

June 15, 2020 AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force Teleconference Report

Attendees

Steve Peters, Oris Friesen, Henry Goldberg, Mark Goldstein, Tracey Beal, Jamie Brown, Amanda Bruno, Kirk Busch, Michael Cohen, Mark Dallmeier, Dan Doehler, Derek Ferguson, Terence Ford, Ian Hathcock, Holly Henley, Steve Hill, Brittany Holmes, Bob Jacobson, John Kelly, Ilana Lowery, Janet Major, Derek Masseth, Sophia Mayberry, Mala Muralidharan, Peter Newbegin, Mauricio Orozco, Cody Pedersen, Lea Marquez Peterson, Lawrie Prickett, Alan Pruitt, Tracy Rexroat, Jeff Sobotka, Dan Stormont, Rohit Tripathi, Nicole Umayam, Karen Ziegler

Overall Task Force and Subcommittees Meetings

Steve Peters noted the overall task force will continue to hold meetings on Monday mornings through June and beyond that to work towards writing a report of preliminary recommendations by mid-July.

The “Planning” webpage on the task force website provides a description of the Subcommittees, their team leaders, and links to participate in the subcommittee meetings. The Technology subcommittee meets on Tuesdays at 9:30 am, the Education and Libraries subcommittee meets on Thursdays at 9:30 am, and the Funding and Resource subcommittee meets on Fridays at 10:00 am. The Communities subcommittee, led by Alan Pruitt and John Lucas, will hold its kickoff meeting this Friday at 11:00 am. Anyone wishing to join a subcommittee should contact Steve.

Updates: State Broadband Director, AZ State Library and Federal Legislation, Telehealth, State 911 Program, ADE, ACC

State Broadband Director Update

Jeff Sobotka, State Broadband Director, reviewed his recent activities. His activities are shifting from short-term to mid-term broadband infrastructure issues. A key focus is broadband infrastructure for northern Arizona. The Governor’s proposal for new fiber infrastructure along state highways is being developed including working with ADOT on costs, discussions with major infrastructure providers, meeting with the CIOs of the state universities, National Environmental Policy Act considerations, and federal permitting.

Other broadband issues Jeff is working on are the Kingman airport, Town of Springerville in Apache County \$50,000 state rural broadband development grant work with John Lucas, Navajo Nation telehealth work with Janet Major, Insight webinar on broadband for small

business, and work with ADE (Milan Eaton) on using donated money to activate mobile hotspots. He is also continuing to discuss connectivity options with the Governor's office.

Arizona State Library and Federal Legislation Update

Mala Muralidharan, E-rate Administrator for Public Libraries at the Arizona State Library, stated the Arizona State Library redistribution of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) CARES Act funding received for its first two phases has been completed (discussed at the previous task force meeting), and the plan is to distribute the entire \$650,000 in CARES funding. The State Library is also working with the state government on Arizona CARES funding received.

Nicole Umayam, Digital Inclusion Library Consultant at the Arizona State Library, is working on the pilot of a "Library Tech Helpline Service", which will employ library staff to provide phone-based basic tech help support, digital literacy training, and information regarding low-cost home Internet offers. This helpline will be supported through Library Services & Technology Act funding and based on the National Digital Inclusion Alliance's Digital Navigator tech support model.

Mala will provide a written update on relevant federal legislation to be posted on the task force website.

Telehealth

Janet Major, Associate Director of Education & Facilities for the Arizona Telemedicine Program, provided an update on telehealth activities relevant to the task force. She noted libraries are important sources of information on how to use telehealth for people who don't have Internet service at home. The Navajo Nation's chapter houses provide locations where tribal community members can obtain telehealth services and get information on telehealth. Janet met with Dr. Dale Alverson, former President of the American Telemedicine Association, to discuss how to move ahead with telehealth solutions for the Navajo Nation, which may include the Four Corners Telehealth Consortium to involve all four states in collaborative approaches. Telehealth grants for the Navajo Nation will help advance solutions.

State 911 Program Update

Karen Ziegler, Public Safety Program Manager at the Arizona Dept. of Administration, provided an update on the State 911 program. The State government is issuing an RFP in July for an Emergency Services IP Network (ESINet) backbone network for next-generation 911 service (including text and video capabilities). Karen is discussing the possibility of leveraging regional projects, such as John Lucas' work with Apache County, for the 911 network.

