GREEN COUNTY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

COMMITTEE: Broadband Ad Hoc Committee

DATE: Wednesday, October 27, 2021   TIME: 1:30 PM

LOCATION: Green County Historic Courthouse
County Boardroom
1016 16th Ave., Monroe, WI 53566

Members Present		**Others Present**
Ryan Camron	Bill Peterson	Siggi Eckhardt
Jody Hoesly	Bill Trow	Karen Orsinger
Cara Carper	Jane Curran-Meuli	Jerry Guth
Kathy Pennington	Steve Engles	
Rob Sommers		

Meeting was called to order by Camron, chair.

Motion by Pennington, second by Hoesly to accept the minutes of the September 29, 2021 meeting. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Camron shared his findings regarding other counties. These findings concerned strategies pursued, particularly as related to fiber builds, household broadband costs controlling for county population, and possibilities for mapping download/upload speed test results. A common sentiment emerged from his conversations; that a guidance policy should be as simple as possible, and not particularly technology-specific. Also suggested; require annual testing post-build, and enact an ordinance requiring county notification on new projects.

Similar research/findings by Hoesly were shared/discussed. These findings described speeds data available, example studies and committees, and the maps available by SWWRPC. A question that was posed; what metrics are meaningful to ISPs looking to expand into new areas?

There was brief discussion on the work of the WCWRPC Broadband Alliance and its recommendations updated June 15, 2021.

Pennington shared her findings in mapping providers and speeds in her township. Although more data points are ultimately desired; a "picture" did start to emerge, highlighting service options for residents. Discussion took place on how residents might be educated on service upgrade opportunities. Peterson provided examples of how fixed wireless and cellular technology can be improved or simply made an option, but also highlighted how such enhancements (infrastructure) may be unattractive or not feasible.

An initial "outline" for the guidance policy was reviewed. This initial outline airs some of the questions that emerge regarding process/procedure. The next draft will present a singular process, which can be altered as the committee continues its work. Camron shared his opinion that there should not be an initial approval by one person since the process needs to protect against individual bias being magnified, and further, ensure project details/considerations are not accidentally missed. Following this logic, a couple members

opined that a cover sheet or check list may help those reviewing and ensure proposals are actually complete. Sommers will create an initial draft of this cover sheet/check list. Members who wish to take increased responsibility for specific sections of the guidance policy will be better suited with the next version of the outline.

The "affordability" aspect was discussed briefly. The suggestion by other counties that this be left undescribed was met by some resistance by the committee, as it may be difficult to point to price in a meaningful way when accepting or rejecting proposals. Nonetheless, there appeared to be agreement that a single monthly rate definition might be inadequate, or at the very least, that the discussion/concept of affordability is more complicated than such definition.

Other discussion focused on usage and availability of ARPA funds, by town governments, guidance on ARPA funds by the US Treasury Department, and grants awarded/recommended by the Wisconsin PSC.

Motion by Pennington, second by Peterson to adjourn. Motion carried on a voice vote.