



July 12, 2021 AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force Teleconference Report

Attendees

Steve Peters, Oris Friesen, Henry Goldberg, Mark Goldstein, Tracey Beal, Andrew Bevington, Brendon Blake, Melissa Boydston, Kirk Busch, Erin Carr-Jordan, Oliver Carter, Michael Cohen, Jerry Crow, Brian Daly, Milan Eaton, Michael Edmonds, Ian Hathcock, Holly Henley, Shereka Jackson, John Kelly, Ryan Kelly, Debbie Kovesdy, Janet Major, Derek Masseth, Paul Melcher, Andrew Metcalfe, Randy Mifflin, Mauricio Orozco, Cody Pedersen, Lea Marquez Peterson, Lawrie Prickett, Cindi Ptak, Jenny Rickel, Tracy Rexroat, Fernando Roman, Paul Ross, Michelle Simon, Andy Sinclair, Roni Singh, Jeff Sobotka, Graham Taylor, Paul Trujillo, Rachna Vas, Albert Velarde, Manny Villa, Joy Whiting, Brad Zerbe, Karen Ziegler

Task Force Sponsors, Events and Updates Webpage, Participants List, Upcoming Presentations at Task Force Meetings

Task Force Sponsors

Steve Peters again thanked Care1st Health Plan Arizona, Valley of the Sun United Way, the Satellite Broadcasting & Communications Association, and Kajeet for providing sponsorship funding for this task force. The sponsors are displayed on the task force website.

Steve is continuing to seek further funding support for the task force's upcoming work, and welcomes any organizations interested in becoming sponsors.

Task Force Events and Updates Webpage

Steve continues to add information relevant to the task force on the Events and Updates webpage of the task force website. Steve includes a link to this webpage/newsletter in his e-mails to the task force, and strongly encourages task force participants look at this webpage regularly for important information on programs (e.g. federal grant programs), events, and contacts. Steve regularly updates this webpage with new announcements and activities of interest to the task force.

Task Force Participants List

Steve noted that the task force participants spreadsheet is located on the task force website. Steve again asked attendees to fill out the Google form on the website to be included in this spreadsheet. This is a good place for task force participants who are looking to connect with others on the task force.

Attendees at task force meetings showing their position and contact information are also included in an Appendix of each task force meeting report.

Upcoming Presentations at Task Force Meetings

Steve stated he has arranged several presentations for upcoming task force meetings:

- Steve Hill, President of the Satellite Broadcasting & Communications Association, will provide a briefing on the satellite industry and satellite technologies.
- There will be a panel discussion on municipal networks – Karen Ziegler, Paul Ross, and John Lucas will be on the panel.
- Pima Community College Cyber Warfare Range presentation.

With regards to the satellite industry, it was noted there is a Coconino County partnership with SpaceX, and Derek Masseth stated he could refer the person in charge of this partnership to Steve.

Updates: State Broadband Director, Telehealth, ACC, Sun Corridor Network, ADE

State Broadband Director Update

Jeff Sobotka, State Broadband Director at the Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA), reported on his recent activities.

Jeff reported that the ACA Rural Broadband Development Grants (RBDGs) program funding announcement has been moved to early August, and Jeff plans to start the application process for the RBDGs program in early fall. Mark Goldstein asked if the Governor had signed the state budget yet, and Jeff replied that he had but will need to wait until early August to provide details on the RBDGs program. Karen Ziegler commented that it appears there is not direct state legislature funding for the RBDGs program, but the ACA will receive funding for this program from the Governor's Office using funds received from federal sources that must meet federal regulations. John Kelly added that the legislature decided that federal funding sources were more appropriate for this broadband program. Jeff concluded saying there will be a lot of funding coming for broadband including federal and counties sources.

The ACA has retained KPMG as the external consulting firm to provide an update to the state broadband strategic plan focusing on middle-mile fiber strategy/planning. Jeff stated people have signed up for an open-access meeting with KPMG to discuss improving fiber access along state highways, and KPMG has a set of questions it has prepared for this meeting.

