

**Ultra High Speed Broadband Task Force Meeting**  
**Approved Meeting Minutes**  
**Friday, February 20, 2009**  
**9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**



**Location:** Main Meeting at Inver Hills Community College, Room HH124, Inver Grove Heights with video-conferencing site at St. Cloud State University.

**Facilitator:** Anne Losby

**Task force members in attendance:** Steve Cawley, Brent Christensen, Tom Garrison, Jack Geller, Dana Mackenzie (for Barbara Gervais), John Gibbs, JoAnne Johnson, Jack Ries for Gopal Khanna, Rick King, Tim Lovaasen, Dan McElroy, Mike O'Connor, Jen Hegna (for Kim Ross), Vijay Sethi, Dick Sjoberg, Karen Smith, John Stanoch (Andy Schriener substituting early morning and JoAnn Hanson after lunch), Chris Swanson, Craig Taylor, Mary Ellen Wells, Peg Werner, and Dave DeVries for Robyn West.

**Public attendees:** David Minke, Randy Young, Gary Sheldon, Eric Lampland, Ann Treacy, Frans Versluis, Ann Higgins, Myron Lowe, Jim Hickie, Michelle Schlie, Bill Coleman, Tom Ollig, Jim Moeller, Elizabeth Emerson, Tom Berkelman, Emmett Coleman, Clint Herbst, Chris Mitchell, Mike Reardon.

**Staff in attendance:** Shirley Walz and Carlos Seoane from Thomson Reuters; Diane Wells from the MN Department of Commerce.

**Opening comments; review meeting agenda – Rick King**

The meeting was called to order at 9:41 a.m.

Rick King indicated that he does not think we have any members of the task force via teleconference.

Substitute list:

Jen Hegna, Information Systems Manager for Byron Public Schools, here for Kim Ross.  
Dave DeVries here for Robin West.

Jack Ries for Gopal Khanna because Gopal is chairing the national association of state CIO's this week.

Dana Mackenzie, IT Director for Cook County, here for Barbara Gervais.

Andy Schriener here for John Stanoch. Rick indicated he understands that John Stanoch and John Gibbs will be here later.

Rick King indicated that he had a couple of comments before we get to the agenda. At the last meeting as a task force we entered into a contentious area and we will see more of that as we move forward. In thinking about this as a task force, he went back and looked at what we had captured as meeting guidelines. We do not have to go through them now, but Rick did want to remind everyone what we had adopted and that they are included in the agenda packet. Everyone should revisit as we know we have issues that we do not all agree on. We were all appointed to this task force because we represent

different view points. Part of the philosophy for the panels we've had is also to bring views forward. As panel members talk, there are going to be some people listening who

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are not going to agree with panel members, but the panel members should be able to say their piece. The task force members should be able to then ask questions in a respectful way. Questions do not need to have an edge to them. They don't have to be softball questions, but ask them respectfully. Consider this as we go forward today.

Rick King asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Motion made and seconded. Agenda approved.

Rick King directed the task force to the meeting minutes from January 16, 2009. Any questions, comments? A motion to approve is in order. Motion made and seconded. Minutes from January 16, 2009 approved.

Rick King directed the task force to the meeting minutes from February 6, 2009. Any questions, comments? A motion to approve is in order.

Tom Garrison stated with respect to Brent Legg's comments, Brent Legg was asked a question as it related to municipal builds. Tom indicated that his question went to what foundation and what expertise does he have to comment on that? He was brought in as a mapping expert, not a fiber build expert. Tom noted his objection to Brent Legg's comments as he is not an expert.

Rick King indicated that what the minutes captured is what Brent Legg said, referring to the minutes at the bottom of page 7 and onto page 8. What Mr. Legg said was in response to a question asked from a representative of a county. It clearly is his opinion. Perhaps they aren't the best expert on the subject, but they were asked.

Jack Geller indicated that he thought it was kind of an out of bounds question, but that was the question and that is Mr. Legg's opinion. Jack asked Tom if he was requesting it be stricken from the minutes.

