

Governor's Task Force on Broadband
Cass Lake/Deer River
Monday, July 16, 2012
8:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

I. Leech Lake Tribal College, 6945 Little Wolf Road, Cass Lake, MN 56633

At the Leech Lake Tribal College, Chair Anderson Kelliher thanked everyone for their efforts in assisting with the task force meeting. Leech Lake Tribal Chair Carri Jones welcomed everyone to Cass Lake and the Tribal College. Mike Jones, the tribe's Minnesota Rural Intelligent Community (MIRC) partner with the Blandin Foundation, described the Leech Lake tribe's MIRC project. Several other members of the tribe also described how broadband is benefitting the reservation.

II. Temporary Employment Program, 6271 Lower Cass Frontage Road, Cass Lake, MN 56633

Janice Gale, director of the Temporary Employment Program, gave a tour of the office and described how the program works and how the addition of computer stations and broadband have expanded the program's ability to serve tribal members.

III. Deer River High School Media Center, 101 1st Avenue NE, Deer River, MN 56636

Task Force members present: Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Gary Evans, Matt Grose, Maureen Ideker, Bernadine Joselyn, Danna MacKenzie, Andy Schriener for Duane Ring, Dick Sjoberg and Shirley Walz.

Task Force members on telephone: Dan Richter, Bob Bass

Task Force members absent: Steve Lewsader (sick), Keith Modglin, Steve Peterson, Bao Vang

Others in attendance: Bill Hoffman, Diane Wells, Joanna Dornfeld, Dennis Ahlers, Bill Coleman, Rep. Carolyn McElpatrick, Rep. John Persell, Rep. Tom Anzelc, Brad Box, Fred Underwood, Frank Reese, Janice Gale, Mark Adams

Others on the phone: Ann Treacy

A. Greetings and Introductions

Chair Margaret Anderson Kelliher convened the meeting of the task force, welcomed everyone and gave an overview of the meeting schedule for the day. Task Force members and members of the public in attendance were then asked to introduce themselves.

B. Approval of Minutes of the June 12, 2012 meeting of the Task Force

Gary Evans moved to approve the June 12, 2012 meeting minutes. Second by Danna MacKenzie. Motion approved.

C. Public Comments

Rep. John Persell thanked the Task Force for meeting in northern Minnesota and for working on this issue. He noted that broadband is an important issue in rural areas and that those residing in urban areas may not realize how difficult it can be without broadband.

Rep. Carolyn McElfatrick indicated her interest in learning from the Task Force proceedings. She first began to hear about the issue from her constituents in Aitkin County. She noted the many applications for using the technology and how important it is for schools, business and personal use.

Brad Box, Chair of the Deer River School District, welcomed the Task Force to Deer River High School. He noted how important broadband is both within and outside of the school as it can extend learning time. However, there are issues with availability in the outlying areas of the district. He also noted that the Deer River area is very dependent on tourism and visitors want access to the Internet when they are in the area. He thanked the Task Force for working on this issue.

D. Tribal Issues Panel

As the panelists came up to the table, Chair Anderson Kelliher summarized the issues that were presented at the Tribal College and the Temporary Employment Program office. She also explained the work that the Task Force has accomplished and the upcoming reports to be filed in September and December. Shirley Walz also described a tri-fold handout that was provided to each Task Force member, which lists the broadband, cable and telephone companies offering service in Itasca County and was put together by the Task Force's Broadband Adoption subgroup.

Fred Underwood, Fond du Lac IT Director. Mr. Underwood explained that 12 years ago the Fond du Lac reservation had one dial-up connection and today has 10 Gbps fiber connecting all businesses. The technology has come a long way and so have the expectations of the community. For those tribal members living on the Cloquet corridor of the reservation, there are choices for broadband service. For the members living in other areas of the reservation, there are no choices. Mr. Underwood noted the importance of broadband availability for jobs, college, housing and emphasized the importance for youth. He discussed that as IT director, he is expected to ensure broadband is available. However, there are issues with funding and with technology (satellite has economic barriers; wireless is not compatible with the many pine trees on the reservation). Broadband has become a utility, one of the things that is needed to survive in life. A hurdle noted for the deployment of broadband is that public agencies are not allowed to partner; there are many regulatory hurdles to create partnerships. He noted that ConnectMN

has done a good job of broadband mapping and if he had known where the University of Minnesota-Duluth had fiber, he could have piggybacked on it instead of building new.