The last ACA/NTIA Arizona Broadband Workshop will be held on Wednesday, July 14th at 10:00 am. The topic for this workshop is "Broadband Adoption and Use – The Secret to Sustainable Networks". This workshop will focus on digital inclusion, which is important for federal grant applications. Steve noted that there is a link on the task force Events & Updates webpage to register for this workshop.

The State of Arizona through the ACA is seeking to formally support an eligible project for the NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Grants Program (\$288 million in national funding available for this new 2021 program). The grants are designed for public-private partnerships between states or subdivisions of states and private service providers who will provide fixed broadband service in an eligible service area (primarily intended for rural areas). ACA had requested submissions of expression of interest in applying for this grant program, and the ACA intends to select an eligible project from the 25 applications submitted to formally endorse or serve as a

co-applicant for the grant. Jeff stated the ACA has narrowed the choice of endorsement down to 3 applications, and will announce the winner shortly.

Mark Goldstein noted an article that provides analysis of the \$65 billion proposed for broadband purposes in the current bipartisan Senate federal \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package under consideration. A majority \$40 billion would go to the states as state block grants (approximately \$800 million would go to Arizona) and would be used primarily toward bringing broadband to unserved areas; \$15 billion would go to the USDA ReConnect program for funding rural broadband deployment; and \$10 billion would be equally split between a bond program to fund public/private broadband partnerships and a digital equity program aimed at increasing broadband adoption. See Mark's post in the Appendix 2 Chat for more information on this article.

Telehealth Update

Janet Major, Associate Director of Education & Facilities for the Arizona Telemedicine Program (ATP) and Chair of the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA), reported on her and recent telehealth activities.

Janet thanked task force participants who participated in their "Virtual Telehealth Office Hours" on June 30th where experts discussed and answered questions on the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) program. Janet will share information on this session with the task force. There will be another Office Hours session on the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) program in late July to help inform applications which are due by August 13th. Jeff Sobotka noted that Arizona is #10 out of the 50 states in EBB signups with 134,000 low-income households enrolled (according to the USAC tracker – see Jeff's link to this in the Appendix 2 Chat). Tracey Beal, the leader of our task force EBB outreach activities, reported that she will be doing an interview tomorrow with Cox on the EBB program and it is important for people to get the word out about the EBB and ECF programs.

The ATP will be providing an update on the Telehealth Omnibus Bill (HB 2454) on July 28th, which will include information on licensure. See Janet's link in the Appendix 2 Chat to register for this.

ACC Update

Lea Marquez Peterson, Commissioner and Chair of the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC), reported on her and ACC recent activities.

Lea explained that the ACC regulates utilities, and has some limited jurisdiction over telecommunications service providers.

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) Broadband Expansion Task Force, in which Lea participates, released their draft recommendations report. This draft report is being reviewed by their telecommunications committee for modifications, and then will be sent to the FCC. Steve noted that there is a link to this report on the task force Events & Updates webpage. The NARUC task force will be meeting on July 17th.

Lea reported that Mohave Electric Cooperative (MEC) has connected their first customer to their Fiber-To-The-Premise (FTTP) network. Jeff Sobotka commented that rural electric co-ops will be important players in providing broadband services in rural Arizona, and the ACC may play an important role in this.

Mark Goldstein commented that he put a link in the Appendix 2 Chat to the California PUC report on reforming their Universal Service Fund (USF). As noted at previous task force meetings by Lea, the ACC has been considering reforming the Arizona Universal Service Fund (AUSF) to support broadband in high-cost rural areas.

Sun Corridor Network Update

Derek Masseth, Executive Director of the Sun Corridor Network (SCN), reported on recent SCN activities.

The Future of Tech Commission Town Hall public discussion of digital equity, access, and tech innovation for the workforce, hosted by ASU and Common Sense Media, was held on July 8th. It was successful with about 600 people registered.

The “Lighting Up the Future” 3rd (and last) Roundtable on “The Utilization Gap” will be held today July 12th at 4:00 pm. Derek stated he is looking forward to seeing a summary report on the Lighting Up the Future series of roundtables.