Tom Garrison indicated that no action needs to be taken. He wanted his comments captured in today's meeting minutes.

Mike O'Connor indicated he agreed with Tom and wanted his objection noted.

Mary Ellen Wells stated that the minutes are the minutes and that is what was said.

Rick King indicated that we will note in today's minutes and asked if there were any other comments.

Chris Swanson indicated that he received a letter from constituents that were very concerned about the statement of Brent Legg. He has a letter that he can read. He also would like to go on record to support what Tom said.

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Rick King indicated he would like to take care of the minutes before moving on to correspondence. Rick also had some comments submitted to him. Motion made to approve the minutes. Minutes from February 6, 2009 meeting approved.

Rick King indicated we will go to the correspondence that was received.

Chris Swanson indicated that there were multiple correspondence that he received (he did not identify who submitted the comments). Chris read the following:

At our last meeting, Mr. Legg from Connected Nation made a statement concerning his lack of awareness of any successful municipally owned fiber-to-the-premise networks. This statement might have been more understandable if he had disclosed that Connected Nation has significant Board of Director and Advisory Board representation from large incumbent broadband service providers, who naturally resist the competition they face from municipally-owned networks. But there are literally hundreds of municipally owned networks, with many of them FTTP networks that have been operating successfully for years. Reedsburg, Wisconsin; Bristol, Virginia; Burlington, Vermont; Windom, Minnesota; Jackson, Tennessee; Kutztown, Pennsylvania; are just a few of the communities that have been successfully served by public networks.

But in all fairness, it should be noted that there have been municipal failures that have occurred. FTTP networks are still relatively new and involve performance risks like any operating service. But to say that municipalities cannot be successful would be like making the statement that private companies should not operate fiber networks based solely on the performance of WorldCom, Adelphia, MCI, and Charter Telecommunications, who have all filed for bankruptcy. Add to this list the numerous weak telecom companies that have been absorbed by other companies, as well as the ones that continue to limp along, unable to make the type of FTTH investment needed for the type of Ultra High Speed Broadband we are seeking.

So in all fairness, we should recognize that municipally owned networks can be a viable strategy for communities seeking ultra high speed broadband to increase their economic development, and our consultants should disclose their biases when dealing with sensitive issues like this.

Rick King asked if there were others.

Chris Swanson indicated that he has multiples, but the one he read sums them up.

Vijay Sethi indicated that he received a communication from the Minnesota Rural Counties Caucus. Their question had to do with what kind of recommendation would come out of the task force in light of the budget shortfall. There is a mandate such that the government has proposed that there should be a consolidation of human services across the state. The question being asked is do we have a high speed broadband network or will we have a high speed broadband that can assist in facilitating the consolidation of services.

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Rick King asked if we have the question captured. He then asked if this was the current network we have today that connects the states and many counties and school districts or is that the network that goes beyond the state network?

Vijay Sethi indicated that the answer is yes and no. We have many counties that don't have the infrastructure today. He suggested that perhaps Jack Geller could address.

Jack Geller indicated that all 87 counties are connected to the state network. The level of connectivity varies. All counties are connected to that state backbone at a T1 or higher.

Vijay Sethi asked a follow-up question. Do we have the capability now, assuming the government is proposing consolidation and if that comes to pass, is there the connectivity and speed and capacity today for the services to be delivered across regions?

Jack Geller indicated, without knowing all situations, the answer would probably be yes because all counties are connected by fiber.

Steve Cawley indicated that the network we are using now at Inver Hills is part of the state network. OET operates the state backbone network with tremendous capacity. County by county there is that last mile issue but the backbone network has enough capacity. We work on getting more fiber on a regular basis.

Dana Mackenzie indicated she would like to offer a counter view. All of her neighbors have a single T1 connection to their county seat. What travels over that connection is all court functions, all general government work, all county health work. The idea that we could consolidate services and use that same facility wouldn't work. What we are talking about is a 1 Mbps connection that is serving our entire county when many people have that type of connection just for their home

Steve Cawley indicated he would agree we need more capacity. But county by county is a T1 the limit of service your county can receive? He would say not. It is a budget issue and not because the service isn't there.