Frank Reese, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe MIS Manager. Mr. Reese explained that his background is on the telecommunications side and that when he started, voice communications on the reservation was very poor. They have slowly improved voice communications and are also using a wireless network. A difficulty is that there are five telephone companies that provide service on the reservation. They are working on going over all areas of the reservation to make sure that there is coverage and hope to receive USF mobility funding for a wireless network and will use that network to bring broadband service to all homes on the reservation. They have also established a new utilities commission on the reservation. Getting cooperation from all of the providers to map what is in the rights-of-way on the reservation and acknowledgement of the new utilities commission have been challenges. Another issue is that AT&T is not an eligible telecommunications carrier in Minnesota so that tribal members cannot get discounted cell phone service from AT&T under the universal service program.

Both panelists responded to questions from Task Force members.

E. Subgroup Work Time

The Coordination Across Government Levels and Best Practices/Incentives subgroups met.

Lunch Break.

F. Education Demonstration of Telepresence Classroom

The Task Force met in the Telepresence classroom for a demonstration of the technology.

G. Education Panel

Jennifer Duggan from the Minnesota Department of Education participated by teleconference and explained how the state is moving standardized testing online. A list of the tests that are administered online includes:

- Math MCA grades 3-8 is available online and administration mode is determined at a school level.
- Math MCA-Modified grades 5-8 are only available online. This assessment's initial administration was 2011.
- Science MCA grades 5, 8, and HS are only available online. This has been the case since 2008.
- Math and Reading GRAD retests are available online monthly.
- Reading MCA and Reading MCA-Modified will be available online for the first time in 2012-2013 school year. Administration mode is determined at a school level.

Fred Nolan, Director of the Minnesota Rural Education Association, also participated by teleconference. His association represents approximately 150 school districts from very small to larger, such as Grand Rapids and Bemidji. His experience from talking to school superintendents is that broadband is the

transformation technology much like highways were. Education is moving to a more blended learning of face-to-face time with teachers and online. The question is to make bandwidth available so that all students have it, at school and at home. Sometimes the availability issue is not having the facilities available and sometimes it is the price.

Joe Silko from the Itasca Area Schools Collaborative emphasized that access is primarily a rural issue. They have students riding the bus for four hours a day in some instances and would like to have cellular coverage so that broadband could be made available for learning on the bus.

Curt Tryggestad, currently Eden Prairie school superintendent and previously the Little Falls school superintendent, participated by teleconference. He noted that many students access broadband at school but cannot at home. He also said that providing ipads to students in grades 5-12 in Little Falls did change how students interacted with teachers—one teacher said they got texts from students whereas they had never received telephone calls. Going digital did make the district more reliant on technology so a backup system in the event of failure was essential. They also put hot spots on athletic buses and did find that students did do homework on the bus.

Mark Adams, superintendent of Greenway and Nashwauk/Keewatin. Due to budget issues, the two districts had to eliminate music and fine arts and consolidated to one superintendent and one business office. They are using fiber that was laid years ago to share classes with the Deer River school district. There is a need to make sure schools have access to this type of technology.

The panelists responded to questions from Task Force members.

H. Subgroup Work Time

The State of Broadband; the Broadband Adoption; and the Monitor/Understand Impact of FCC & PUC Decisions, Cost of Broadband subgroups met.

I. Discussion of September Report

The Task Force discussed and agreed upon a timeline for the preparation of the report due September 14, 2012.

J. Other business/Upcoming meetings/Adjourn

The Task Force discussed the draft letter to be sent to officials in towns that were affected by the flooding and to encourage placement of broadband infrastructure as streets are repaired.

The Task Force discussed the September meeting in Thief River Falls and agreed to start at 10:00 a.m. and a rough agenda, including time to review a final of the September report.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15.