The SCN has been chosen to receive two NSF planning grants. One grant is for planning the creation of a network in the Yuma area for colleges and high schools, including connecting homes and advancing smart agriculture. The second grant is for a regional research and education network connecting Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and New Mexico. Steve Peters asked if this regional network will leverage Internet2, and Derek replied that it will for various collaborations including for fire responders. Brad Zerbe asked how this regional network will be used, and Derek replied that it is predominantly focused on research and somewhat on network resiliency but they are accepting any ideas on how it could be used. Mark Goldstein noted that Derek and the SCN were one of the authors of a new report “The Minds We Need” by a national partnership of research and education networks led by Internet2 that advocates for how the nation can leverage these networks for innovation and national competitiveness (see Mark’s link to this report in the Appendix 2 Chat).

Phase 2 of the Isaac School District network (discussed at previous task force meetings) is coming on line later this month, which will connect more households and has a new ISP partner.

The SCN continues to work on community network projects with the Navajo Nation-Diné College and Tohono O’Odham tribe community college.

Responses to the RFPs for mid-mile fiber deployment along I-17 and I-19 are expected shortly.

Derek is also participating in the KPMG middle-mile fiber project (discussed by Jeff Sobotka).

ADE Update

Milan Eaton, State E-rate Director at ADE, reported on recent ADE activities.

Milan Eaton reported that the Arizona Rural Schools Association Final Mile Project (discussed by Wes Brownfield and Milan at previous task force meetings) is waiting for the window to close on the responses solicited to the RFPs for the pilot projects at five rural school districts

Milan emphasized that it has been determined that it is not legal to use school E-rate-funded fiber backhaul to the Internet for “To and Through” networks (as had been discussed at previous

task force meetings). Milan stated that any organization using a school E-rate network for “to and through” access to the Internet could jeopardize Arizona’s \$70 million per year in E-rate funding so this approach should not be implemented. After the meeting, Milan sent an e-mail describing more information on E-rate regulations in this regard, which is shown in Appendix 1.

Native Network Presentation

Steve Peters invited Andrew Metcalfe, President and CEO of Native Network, to deliver a presentation to the task force following up on the June 28th presentation to the task force by Rachna Vas of Microsoft Airband who partners with Native Network. Following is a summary of key points from Andrew’s presentation, and the full presentation will be posted on the task force website.

Andrew has served as CTO of Cellular One overseeing multiple rural network buildouts and also founded the CLEC Northwest Telephone that built fiber for service providers in the Pacific Northwest. Andrew is a Native American, and has in-depth knowledge of Native American tribes. In 2015, he formed Native Network, headquartered in eastern Washington, to assist tribes and municipalities in all facets of their broadband and overall telecommunications infrastructure and services. They typically work with communities of population under 10,000. In 2018, they began to partner with Microsoft Airband to provide digital literacy/skills training for their customers and fully address the digital divide.

Native Network has expertise in various types of telecom infrastructure: fiber, fixed wireless, and mobile. They offer a range of wholesale (working with partners) or retail telecommunications services such as: broadband Internet, VoIP/hosted PBX, mobile wireless (expanding to 5G when ready), cloud, and VLAN/VPN services.

Native Network provides network design and consulting expertise for tribes and communities to build, support, and operate their own networks. This includes feasibility and technology studies, partnering on applications for state/federal grant funding, designing network infrastructure, and partnering with public-sector entities to run their own networks for their communities. They partner with Zayo in providing fiber for access or backbone networks. They also provide communities with telecom billing and operational support systems. Native Network provides a community an overall turnkey system, which they run for a year and then transition the control to the community.

Native Network has network POPs and data centers in Phoenix and Tucson, and a dark fiber DWDM ring in Tucson. In Tucson, they worked in 2020-21 with the Pascua Yaqui tribe, who had CARES Act funding, to build a broadband network for all members of the reservation as well as a tribal data center. This included using local contractors to construct wireless towers. They also helped the Pascua Yaqui tribe become an ISP and market their services.