Peg Werner said if they are consolidating to save money and then they are going to spend a lot of money to save money, that will be the discussion.

Mike O'Connor said he is in sort of the glass is half full position. If we could take advantage of this moment to drive some of these issues forward, we could kill several birds with one stone. If we could get some studies to clarify the situation, it seems useful for the legislators who are making the decision. We could tease out the difference between the service and the capacity by county and then come back to the state with some sort of discussion with this.

Jack Geller stated that one of the value statements that is a consensus item is that adequacy of bandwidth is tied to function. So if he understands Vijay's question, if in fact all these human services are consolidated regionally, we would need to figure out from the human service side what are the functions needed and then and only then could you

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answer the question about whether there is enough bandwidth available. So in reality, until we know what the functions are, we don't know the answer.

Vijay Sethi indicated it's not just a capacity issue, but a cost issue. It is something that all counties are thinking about. If property tax dollars are decreasing and as the demand on those taxes increases for services, the proposal that is coming down is that this is the start of the process. The Governor's office is seeing this consolidation as a cost saving measure but if there are costs to do this, it must be recognized. So some sort of survey to determine what we need for capacity would be helpful. It becomes a matter of what you need to add to, as long as the funds are there.

Dick Sjoberg said the first question is whether the bandwidth is available. The question is money. How long has the county had a T1? Internet usage is going up 40 percent a year.

Danna Mackenzie indicated Cook County has had their T1 6 or 7 years.

Dick Sjoberg said then you are due to have county commissioners look at your service level and hopefully spend more.

Danna Mackenzie indicated that she did not mean to suggest that the facilities were not there. There is a complex funding model between the state and the county for paying. If we are going to take into account the consolidation, her point was that you have to look at the funding formula.

Dick Sjoberg said that the crux of what the group is looking at is how this is funded.

Dan McElroy said he applauds the discussion. He did want to point out that this consolidation was the Association of MN Counties idea. The bandwidth and who pays is the least of the consolidation of human services issue. As someone that believes broadband has to become ubiquitous, this is just one of the reasons why broadband is needed. The smallest doctor's office that can't operate because it has to be able to send x-rays. For libraries that need to access a catalog online. We can add to the argument why it matters and he thinks it matters for the entrepreneur. He is excited to be adding to the reasons why broadband has to be ubiquitous.

Mike O'Connor asked if there is something that we could do as a group to help you or to help this group.

Vijay Sethi said that as we sit down to draft recommendations, he hopes we address this, so he hopes that the debate will unfold in the next few months. The consolidation of human services will continue to be debated over the next months. As we discuss how this will happen, he would like the task force to stay a part of it.

Rick King indicated that he would like to paraphrase two letters he has and then open the meeting up for public comment. First, a letter from the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools, adding their voice from Northeastern Minnesota, St. Louis, Cook, Itasca counties, that there is a strong interest in broadband services through the

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region. They look forward to working with us to identify shovel ready projects. The letter is from Ron Dicklich. Also an e-mail letter from Steve Downer from the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association which starts out similar to the information that Chris Swanson mentioned. He makes comments and wants to challenge statements made about the municipal model and success. The letter is supportive of the idea that there are municipalities that have been successful. The letter also goes into talking about the state needing to upgrade the electric grid. They asked that their information be placed in the record.

Rick King indicated that he had also received a couple of e-mail and calls. The Star Tribune reporter was at our last meeting. From the article that was published, there was concern about our discussions with the press relative to that reporter's recall. People thought that only the chair would speak for the task force. When people asked questions, the reporter was in the room and wrote down what he heard. It's also possible that the reporter asked people questions during the break. The question was, didn't we agree that this wasn't going to happen. Rick said he doesn't want to spend a whole lot of time on this, but others got calls after the meeting and declined to comment and now they don't feel that the article had balance. Rick went back to what we agreed to, which was that the chair would speak for the group. We did not talk about when the reporter is present at the meeting. That reporter will write what they want. Rick wanted to know if we are reaffirming how to handle or is there any change about people commenting.

