

Coordinator Report March 2020

Activity Update

- Coordinated and facilitated AZBSN Leadership Team. Discussed 2020 plan that includes newsletters, Roundtables and webinars: Tentative plan includes:

- March and April Newsletters
- March-April Webinar – Dates TBD
- April Forum with ACC Commissioner Lea Marquez Peters re National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners Broadband Expansion Task Force (see below)
- September Policy Roundtable

The March newsletter and webinar may focus on key state resources such as the Arizona Telemedicine Program, the State Library E-rate program, the Sun Corridor Network, smart cities/region activities in Arizona, and the Arizona Blockchain Initiative. Webinars will typically be 1.5 hours in length. **Note that on March 11 the Governor's Office will announce Governor Ducey's Executive Order regarding *Arizona Broadband 25 plan*. This could be the focus of the newsletter and the webinar**

- Contacted Rio Salado re availability of space for Roundtables. Dates Conference Center available September 4th, 9th, 14th, 16th, 22nd, 25th, 28th & 29th.
- Meetings and phone calls with Jeff Sobotka regarding ACA and AZBSN collaboration, and state planning and strategy issues. Another meeting to take place week of March 16.
- Working on draft of Sponsorship Document – Needs a few tweaks and then ready to go.
- Drafting Interorganizational agreement between GAZEL and ATIC regarding the coordination and funding of ASBN, the Arizona Broadband Stakeholder Network.
- Exploring new conferencing options following expiration of GAZEL ZOOM courtesy account
- Coordinating with ACC Commissioner Lea Marquez Peterson's Deputy Policy Advisor regarding date and agenda for Policy Forum tentatively April 20 regarding the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners NARUC Broadband Expansion Task Force She has recently been appointed to the Task Force to "bridge the divide" between high-speed internet connectivity in urban and rural areas. Started creating web pages regarding this event.
- Connected with Arizona School Boards Association regarding collaboration with their Rural Alliance and Rural Advocacy Day February 17. Derek Masseth and I attended the Rural Advocacy Day February 17.

- Connected with Helios Education Foundation regarding collaboration with their new Arizona Student Opportunity Collaborative – in partnership with the Arizona Department of Education, Arizona State University and seven rural school districts. Some of the rural communities/districts represented in the pilot program include: Ajo Unified, Camp Verde Unified, Prescott Unified School District, Humboldt Unified School District, Show Low Unified, Miami Unified, and Ray Unified. It is focused on establishing a network to offer courses that rural students need to graduate but where the schools do not have the necessary teaching resources for these courses. Steve arranged a conference call for the Collaborative Leadership with Steve, Jeff Sobotka and Derek Masseth to discuss how AZBSN, the ACA and the Sun Corridor Network might be able to help.
- Continued to add contacts and update email list.
- Attend NIST & NCTA Global City Teams Challenge (GCTC) Smart Agriculture and Rural Broadband SuperCluster Workshop in Phoenix on February 19, 2020
- Exploring opportunities to include broadband as topic, and maybe exhibit table, at Local First Arizona 2020 Rural Policy Forum, August 5- 7, Sahuarita, Arizona, and the Arizona Digital Government Summit Wednesday, May 27 @ the Hyatt Regency Phoenix
- Per request from Ben Blink, Governor Ducey's Policy Advisor on Transportation and Technology Innovation, drafted AZBSN Statement to be included in Press Release announcing Governor Ducey's *Arizona Broadband 25 plan*.

Statement: Steve Peters, Coordinator of the Arizona Broadband Stakeholder Network, led by the Arizona Telecommunications and Information Council and the Greater Arizona Educational Leadership organization, are excited to see the Arizona Broadband 25 plan that continues Governor Ducey's commitment to provide strategies, leadership and resources to connect the many tribal, rural and other underserved communities in Arizona that do not have fast, reliable and affordable broadband access. The Broadband Office, and the State Broadband Manager, will enable Arizona to continue to coordinate our resources, implement new strategies, dramatically increase access to federal funding, and provide funding and assistance to rural communities. The Broadband Priority Corridors will enable us to connect communities that have not been viable in the past.

- Per request from Ben Blink, Governor Ducey's Policy Advisor on Transportation and Technology Innovation, and Jeff Sobotka, attended Arizona House of Representatives Technology Committee Hearing on broadband March 11. Ben Blink provided presentation on Governor's initiatives
- Met with Ben Blink following Arizona House of Representatives Technology Committee Hearing March 11 to discuss AZBSN collaboration with the Governor's office, and state planning and strategy issues

Tentative topics for Discussion at Commissioner Marquez Peterson Forum

Issues that the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners NARUC Broadband Expansion Task Force Task Force, and Commissioner Marquez Peterson, will be addressing include:

- How some States have successfully shifted state universal service funds from telephone and op ex support to broadband buildout capital support and any lessons learned that other states could utilize.
- What other state programs are successfully building out broadband, how are they funded, and how are they structured.
- How NARUC and NARUC members can best work with the FCC to help craft Universal Service Fund programs that will be most successful at expanding broadband into unserved areas.
- Electric and gas utilities who have successfully leveraged their infrastructure to provide broadband service, including lessons learned from considering any regulatory hurdles, project funding mechanisms, the relative financial success for the utility, how (or should) State commissions incentivize such projects, and whether the overall approach can be replicated elsewhere.
- Information related to the impacts of rural broadband deployment on economic development, education, healthcare, quality of life, the delivery of public utilities services and its ultimate benefits to customers.

NARUC felt a separate task force is needed because the overlap in strategies impacts the NARUC Electricity, Consumer Affairs, and Telecommunications Committees.

Broadband redundancy and diversity for our state's 911 public safety answering points (PSAPs)

Commissioner Peterson would also like to address the issue of broadband redundancy and diversity for our state's 911 public safety answering points (PSAPs). After a motorist death in Payson in 2017, a 911 service outage in Pima County in 2019, and a 911 service outage in Page in 2020, the Arizona Corporation Commission has become concerned that our PSAPs may not have the sufficient broadband redundancy and diversity necessary to provide continuous and reliable 911 service in the event a broadband carrier's service goes down. The Commission has also become concerned with respect to CenturyLink's role in the recent instances and has asked staff to prepare an order to show cause to determine whether CenturyLink is doing enough to provide continuous and reliable service to PSAPs throughout Arizona. While the Commission's staff works to prepare the order, Commissioner Marquez Peterson has also suggested that stakeholders form a "CenturyLink Working Group" or "911 Redundancy Working Group" to look at more immediate and pragmatic solutions for Arizona's 911 PSAPs and investigate whether PSAPs can also serve as "anchor institutions" for purposes of furthering other broadband initiatives and programs.