Mauricio Orozco asked if Native Network does outreach for the EBB program with tribal communities, and Andrew responded that they could probably help with that and would connect Native Network’s marketing specialist with him.

Mark Goldstein asked if Native Network is using Microsoft Airband’s TV White Space technology for broadband access. Andrew responded that they have deployed this in some locations where it works well for non line-of-sight access (through trees and hilly areas) but that if is a fairly expensive approach. Andrew added they use the appropriate broadband access technologies for different communities which may be fiber, CBRS Private LTE Networks, or 5G

Wireless, etc. Rachna Vas, Business Program Manager for Microsoft Airband, commented that Microsoft Airband partners with ISPs to provide digital literacy/skills services whatever broadband access technologies they use – they want to get as many people connected as possible.

Jeff Sobotka asked if Native Network is partnering with any tribes on applying for the NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Grants Program since it appears they would be effective in doing this. Andrew responded that Native Network will be working with tribes on this, and would like to discuss the possibilities for this in Arizona with Jeff.

Michael Edmonds remarked that the Old Pascua tribe in Tucson has no Internet service, and Andrew replied that Native Network has a plan to work with them on this.

Brad Zerbe commented that he lived on the Navajo Nation and distance learning is very important to them because of teacher shortages. Brad asked about whether Native Network is involved in bringing classes to tribal communities. Andrew responded that Native Network has worked with tribes on training including languages training, and that their networks are designed for effective video content delivery. Andrew added he would like to speak with Brad about needed distance learning applications. Tracey Beal, Executive Director of School Connect noted that School Connect is working to connect rural school districts' networks with tribes for classes they may want to use. Tracey added that she is working with Wes Brownfield of the Arizona Rural Schools Association to provide 365 new donated laptops for rural school districts, and those on the task force interested in such laptop donations should contact her.

Next Steps

The next AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force overall meeting will be held on Monday, July 19th at 7:30 am.

As noted above: 1) the final ACA Arizona Broadband Workshop will be held on Wednesday July 14th at 10:00 am; 2) the "Lighting Up the Future" 3rd Roundtable on "The Utilization Gap" will be held today July 12th at 4:00 pm..

Mark Goldstein invited those task force members interested to participate in the ATIC Board Meeting on Wednesday July 14th at 12:00 pm.

Steve Peters noted that he will be taking vacation in July but will participate in task force meetings and continue sending out his regular task force announcements. Mark Goldstein may moderate a task force meeting if there are any issues with Steve doing that during July.

Henry Goldberg and Oris Friesen will write up a summary report of today's task force meeting.

Appendix 1: Milan Eaton E-mail on "To and Through" E-rate Regulations

From: "Eaton, Milan" <Milan.Eaton@azed.gov>
Subject: More on "To and Through"
Date: July 12, 2021 at 10:48:13 AM MST
To: "aticarizona@gmail.com" <aticarizona@gmail.com>

Cc: Oris Friesen <oris@cox.net>, "Masseth, Derek A - (dmasseth)" <dmasseth@email.arizona.edu>

Steve,

Can you publish a couple of points for me in your minutes from today? It would be very helpful!

- Schools cannot extend their network past the campus.
- What they CAN do is bring in a separate (non Erate) ISP service into the school and broadcast that signal from the school to the neighboring community. This will only result in challenges from the local providers in the area plus some providers do not allow you to re-broadcast their signals but it's not against Erate rules.
- Any hardware provided by the school using federal funds is required to be CIPA compliant wherever it may be located. Compliance is dictated by the local governing board.

Thanks,

Milan Eaton

State Erate Director for Schools
Arizona Department of Education
Information Technology
Cell: 623-332-6357
Milan.Eaton@azed.gov

Appendix 2: Chat from Zoom

Paul Melcher to Everyone (7:32 AM)

My mic isn't working, but am able to join.

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (7:33 AM)

Paul, please enter your name, affiliation & contact vector(s) here in the chat. Thanks!