Karen Smith said that if there is a reporter in the room it is ok to cite what is said in the meeting but outside of that, they should talk to the chair for official comments. Once the report is submitted than it's ok to speak more openly. It's important to have one spokesperson.

Steve Cawley said there are shades of gray to when you can talk and when you can't. He indicated that this will get complex as far as when we can talk. For example, he participates in other organizations at the state and national level and might be asked for an opinion on broadband stimulus funding. He needs to think about what hat he is wearing.

Rick King indicated that he does not think anything that we discuss prohibits people from making comments in their daily role. There is a gray line. Almost all of our worlds cross. He agrees that we want to use our best judgment. He brought it up for discussion because we had our first scenario.

Mike O'Connor said that he was one of the people that wrote a note to Rick. He got called after the meeting and declined to comment because it was task force stuff. He just wants to know what the rules are until the report is delivered.

Brent Christensen said that we had a wrinkle because the reporter was in the room. If a reporter came up to a task force member to ask for clarification, inside this room that is one thing. Outside of this room it is important to have one line of communication.

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Tom Garrison said that as probably the only ex-reporter in the room, reporters clearly have the right to do their job. He would echo Karen's comments. If they are asking for clarification, that is a fair question and we should respond. But if they want further comment, we should refer to the chair. We want understanding and clarity but we also want to support the chair.

Vijay Sethi said that the key is whether it's an official comment or not. If the reporter is here and there are 3 to 4 of use making comments, if the reporter chooses to quote, that's his prerogative. But if they call and ask for something regarding the task force outside of a meeting, then they should be referred to the chair.

Mary Ellen Wells had one thought on managing the gray; maybe the default is to tell them to talk to our chair; if it clearly is just clarifying that's fine.

Jack Geller indicated that he is with Mike on this. We had agreed that this is an open meeting and a public body. There is no retribution. We are self policing and that is what we agreed to. If you choose to not go along, you don't have to. We were all selected individually by the Governor. It's all in a spirit of good will and trust. Use your best judgment.

Rick King is hearing that we should reaffirm what we agreed to and that we recognize that we all have a professional side. We do not need a motion; the spirit is that we have an agreement. We know we have gray areas to manage.

Rick King asked if there were members of the public that wish to say something to the task force.

Eric Lampland, president of Lookout Point Communications, a company that provides fiber to the home, indicated that he would like to address the task force. He has a lot of comments but will submit his prepared comments in a letter since we are running late. He was asked by many to make comments today. First thing, the reason why he was asked is there is a certain amount of prejudice that is coming from the task force. He would like to share that perception with the task force. People that have come to the task force to talk about the type of data and comments that came from Connected Nation. There are concerns about Connected Nation and their data conclusions. They say 92% have access, higher than any they have seen. They say Minnesota has higher download speeds. Sample size of approximately 200,000 tests since November 2008. Minnesota has the fortune of having several providers that far exceed the average in terms of download speed. If those are the kinds of data that you are relying on, be careful. Connected Nation has a reputation nationwide, supported by newspaper articles and bloggers, that does not necessarily serve them well. Kentucky has filed complaints with their work and information. Thought that we could approach the conclusions in a different way as it sounds like we are great and he does not think it is true. He does not know anyone who is getting 100 MB symmetrical. The Communications Workers of America say average speed is 2.3Mbps. He understands that you are the Ultra High Speed Broadband task force so hopefully you don't get excited about exceeding a speed of 2.3Mbps. As to their claim about their 200,000 tests and 6.5Mbps speed. The tests come from Ookla. Everyone else uses that speed test data. Many have done speed

