

Oregon Telecommunications Coordinating Council
Minutes
September 18, 2008

Attendees:

Council Members: Link Shadley, Pam Berrian, Agnes Box, Cathy Britain, Ed Parker, Brant Wolf, 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

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

Council Business:

Action Item

Paul Zastrow moved that the August 28, 2008 minutes be approved as distributed. Art Hill seconded the motion. The Council approved the minutes.

Council Seats

Chris Tamarin reported that Joe Franell of the City of Ashland withdrew as a candidate for council membership representing cities. Eric Schmidt reported that Joe O’Leary has been appointed as the “point” person for telecommunications. Eric indicated that the Governor’s office is not viewing open seats on boards and commissions as a high priority.

Framing an Oregon Broadband Policy

Chris Tamarin reported that the Editing Group has been working on revisions to the broadband policy paper since the last Council meeting. The latest version of the paper was distributed and discussed. Council members were asked to submit any additional comments to Chris by Thursday, September 25. The Editing Group will incorporate any changes into the paper.

The process for requesting public input was discussed.

Action Item

Paul Zastrow moved that the following schedule be adopted for seeking public input, developing the final draft of the “Framing an Oregon Broadband Policy” paper, and developing and submitting any proposed bills, resolutions and/or executive orders.

Around October 1 - A public announcement and broadcast e-mail will be sent out with the approved draft asking for public comment and input to be received by October 15, to be discussed in the ORTCC public meeting in Newport.

October 17 - End of public comment period.

October 18 through November 20 - The Council will draft legislative and policy recommendations in the form of a proposed bill, joint resolution and/or executive order.

November 20 - The Council will seek consensus and approval of legislative and policy recommendations for the 2009 Legislative Session.

December 1 - Any resulting proposed bill(s), resolution(s) and/or executive order(s) approved by the Council on November 20 will be submitted to legislative counsel, sponsoring legislator or legislative committee and/or the Governor's office.

Cathy Britain seconded the motion. The Council approved the motion.

Continuation and/or reformation of the ORTCC

Cathy Britain reported that a placeholder bill to extend the life of the ORTCC has been drafted. It needs to be sponsored by a legislator or legislative committee. Cathy noted that the House Government Accountability and Information Technology Committee appears to be the most appropriate committee to work through now that the Joint Legislative Committee on Information Management and Technology no longer exists. The chair of the committee is Chuck Riley and the Vice Chair is Chris Edwards. The second Vice-Chair is Fred Girod. Other members are E. Terry Beyer and Kim Thatcher.

Pam Berrian offered that members of the Eugene delegation would be an alternative option.

Onno Husing offered that representatives from the coast could also be approached.

The current statute language, ORTCC membership and mission were discussed.

Cathy Britain proposed that a task committee be formed to draft the proposed extension bill. A task committee with Michael Weidman (chair), Onno Husing, Ed Parker, and Chris Tamarin was formed to draft a proposed extension bill to include revisions in membership and mission. The proposed bill will be brought to the Council at the October meeting.

Cathy Britain will pursue having the placeholder bill “dropped” with the intention to gut and stuff the bill with the revised language. Link Shadley noted that Cathy and Legislative Committee had been given authority to work with prospective sponsors to pre-session file a bill to extend the life of ORTCC in the last council meeting.

Committee Chair and Council Member Reports

Economic Development: Art Hill noted that he is pleased with the economic development elements and references included in the broadband policy paper.

Education: Art Hill noted that the Oregon Health Network project has a very large education component. The project will result in new infrastructure and improved network services to health care education institutions across the state and specifically Oregon's Community Colleges. Michael Weidman added that now is the time for eligible users to start planning for the 2009 funding cycle of the e-rate programs. Paul Zastrow noted that this will be a topic of discussion at the upcoming meeting of the Oregon Association of ESDs.

Healthcare/Telehealth: Cathy Britain reported that the Telemedicine Reimbursement bill has a Legislative Council number assigned, #1338. Cathy said that it appears that both healthcare insurers and service providers are in agreement with the bill. Cathy said that the challenge will be to provide educate people about telemedicine. The bill will be sponsored by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. Kim Hoffman added that one of the best things about the bill is that it is not defined by geographic areas, but by areas of need wherever they are.

Kim Hoffman reported that the Oregon Health Network will be holding its first Board of Directors meeting tomorrow afternoon, September 19th. She noted that Art Hill, Chris Tamarin and Kim, herself, are on the board. Ed Parker added that the first OHN RFP is expected to be released by the Universal Service Administrative Company soon. Cathy Britain added that the next two RFPs are expected to following the first in about a month, though this all depends upon the actions of the FCC and USAC. Cathy also noted that OHN is working on a Sustainability Plan to satisfy an addition requirement instituted by the FCC. Kim also noted that fundraising has been active and contracts for matching funds are being negotiated. The Oregon Health Network website may be found at www.oregonhealthnet.org.

Infrastructure: Michael Weidman reported that LS Networks is establishing another Coast to Valley route for additional redundancy. Ten Gigabits of bandwidth is being turned up to support the new Alaska-Oregon Network fiber coming ashore near Florence. Two more ten Gigabit "waves" of bandwidth will be available on a physically diverse path to the coast.

Public Safety: Onno Husing noted that the Emergency Board meeting is coming up at the end of September and that the Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network project is expected to submit a funding request.

Klamath Falls Telecommunications Task Force: Agnes Box reported that there is a statewide project call Big Look that is engaged in planning for how Oregon will support an additional 1.7 million people by 2040. She noted that meetings are scheduled for Klamath Falls, Medford and other communities across the state. The Big Look task force

will present recommendations to the 2009 Legislature. More information is available at www.oregonbiglook.org.

Oregon Connections Telecommunications Conference: Chris Tamarin reported that the conference is scheduled to be held in Newport on October 16 and 17. He said that pre-registration for the conference has been strong and he expects a full house. The conference program and registration list are posted on the conference website at www.oregonconnections.info.

Oregon Rural Congress: Onno Husing reported that there is a lot of follow-up activity taking place in response to the August meeting. He added that telecommunications is a key area of interest.

Industry: Brant Wolf reported that the Oregon Telecommunications Association is holding a Central Office Information Technology Seminar next week. Link asked about the trend toward convergence. Brant responded that the trend continues. Verizon is perhaps the best example of a “converged” service provider that is facilities based with copper, fiber backbone, fiber-to-the-home, and wireless infrastructure. Cathy asked about the future of the small independent telephone companies. Brant doesn’t believe that the independents will be merged with any large telcos; he expects them to remain independent, though he is concerned about the growing competition from other service providers even in rural communities. Link Shadley reported that Always On Networks in Chiloquin are now providing WiMAX service in Bangladesh.

Meeting Schedule:

The next council meeting will be on Wednesday, October 15, 2008 at the Best Western Agate Beach Inn and Conference Center, 3019 North Coast Highway, Newport, Oregon 97365. Meeting information will be updated and posted on the Council website at www.ortcc.org.

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