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (7:38 AM)

Getting some clarity on the \$65 billion proposed for broadband purposes in the current bipartisan Senate \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package. From the article in Telecompetitor: Blair Levin: FCC May Be Locked Out of Proposed \$65B Broadband Infrastructure Plan (6/29/21, <https://www.telecompetitor.com/levin-fcc-may-be-locked-out-of-proposed-65b-broadband-infrastructure-plan/>) we learn “The majority of the proposed \$65 billion in broadband infrastructure funding, \$40 billion, would go to the states and would be used primarily toward bringing broadband to unserved areas but with some flexibility in how the funding is used. Fifteen billion dollars would go to the USDA ReConnect program, which also funds rural broadband deployments. The remaining \$10 billion would be equally split between a bond program to fund public/private broadband partnerships and a digital equity program aimed at increasing broadband adoption.”

Paul Melcher to Everyone (7:42 AM)

Paul Melcher, MPA
Community and Economic Development Director | Town of Oro Valley
11000 N. La Cañada Dr | Oro Valley, AZ 85737
pmelcher@orovalleyaz.gov | www.orovalleyaz.gov
Phone: 520-229-4847 | Cell: 520-780-0219

Janet Major to Everyone (7:50 AM)
<https://telemedicine.arizona.edu/>

Janet Major to Everyone (7:52 AM)
Cindy Hogan wrote a great blog "AZ COmmunities Orgs forge a path to digital equity through the lessons of the pandemic" <https://telemedicine.arizona.edu/blog/arizona-community-organizations-forge-path-digital-equity-through-lessons-pandemic>

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (7:53 AM)
[file: State of California - Broadband Networks Executive Order 08_20.pdf]

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (7:53 AM)
State of California - Broadband Networks Executive Order 08_20.pdf posted here FYI.

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (7:54 AM)
[file: California PUC - Universal Service Public Purpose Programs Funding Mechanisms Scoping Memo & Ruling 06_28.pdf]
Oops, wrong one. Here's the new California PUC - Universal Service Public Purpose Programs Funding Mechanisms Scoping Memo & Ruling 06_28.pdf FYI.

Jeff Sobotka to Everyone (7:57 AM)
EBB Results <https://www.usac.org/about/emergency-broadband-benefit-program/emergency-broadband-benefit-program-enrollments-and-claims-tracker/>

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (7:59 AM)
Derek Masseth/Sun Corridor was one of the authors of a new report on Inclusion, Innovation, and Competitiveness from The Minds We Need that can be downloaded (with free registration) at <https://mindsweneed.org/> FYI.

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (8:09 AM)
CTC Technology & Energy had two most excellent recent posts on federal broadband funding worth reviewing, one more general and the second focused on the NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Program (BIP): Weighing Your Options: An Analysis of Recent Federal Broadband Funding (6/19/21) - <https://www.ctcnet.us/blog/weighing-your-options-an-analysis-of-recent-federal-broadband-funding/> & A Deep Dive into the Scoring Metrics of the NTIA's Broadband Infrastructure Program (6/23/21) - <https://www.ctcnet.us/blog/a-deep-dive-into-the-scoring-metrics-of-the-ntias-broadband-infrastructure-program/> FYI.

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (8:17 AM)
ATIC will hold it's monthly Board meeting this Wednesday, 7/14/21 from Noon-2:00 PM. All are welcome to attend. Details and agenda at <https://www.arizonatele.org/current-board-meeting.html> FYI. We'll take August off and return on 9/8/21.

Jeff Sobotka to Everyone (8:34 AM)
Need to drop. Have a great week everyone!

From Mauricio Orozco to Everyone (8:41 AM)
Awesome news and thank you Tracey!!

From Andrew Metcalfe to Everyone :(8:41 AM)
Thanks Jeff

From Paul Ross to Everyone (8:42 AM)
Cheers Everyone.