ADE Update

Sophia Mayberry, Project Manager in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at the Arizona Dept. of Education (ADE), stated Kathy Hoffman (State Superintendent of Public Instruction) has established a state Technology task force to develop innovative solutions to address the digital divide in education. This task force will consider solutions for the COVID-19 crisis and look for long-term solutions as well.

ACC Update

Lea Marquez Peterson, Commissioner at the Arizona Corporation Commission, noted she serves on the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) Presidential Broadband Expansion Task Force. She recently was involved in a teleconference with commissioners from five state public utility commissions, with ongoing discussions to be discussed at future task force meetings.

Subcommittee Activities

Education and Libraries Subcommittee

Mala Muralidharan, facilitator of the Education and Libraries Subcommittee, summarized some areas discussed at the June 11th meeting of the subcommittee. The full subcommittee meeting report is posted on the task force “Planning” webpage.

The subcommittee is working towards making its recommendations by the end of June for the task force’s preliminary recommendations document to be written in July. The subcommittee is aiming to base its recommendations on relevant data sources such as those from ADE, the Pew Research Center, Benton Foundation, and state public Wi-Fi maps.

Henry Goldberg sent an e-mail to the subcommittee after its June 11th meeting proposing a structure for making its recommendations covering six areas: Broadband Internet Access Requirements for Students and Library Use by Communities, End-User Devices Requirements, Technical Support, Professional Development of Teachers, Digital Content, and Safe Operations of Schools/Libraries. His proposal summarized in each of these areas the key information available from previous task force/subcommittees meetings and the information that needs to be collected.

Funding and Resources Subcommittee

Lea Marquez Peterson, facilitator of the Funding and Resources Subcommittee, stated the subcommittee met on June 12th and is working towards making its recommendations by the end of June. Steve Peters has prepared a document with a proposed structure for the subcommittee’s recommendations including federal/state government potential funding sources, directory of foundations and corporate sponsors including the Federal Reserve’s Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), collaboration with AZ StRUT on its end-user devices refurbishment program and statewide expansion, and advocating for the Governor’s broadband proposals. Lea noted these recommendations are intended to be distributed to communities as well as be included in the task force preliminary recommendations report in July.

Another output of this subcommittee is Mark Goldstein’s list of consultants (44 currently) that can provide broadband consulting or grant writing expertise to support communities and institutions that are looking for assistance in finding consultants for their COVID-19 digital access/broadband projects and funding needs. Mark noted this list can be searched according to various categories of expertise. The list is posted on the task force’s Resources webpage. Steve Peters commented that there will be a lot of federal government funding for broadband projects but the grant applications are difficult to write, so this list of consultants should be very helpful to communities.

Technology Subcommittee

Steve Hill and John Kelly, facilitators of the Technology Subcommittee, reported on the Technology Subcommittee meeting held on June 9th.

Tom Mehlert, Director of AZ StRUT, delivered a presentation on AZ StRUT that refurbishes donated computers and provides these to Arizona schools. Last year AZ StRUT donated about 4300 computers, filling in gaps when students can't get computers from schools. The subcommittee also discussed how AZ StRUT's operations could be expanded in the state.

The subcommittee will hold future presentations on broadband Internet access solutions and aim to construct a portfolio of broadband Internet options including connectivity features and costs (to assist communities in finding affordable solutions).

The Technology subcommittee intends to work with the Education and Libraries Subcommittee to provide technology options that address the needs identified.

Communities Subcommittee

Steve Peters met with Alan Pruitt and John Lucas, the facilitators of the Communities Subcommittee to get that subcommittee's meetings going.

Alan Pruitt stated the Communities Subcommittee will hold its kickoff meeting on Friday June 19th at 11:00 am. Joselyn Cousins, Senior District Manager of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, who manages the Arizona region for the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), will present on the CRA funding program available for digital equity. An Economic Development Administration official in Seattle will participate in this meeting. Steve Peters remarked he may ask Joselyn Cousins to present to the whole task force as well.