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tests around the country and their experience is that they get about 200,000. When we asked Connected Nation where they got 200,000 tests, they would not answer the question. It's interesting that Ookla's tests are public, so surprised that Connected Nation indicated that they have to protect the 200,000 samples. If you look at it in a different way, Connected Nation also notes that 6 of 7 counties have speeds in excess of 6 Mbps and only 3 outstate counties have a speed that high. Where they are getting an average of 6.5Mbps is a stretch. He would like to think that this is a statewide test, but even if we are the urban core, we can't quite make that work. He lives in St. Paul and can't get 6.5 Mbps; the numbers don't make sense. There is a great deal of concern about the task force using and accepting the numbers. There are a lot of other things you can say, but by the time you get done with your report this November the FIOS system out East will connect more people with fiber optics than the number of people we have in the state of Minnesota. AT&T's U-verse is doing the same. In this state we are holding on with competitors that are having financial problems. He was involved with U of MN building out the Internet. At the time that was a nice thing. In rural Minnesota, think about what it would be like to wait 10 to 15 years for the Internet to show up.

Rick King asked if there were others wanting to provide comment.

Christopher Mitchell from the Local Institute for Self-Reliance addressed the task force. He remembers listening to the House Telecommunications Committee discuss the bill that created this task force. During that discussion, the sentiment among the representatives was to remove the term "Ultra" from the title because it would look foolish in coming years when the speeds discussed today were relatively slow. However, the title with the word "ultra" in it ultimately was retained because of its importance. This task force was not conceived to discuss broadband. It was carefully crafted to discuss ultra high-speed broadband. When existing providers presented their services at a past meeting, only Comcast and only in the metro region discussed services offered that could be called "high-speed." While this is not unexpected in that the task force must understand what is presently available, he hopes the focus will return to "ultra high-speed." The reality for private providers is that offering ultra high-speed services is an expensive proposition in the metro region and a fantasy in rural areas. Private providers must make investments that will provide a solid return for investors. We have dealt with this same problem in the past when our elected leaders recognized the only way to connect the entire country with electricity and phone service was to encourage publicly owned infrastructure via cooperatives, utilities, and municipal systems. As we move forward, we must recognize that the private sector does not have the means or the incentive to provide the fastest available broadband everywhere in Minnesota. Local governments must be allowed to invest in the networks they need to drive economic development and to take advantage of modern technology.

Bill Coleman, with Community Technology Advisors was the next person to address the task force. He indicated that he has been advising communities for eight years on his own. He was with Onvoy and the State of Minnesota before that. He is glad that the task force and the Connected Nation results have stirred a discussion of broadband statewide. He's seen a lot of blogs and discussions. There is not a central voice, so they formed the Minnesota Broadband Coalition ([www.mnbroadbandcoalition.com](http://www.mnbroadbandcoalition.com)). They looked around and saw documentation and saw Blandin with a vision and



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principles. It doesn't cost to join, if you agree with the vision and principles, it's a good way to gather and post.

Rick King asked for any other members of the public wanting to speak. We'll get to the 3 minute rule as an average, thanks to the last two speakers.

With no other members of the public indicating they wanted to speak, Rick King indicated that he would like to move on to the panels to stay relatively on time. Rick indicated that the panels today were primarily organized by Tom Garrison and Robyn West and turned it over to Tom Garrison.

Tom Garrison indicated that they will start first with the county discussion and asked Vijay Sethi to do the introductions.

### **County Perspectives**

- **Gary Shelton, Interim County Administrator, Scott County, MN**

Vijay Sethi indicated that there are two experts from the Minnesota counties who will present metro and rural perspectives. Gary Shelton is with Scott County and has been there for 31 years. He has been involved in all aspects of county government. He started in the sheriff's office, served as IT director, CFO, and now is the Interim county administrator. He has been involved in broadband connectivity for about 12 to 15 years.

Rick King indicated that we will have the two speak and then open it up for questions.

