



Background on City/County Speakers

County Panel

Gary Shelton, Interim Scott County Administrator

In his 31 years of service to Scott County, Mr. Shelton has served in several capacities including Jail Administrator, Information Technology Manager, and as the Deputy County Administrator for the last 10 years. As the Interim Administrator he is responsible for the county's budget and supervision over all county departments, including Information Technology.

Scott County became actively involved in the Broadband issue because of the rapidly increasing needs for bandwidth within county operations and efforts to collectively and collaboratively work with other governmental entities. Limited options in obtaining the needed connectivity led to projects and collaborations not moving forward because of this lack of connectivity, and the escalating costs associated with obtaining the needed bandwidth. Last, but certainly not least, Scott County discovered that many organizations within the county faced similar issues.

Danna MacKenzie, Information Systems Director for Cook County, Minnesota

Ms. MacKenzie has been involved with rural connectivity issues since 1995 when she and a small group of locals worked with MRNet, Rural Datafication Funding, the IRRRB and the County revolving loan fund to establish the member-owned, non-profit cooperative, Boreal Access to provide dial-up internet service to Cook County citizens. Since then she has served on the Blandin Broadband Strategy Board, the Iron Range Do-It Board, the Association of Minnesota Counties Futures Task Force and the Minnesota County IT Leadership Association. Her focus is keeping Minnesota's rural communities on the connectivity map.

The primary reason Cook County has taken the lead in investigating broadband options stems from the idea that the county is the only local government body that has jurisdiction over the entire area. Cook County's sparsely located population suggests that it likely will take a county-wide project to bring service to residents in outlying townships and unorganized population corridors.

City Panel

Steven Mielke, City Administrator, Lakeville

Lakeville is a city of 54,000 population in southern Dakota County. Mr. Mielke has been the administrator of Lakeville since June 2004 and prior to that was the City Manager of Hopkins, MN for 15 years.



Lakeville became interested in broadband issues due to pressure from industrial and high tech members of the Lakeville business community who have expressed concerns about the lack of options and the costs associated with obtaining affordable high speed internet service, as well as wanting more than one option in case of a service failure. In order to look deeper into the questions posed, as well as concerns for being an attractive location for future businesses, in 2007 Lakeville formed the Business Telecommunication and Technology Task Force (BTTTF) to study and make recommendations on various issues relating to the need for additional broadband technologies in Lakeville. The result was an identified need for greater options. Lakeville is now moving forward with additional studies focused on the feasibility of serving all businesses with a fiber-based network.

Jeff O'Neill, City Administrator, Monticello

Monticello is a fast growing community of 12,000 population, located along the I-94 corridor midway between the Twin Cities and St Cloud metro areas. For three years Mr. O'Neill has been a member of a local task force charged with evaluating the need and defining methods for bringing ultra-fast broadband to citizens and businesses within the community.

Following a community vote overwhelmingly in favor, the work of the task force in Monticello resulted in the development of a publicly operated telecommunication system known as Fibernet Monticello. Fibernet Monticello emerged in response to business and citizen recognition that high speed data communication service provided at an affordable cost is key to a bright economic and social future. Portions of the project including the head-end building and fiber backbone have been constructed which will enable data service to be instituted soon.

O'Neill's has been with the City of Monticello for twenty one years, including years of service as Community Development Director. Prior to that he was City Administrator for Watertown, MN and Assistant Administrator for the City of Coon Rapids.

O'Neill has a MA in Urban and Regional Studies from Minnesota State at Mankato as well as a Bachelors of Arts Degree with a major in Political Science from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter MN.

Ruthe Batulis, Eagan Technology Task Force

Eagan is the 8th largest city in Minnesota, with a population of 67,500 and major employers like Blue Cross Blue Shield, Lockheed Martin, Northwest (Delta) Airlines, and Thomson Reuters. Since 2000, Eagan has experienced the most job growth of any city in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and has experienced a nearly 15% growth in so-called knowledge workers (professional, scientific & technical jobs) while the Twin Cities as a whole experienced more than a 6% decline.

Ruthe Batulis has served as the President of Eagan based Dakota County Regional Chamber for over five years. The organization covers nine cities and two townships and is one of the largest in the metro area,



serving members through four locally-focused business councils. In 2005, she was appointed by Governor Pawlenty to the Minnesota Academic Excellence Foundation and currently chairs that board. She serves on the Eagan Technology Task Force and recognizes the importance of world class broadband services for small business, high tech job growth, and expanding communities. Ms. Batulis is also on the Metropolitan Coalition of Chambers, and is an Eagan Foundation Board Member and a graduate of the Institute for Organization Management.

Afternoon Guest Speakers

Geoff Daily, Editor, App-Rising.com

Geoff Daily is the editor of App-Rising.com, a blog sponsored in part by interests as diverse as AT&T and the Lafayette Utility System. A technology journalist by trade, Daily has written about the rise of online video, the development of broadband applications, and the deployment of broadband networks for a range of publications. Based in Washington, DC, he's become heavily involved in the world of broadband policy serving as co-chair of the implementation committee for the US Broadband Coalition. He's a believer that the future of the Internet demands high capacity, reliable broadband networks, and that policy can play a key enabling role in spurring not just the deployment of broadband but also demand for the networked experiences it enables. He subscribes to the idea that through broadband we can reinvent and improve all facets of society. Mr. Daily is a native of Plymouth, Minnesota.

Dr. Andrew Cohill, President and CEO of Design Nine

Mr. Cohill is a broadband architect advising communities on technology and telecommunications issues, and has hands-on experience designing and managing community broadband networks. Design Nine is based in Blacksburg, Virginia. In the United States, Mr. Cohill has worked with communities in Minnesota, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, Illinois, New Mexico, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, and Texas. His international work has taken him to British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Quebec, France, the Guernsey Isles, and Japan. Recent Design Nine broadband network projects include nDanville (Danville, Virginia), The Wired Road (southwest Virginia), and the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority (eastern Virginia). He has given policy advice to Virginia, New Mexico, Memphis metro (three states-- Arkansas, Tennessee, and Mississippi), Louisiana, the provincial government of British Columbia, and the Canadian national government

Cohill's extensive background in technology and telecommunications dates back to the early eighties, when he worked at AT&T Bells Labs and for AT&T Technology Systems. He was the Director of the world renowned Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV) at Virginia Tech from 1993 to 2002. In the nineties, Blacksburg became widely known as the "most wired community in the world." Under Cohill's leadership, the BEV project set many firsts, including the world's first residential broadband using Ethernet, the first library in the U.S. with Internet access, the first school system in the U.S. with broadband, the first local government online, and some of the very first ecommerce efforts, including the world's first online grocery store.



He is a widely published writer, and author and co-editor of a book about Blacksburg (Community Networks: Lessons learned from Blacksburg, Virginia). His papers and reports are widely circulated, and his technology news blog has thousands of readers per month. He speaks on community broadband issues, economic development, and technology. He has been a keynote speaker at many statewide and national conferences. Cohill has a B.S. in Computer Science, a Master's degree in Information Systems, and a Ph.D. in Environmental Design and Planning (all from Virginia Tech).