Sun Corridor Network Presentation

Steve Peters introduced Derek Masseth, Chief Technology Officer at the University of Arizona and Executive Director of the Sun Corridor Network. Steve noted that he has talked to Derek about the potential of the Sun Corridor Network to provide connectivity, technical support, and involvement with a statewide consortium for Labster virtual labs.

Derek provided an overview of the Sun Corridor Network. The full presentation is available on the task force website.

The Sun Corridor Network is a non-profit organization created in 2013 that is an education and research collaboration of the three state universities, University of Arizona, ASU, and NAU, and is housed at the University of Arizona. The Sun Corridor Network is the regional Internet2 network for Arizona. It connects the three universities with 100 Gbps fiber trunks and connects to the national Internet2 national backbone network, which offers very low latencies for various applications. The Sun Corridor Network also peers with commercial ISPs to provide commercial Internet service. It also provides cloud services from Google, Amazon, and Azure. Under UCAN, the Sun Corridor Network allows community colleges, K-12 schools, libraries, and other public sector organizations to access its network for Internet2, commercial Internet service, and cloud services (available 24/7/365). Sun Corridor Network is an E-rate authorized service provider and can serve the needs of E-rate eligible entities. The Governing Board of the Sun Corridor Network, consisting of the CIOs of the three state universities, would like to improve connectivity for their surrounding regions. It is expanding its POPs in the state, recently adding an optical POP in Yuma. It also offers an Eduroam capability where students can connect wirelessly at different locations using the same credentials.

Jeff Sobotka commented that major regional Internet2 networks in Texas (LEARN) and California (CENIC) have brought down the costs of connectivity and provide low latency in those states, so there is lots of potential for the Sun Corridor Network to do this in Arizona. Steve Peters commented that the task force's Education and Libraries and Technology subcommittees will have further meetings with the Sun Corridor Network to discuss opportunities in Arizona.

Next Steps

The next AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force overall meeting will be held on Monday, June 22nd at 7:30 am.

This week, the Technology subcommittee will meet on Tuesday June 16 at 9:30 am, the Education and Libraries subcommittee will meet on Thursday June 18 at 9:30 am, the Funding and Resources subcommittee will meet on Friday June 19 at 10:00 am, and the Communities subcommittee will meet on Friday June 19 at 11:00 am.

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

Appendix: Chat from Zoom

From Bob Jacobson to Everyone: (7:38 AM)

Checking in. Suggest everyone listen to NYTimes "The Daily" today. All about COVID at six months. We are losing it.

From Dan Stormont - TEALS Program to Everyone: (7:41 AM)

Yep. We just surrendered in that "war."

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (7:52 AM)

Searchlight New Mexico/Rolling Stone: The Navajo Nation and Coronavirus: Planting Hope Amid a Plague 6/3/20

<https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-features/navajo-nation-coronavirus-planting-hope-amid-a-plague-1009255/>

From Janet Major to Everyone: (7:55 AM)

John Badal Sacred Winds Telecom was at our meeting last week - some of you may remember him from ATIC

From Rohit T to Everyone: (7:56 AM)

Rohit Tripathi, Hughes Network Systems, Rohit.tripathi@hughes.com

From Janet Major to Everyone: (8:01 AM)

USA Today article on libraries

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2020/06/11/when-libraries-reopen-after-coronavirus-might-months/5316591002/> Awesome list Mark - thanks

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (8:05 AM)

[file: (null)] – Consultant List

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (8:06 AM)

Here's the AZ Broadband Consultants List as currently on the AZBSN site. I have a working version with one additional grant writer, but seeking any I might have missed (if you can help) before I issue an updated version. Thanks all!

From Nicole Umayam, AZ State Library to Everyone: (8:07 AM)

Absolutely right, Steve. Meaningful broadband adoption requires affordability of service as well as local tech support to help people get online

From Janet Major to Everyone: (8:07 AM)

Learn Design Apply Inc did an excellent job on the RUS grant workshops:
Dana Satterwhite, Grant Consultant
e: dana.satterwhite@learndesignapply.com
c: (425) 269-2424

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (8:18 AM)

Thanks Janet. I just built their entry in my working AZ Broadband Consultants List.

From Janet Major to Everyone: (8:27 AM)

lets do a deeper dive!

From Derek Masseth to Everyone: (8:28 AM)

Happy to Janet!