Appendix 3: Registration Information for Attendees at Today's Task Force Meeting

First Name	Last Name	Organization	Job Title	Email	Phone	Mobile
Tracey	Beal	School Connect	Executive Director	tracey@schoolconnectaz.org		
Andrew	Bevington	Pima County	Director	andrew.bevington@pima.gov	15205999987	15205999987
Meissa	Boydston	VSUW	VP	melboydston@gmail.com		
kirk	busch	BigData Southwest,	ceo	kirk.busch@gmail.com	4803344997	
Erin	Carr-Jordan	ASU	Head of Social Impact	erobins@asu.edu		
Oliver	Carter	GenTech	CIO	oliver@gentechsupport.com	6027177047	
Michael	Cohen	ATIC	Researcher	mikey1145@yahoo.com		
Jerry	Crow	Digital Forensics and	Retired	jerry.crow@computer.org	4804515954	
Brian	Daly	AT&T	AVP	brian.k.daly@att.com	2063906792	
Milan	Eaton	ADE	ERate Director	milangeaton@gmail.com	16233326357	6233326357
Michael	Edmonds	Ward 3	Engagement Specialist	mike.edmonds@tucsonaz.gov	520-344-2898	929-244-9477
Oris	Friesen	Future Information	Secretary	oris@cox.net	6026891084	
Henry	Goldberg	ATIC	Vice Chair	hgold52@aol.com	480-609-9279	480-433-3536
Mark	Goldstein	International Research	President	markg@researchedge.com	602-470-0389	
Ian	Hathcock	SBI, dba Cellular One	Director of Sales	ihathcock@cellularoneaz.com	19282057713	
Holly	Henley	Arizona State Library, Archives and Public	State Librarian & Director	holly.henley@cox.net		
Shereka	Jackson	future stars	ceo	futurestarsaz@hotmail.com		
John	Kelly	TRIADVOCATES	Principal	John@triadvocates.com		
Ryan	Kelly	Pima Area Labor	Field Director	rkelly@azaflcio.org	5202560995	
Debbie	Kovesdy	GenTech	CEO	debbie@gentechsupport.com	6025711014	6025711014
Janet	Major	ATP/SWTRC	Assoc Director Outreach, Education & Facilities	jmajor@telemedicine.arizona.edu	15204030736	
Derek	Masseth	Sun Corridor Network	Executive Director	dmasseth@suncorridor.org		
Paul	Melcher	Oro Valley	CED Director	pmelcher@orovalleyaz.gov		
Andrew	Metcalfe	Native Network	President / CEO	metcalfe@nativenetwork.com	509-300-0101	509-661-2639
Randy	Miffin	Cellular One	Senior Business	rmiffin@cellularoneaz.com		
Mauricio	Orozco	Care1st Health Plan	Community Engagement	morozco@care1staz.com	14802823631	
Cody	Pedersen	Smith Bagley Inc. dba	Project manager	cpedersen@cellularoneaz.com	19282053395	
Lawrie	Prickett	Sbi	Sfps	Lprickett@cellularoneaz.com		
Tracy	Rexroat	Dept of Educ	Program Specialist	tracy.rexroat@azed.gov	6023640322	6026498439
Fernando	Roman	Communications	Executive Vice President	froman@cwa7026.com	5207097199	
Paul	Ross	Phoenix College	AVP CIO	paul.ross@phoenixcollege.edu		
Andy	Sinclair	Arizona Department of Economic Security	CAPS Capacity Development Coordinator	asinclair@azdes.gov	4802632271	4802632271
Roni	Singh	Sahuarita Food Bank	ERN and CRC director	rsingh@SFB-CRC.org	5203939872	
Jeff	Sobotka	ACA	State Broadband Director	JeffS@AZCommerce.com		
Paul	Trujillo	NAU	Network Architect	paul.trujillo@nau.edu	9285232905	
Rachna	Vas	Microsoft	Program Manager	rachnavas@microsoft.com	3157033043	12026770991
Albert	Velarde	Smith Bagley INC	Strategic Account	avelarde@cellularoneaz.com	15057012222	15057012222
Manny	Villa	Sahuarita Unified	Director of Information	mvilla@sahuarita.net	5.20625E+13	
Joy	Whiting	Apache County	Apache County School Superintendent	joy.joywhiting@gmail.com		
Brad	Zerbe	AZ Govt Consulting	Principal	zerbebrad@gmail.com	623-332-0506	623-332-0506