OCZMA:

Onno Husing reported that he is continuing efforts to secure funding to continue his work on the Oregon Coast Telecommunications Economic Development Strategy.

Public Input:

Chris Tamarin reported that Integra Telecom, Inc., one of the few Oregon headquartered telecommunications service providers recently announced the purchase of Eschelon Telecom, Inc., a company that in the last year acquired two other Oregon based companies; UNICOM, headquartered in Bend and Oregon Telecom Inc., headquartered in Salem. Integra Telecom doubled its size in 2006 with the acquisition of Electric Lightwave, and is now doubling its size again to more than \$700 million in annual revenue with the purchase of Eschelon.

Chris Tamarin reported that Verizon announced at the end of February that it plans to expand its FiOS fiber-to-the premises (FTTP) network to the communities of Forest Grove, McMinnville and Wilsonville in addition to its deployment in the Beaverton, Sherwood and Tualatin areas of Washington County, and in the east Multnomah County communities of Gresham, Troutdale, Fairview and Wood Village. This will bring the total number of homes and small businesses that will have access to the new FiOS network in Oregon to 211,000.

Chris Tamarin reported that Charter Communications announced last month that it will invest over \$2 million this year to upgrade its network in the Pendleton area to deliver High Definition TV, high-speed Internet access and other services. John Irwin added that Charter has also announced a fiber build that will expand the availability of Gigabit Ethernet services on Oregon's South Coast.

Agnes Box reported that two weeks ago, Century Tel completed a 100 Mbps network connection to the K-12 school district in Chiloquin.

John observed that under the pressures of all the current activities and things to be done, we sometimes fail to appreciate how much progress has been made and continues to be made.

Joe Franell reported that the Oregon Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA) is holding its annual conference in Ashland on May 1-4. The theme for the conference is, "To Build or Not to Build – That is the Question." Municipal broadband will be on the program. Pam Berrian who is working on the conference invited representatives of any municipal networks to contact her if they would like to participate in the conference. More information on the APWA conference may be found at www.oregonapwa.org/conference/spring07/index.htm.

Curt Pederson reported that Oregon State University and One-Economy Corporation are sponsoring the "Unwire Oregon Conference" to be held at OSU in Corvallis on May 1st. The keynote speaker will be from Google.

Curt also reported that as part of the Open Health Information Project, the Mayo Clinic is considering bringing its Terminology Search Engine to the OSU Open Source Lab in Corvallis and making it Open Source. He added that the United Kingdom National Health Service and the California Health Association are also bringing millions of dollars worth of code to Open Source. He reported that the OSU-OSL is looking at hosting the core infrastructure for Open Office. The Lab is expanding and is being placed on “soft” dollars due to concerns about the state budget. The Lab is receiving a major funding gift from Real Networks that resulted from the Lab’s work on One Laptop per Child initiative. Other gifts are expected.

New Business:

The ORTCC Meeting schedule was discussed given all the current projects and activities. Cathy Britain suggested that the current meeting schedule should be reviewed in light of all the projects and committee work in progress. John suggested that the Council consider not meeting in April. He noted that in past years the Council has not held a meeting in August.

Action Item

It was moved by Ed Parker that ORTCC not meet as a full Council in April, and that any future schedule changes be considered in the May meeting. Paul Zastrow seconded the motion. The Council approved the motion. Committees will continue to meet in April.

Art Hill asked about the procedure for ongoing activities and communications over April and May such as legislative activities and requests for information. Art asked that when any email messages are sent regarding Council business, that ORTCC be used to begin the subject line for easy reference and sorting of e-mail. Cathy added that it would also be helpful when copying others on ORTCC list serve messages that they be forwarded as a separate message. John asked that everyone follow Art and Cathy’s recommendations.

Meeting Schedule:

The next Council meeting will be on Thursday, May 24, 2007. ORTCC meeting dates for the rest of 2007 are June 28, July 26, August 23, September 27, October 24, and November 29. Meetings will be held in the Teleconference Room (Basement) of the Public Service Building, 255 Capitol Street NE, in Salem with the exception of the October meeting, which will be held in Newport. Meeting information will be updated and posted on the Council website at www.ortcc.org. John Irwin adjourned the meeting.

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