

Oregon Telecommunications Coordinating Council
Minutes
April 24, 2008

Attendees:

Council Members: John Irwin, Link Shadley, Pam Berrian, Agnes Box, Cathy Britain, Ed Parker, Brant Wolf, Stephen Macartney representing Michael Weidman, Paul Zastrow, 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: Lindsay Ball of the Office of the Governor, Jeff Johnson – Chair of the State Interoperability Executive Council, Larry Bundy of Blue Mountain Community College, Keith Grunberg and Brad Kuhnert of Charter Communications, Mary Beth Henry of the City of Portland, Shelley Jones of the Oregon Public Utility Commission, Lonnie Macy of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, John Stadter of First Call Resolution and Andrea Fogue of the League of Oregon Cities.

Remote videoconference sites included Eugene, Klamath Falls, Medford, and Pendleton.

Old Business:

Paul Zastrow moved that the February 28, 2008 minutes be approved as distributed. Agnes Box seconded the motion. The Council approved the minutes.

New Business:

Framing an Oregon Broadband Policy

John Irwin opened a discussion on the interest in ORTCC developing recommendations for an Oregon Broadband Policy. John distributed a draft working paper, as a starting point, noting that Oregon's broadband infrastructure contributes to the economic development tools that we need to be competitive with other states and in a global economy with other countries. Broadband infrastructure is essential for companies, healthcare, education, government, public safety and individuals in Oregon. Oregon's current strong telecommunications infrastructure position is the result of private sector investments and proactive public policy with some notable public sector and public-private partnership activity.

John warned that Oregon cannot stand still without getting left behind. Other states, notably California, are not standing still. He proposed that the Council address the need for Oregon to meet our state's continually growing infrastructure and services needs as well as the motivation and knowledge of how to utilize broadband for commerce, education, workforce development, healthcare, access to government, public safety, and individual citizen access to knowledge. John noted that the ORTCC policy and

legislative recommendations that have been adopted over the years provide some of the “planks” of a comprehensive broadband policy for the state.

Pam Berrian commented that the Council should consider broadband policies that have been developed elsewhere, i.e., private sector – public sector – academia, to avoid having to “reinvent the wheel.” Cathy asked about sources that could be used to collect information on what others are doing in this area. John observed that actually very few states have issued any kind of broadband policy to date. The issues are being discussed at the state and federal level now. John will work on collecting this information for reference. Onno suggested that we not confine our search to the United States, but consider what other countries are doing as well.

Brant Wolf asked about the goals of such a policy, “what do we want it to do?” John responded that it creates a reference point, sets expectations, and provides guidelines for action in the deployment and utilization of broadband as well as streamline regulations affecting rights of way and construction. It could positively impact economic development, education, healthcare, and quality of life. Brad observed that related to this question is the current push to use federal Universal Service Fund dollars for broadband. Ed Parker said that is would be a component, but he envisions the broadband policy to be more than that. Drivers continue to be education, healthcare, commerce, and public safety. We should seek to create an environment that makes its attractive for private sector investment in broadband infrastructure and service delivery.

Ed noted that the Oregon PUC currently has the authority to adjust state USF definitions to reflect changes in federal USF definitions. Ed hopes that the federal USF will expand to provide for broadband, and that when it does, it will provide the trigger to expand the Oregon USF as well. Ed also observed, however, that many of the broadband service providers are not regulated by the PUC.

Agnes Box shared that EDUCAUSE, a nonprofit association that seeks to advance higher education by promoting the intelligent use of information technology, recently made recommendations regarding broadband policy and access www.educause.edu.

Onno Husing noted that the private-public partnership model has worked well and should be incorporated in policy recommendations with the goal of ensuring that Oregon and its communities have the technologies and services they need in the future to be successful.

Brant suggested that one important element is to clarify what unserved and underserved means in the context of Universal Service Funds being used for broadband. He remains concerned about the government funding competitors for existing service providers that have made capital investments.

Pam agreed with Brant and reinforced the need to have wide participation in the development of any policy recommendations. John said that he would like to use the Council’s standing committees to work on this, e.g., the infrastructure, economic development, education and healthcare committees. Art Hill noted that the legislative committee also needs to be involved and added that we should consider funding

elements. He noted that there should be a “30 thousand foot” level component and then more specific detailed components to address specific problems.

Agnes added that this is an opportunity to demonstrate that Oregon is focused on doing the “right things.” She said that we should be forward looking. Why not recommend that Oregon should have 30 Mbps to the home for \$45.00 per month? John observed that that is called a BHAG, or a “Big Hairy Audacious Goal.” John responded that there is nothing that prevents us from having a big vision and dreaming big. Art recommended against specifying levels of bandwidth, but rather stating something like, “Oregon will maintain unsurpassed leadership performance.”

John indicated that this will also be on the agenda in the next Council session and recognized that this will take several months to develop.

Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network (OWIN)

John welcomed Lindsay Ball of the Governor’s Office and Chief Jeff Johnson, Chair of the State Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC).

Lindsay Ball reported on activities that have taken place since he was appointed by the Governor to assume leadership of the Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network (OWIN) project. The northwest seven counties as a mix of large metropolitan and rural areas was examined for an approach to OWIN that would save money through partnerships with local government. The potential for \$42 million in savings over the initial OWIN proposal was identified. In the previous model, the state would build, own and maintain the new network. A collaborative partnership approach is now being pursued.

Seven southwest counties are now also being examined, with the additional support of a federal grant received by Lane County to create an interoperable upgrade to their radio system. Lincoln County is also being examined as a bridge between the southwest and northwest counties. He noted that there are a wide variety of system conditions from robust to beleaguered in the counties. All the counties have been very responsive and positive. Eleven partnership agreements have been signed.

In addition to local government, opportunities to work with private sector partners and federal government partners are also being examined, specifically the US Department of Justice and its Integrated Wireless Network (IWN) project. This has the potential to expand interoperability to other states.

\$76 million in certificates of participation were authorized by the Legislature in the Special 2008 Legislative Session for a phase one infrastructure build-out of digital microwave towers and buildings pending approval of a coordinated plan by the Emergency Board in June. Phase one is scheduled to be completed by October 2009. A later phase two build-out will add radio equipment. The specific radios and technologies to be used are yet to be determined. The goal is to complete the system by 2013 to meet the federal mandate.

The approach is to build this network once and incorporate the needs of all.

Chief Jeff Johnson noted that the SIEC is comprised of 50% state agencies (Corrections, Forestry, ODOT, and Oregon State Police) with their own systems and 50% of local government representatives. The SIEC's role is to create policy for how we will create a new interoperable system in Oregon <http://www.oregon.gov/SIEC/index.shtml>. The goal is to build a system that will be accessible to all state and local public safety responders. There is no mandate, however, that local government be a subscriber. The Chief and Lindsay are meeting with local government representatives across the state to identify partnership opportunities and share information for planning. The SIEC technology committee continues to evaluate and vet different wireless technologies.

The Oregon Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) has recently been approved and adopted http://www.oregon.gov/SIEC/docs/statewide_com_interop_pln_4-08.pdf.

In the future months, the SIEC will be a point of coordination and a venue for presentation of the vision and continuing the integration of OWIN and the execution of the strategy.

A team of people has also traveled to Virginia to meet with the Public Safety Spectrum Trust and Cyren Call Communications to discuss the FCC's vision of a nationwide interoperable data and voice network. It is proposed that Oregon be a primary test state for this system. It is hoped that the FCC will re-auction the D block frequencies needed for this nationwide network later this year.

Ed Parker thanked Lindsay for coming to Lincoln County to meet with the Telecommunications Committee and that Lincoln County is excited about the prospects for the new network.

Andrea Fogue also thanked Lindsay on behalf of the League of Oregon Cities and cities for engaging them in the process. She said that it was exciting to see this finally moving forward.

Eric Schmidt of the Association of Oregon Counties said that the keyword here is partnership and that since OWIN has adopted a collaborative partnership approach, it has mitigated a lot of tension. In addition, an OWIN organization has been created and staffed so now there are people to talk to and answer questions.

Chief Johnson added that a question he frequently is asked is whether OWIN means that there will be a consolidation of Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs). The answer is no. These are two separate systems and sets of issues.

Agnes Box commented on the huge scope of this project and that as a resident of a rural county, Klamath County, she is pleased with the collaborative approach that is now

underway. Lindsay reported that he has already reached a partnership agreement with Klamath County.

John Irwin commented that great progress has been made and keep it up. He said that ORTCC is here to assist in any way it can. John thanked Jeff and Lindsay for all their hard work and leadership.

Committee Reports

John noted that the year is moving quickly, and that as the Council develops policy and legislative recommendations he hopes that drafts of proposals will be available in writing by the end of June for review in the July meeting.

Economic Development

Art Hill reported on telework issues and findings. He is still working on researching www.Oregon.gov hosting information.

Healthcare / Telehealth Reimbursement

Cathy reported that a telemedicine reimbursement bill is being developed for introduction in the 2009 Legislative session. Sixty people are participating in the process.

Kim reported that work is ongoing to establish the Oregon Health Network organization and staffing a Board of Directors. Matching funds are being sought.

Infrastructure

Ed reported that the most important thing happening in infrastructure is the Oregon Health Network project. Oregon has an opportunity to bring over \$20 million in Universal Service Funds for the installation and utilization of broadband infrastructure by healthcare service providers and educators. Work to issue requests for proposal is ongoing.

Public Safety

Onno reported that he has been invited to be a featured speaker at a conference in California to talk about public safety communications, challenges and initiatives on the coast. He noted that he has a six-minute video highlighting the public safety communications interoperability exercise conducted by Lincoln County. He plans to get it posted on www.youtube.com for viewing.

Open Seats

John reported that there is a state report on open seats on councils and commissions. There are dozens and dozens of open seats, however ORTCC is not listed as having an unfilled seat. He noted that when people resigned from ORTCC they did not submit resignations to the Governor's office. John will follow up on the situation.

John also reported that there will be a council member ethics training session in a future session.

Public Input

Chris reported that this year's Oregon Connections Telecommunications Conference www.oregonconnections.info is scheduled for October 16 and 17 in Newport and that thanks to Ed Parker, the keynote speaker will be Vint Cerf, Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist - Google. The focus of the conference this year will be on broadband public policy.

Other Reports

CoastNet

CoastNet is now fully redundant with a ring network architecture running from Florence to Tillamook with dual routes to the Willamette Valley. Extending the network to Astoria is planned.

City of Eugene

Pam Berrian reported that the City of Eugene will move forward with its exploration of Internet Exchange opportunities.

OCZMA

Onno reported that the Office of Rural Policy in the Governor's Office no longer exists. The Eastern Oregon Alliance will participate with OCZMA and others to find a collaborative approach to developing rural policy in Oregon. There may be a summit meeting on this issue in the summer. This may have connections with broadband policy issues.

Meeting Schedule:

The council will meet next on Thursday, May 22, 2008 in the Mt. Neahkahnie Conference Room, 1225 Ferry Street SE, Salem, Oregon 97301. Meeting information including the 2008 Schedule will be updated and posted on the Council website at www.ortcc.org.

* * *