Gary Shelton. Refer to PowerPoint: [Scott Count Broadband \(Fiber\) Approach](#)

- **Danna Mackenzie, Information Systems Director, Cook County, MN**

Vijay Sethi then introduced the next speaker, Danna Mackenzie, IT Director for Cook County

Danna Mackenzie indicated she has 15 years of experience in doing projects on the ground. She comes from a slightly different vantage point than Scott County and she is in awe of all the things they can do in Scott County. She has been involved in rural connectivity issues since 1994 when counties got 56k interconnectivity. They were unique in the state in that they checked out keys to the community members so they could get into the community center and use the Internet. She is involved with bringing in connectivity and trying to serve all. Back in 1994 and 1995, they started to see progress with the extension service, libraries and schools. For citizens that was not access. They are a model of what is more typical in rural areas. Danna then described the process they went through. No one was willing to provide service in Grand Marais. They spent 6 months doing dog and pony shows to demonstrate the importance of the Internet. It's hard when you do not have anything to show anyone. Many people had a hard time understanding why their business needed an email address. They asked them to pony up \$50 on speculation and got dozens of businesses to sign up. They would buy the monthly issue of Lake Superior magazine and count the e-mail addresses and within 2 years, they had 90 – 95 % of their businesses with email addresses. Had tons of

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evidence to convince MR.net that they were worthy of federal dollars to get grant money up there. As it turned out, they were one of the more successful nodes. Then they had to convince Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) and they gave support. They had to talk to the county about the county revolving loan fund and convince them that they were a good risk. In the end, they were able to make all of those points. Danna said that her point is that there were a diverse number of sources that were available to a group of people wanting to get this done. They hope as the dust settles that the tool bag is there and the funding for us to get things done.

Now Danna said she would take off her citizens hat and put on the IS director hat. Because of the scale of the next generation, she sees greater need for government voice and because we see greater need for government involvement where private industry is not going. Cook County is involved to define the scope and the cost of the project to bring broadband to the entire county. We are not looking for a government owner, but partnering with other entities and using what we have. Looking for a system that keeps jobs and service locally. What have we defined as our unmet needs? We do not have access to any true broadband in their county, no dual paths. We are putting more vital functions on these wires, especially with the consolidation of human services. We have a single path of fiber up the North Shore. If that goes out, we lose all 911, no Internet, no credit card transactions, no access to deputies, no cell service. Only have one path in and out. We have identified that a failover path is important. It is important for government to be involved in finding a solution. There is little local accountability by the local providers. Have problems, on the Gunflint Trail they've lost their phone connection many times in the last year. There was a doctor providing consulting services in providing care to a person and they lost the connections and had to find someone who had a satellite access. The reasons she is mentioning this is that it is hard for local providers to keep up and we want to maintain accountability in such a remote area and have that accountability closer to the source. We've also identified diversifying our economy as a need because fishing and timber are not going to last. We are in the unique position as the stewards of our portion of the BWCA so we need to diversify our economy in a low impact way on the environment. We need tools for schools and businesses. We need critical health services for our residents and visitors. And, we want our children to move home, but they are waiting until broadband comes.

Finally, Danna said she was asked to talk about hopes and feedback for the task force. They do not feel their voice is being told in the product delivered by Connected Nation. She views their map with skepticism. The (Connected Nation's) map is 22 MB and it took her 20 minutes to download at her home. Her basic feedback is that the task force should acknowledge that ultra high speed broadband is important to all citizens even though not everyone sees it today. It will be the case in less than 5 years and it takes that long to get. She feels insulted that they use 756Kbps to assess the entire state when the metro area gets 3 to 10Mbps. She asks that the number be reconsidered. Danna hopes that some infrastructure money shakes out of this deal some place. It is the job of local government to respond to its citizens. Incumbents are not providing and should be or else local governments should be empowered.

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Rick King indicated that we have about 5 minutes for questions. Rick asked Gary Shelton to comment on or give us an idea about the number of private companies running over Scott County's fiber and also the type of bonds used.

Gary Shelton indicated they have two private parties now. One provides primarily dark fiber to business. The other is a broadband provider that uses the fiber to transport. They are using the network as a pass-through. There are two that are involved and we have agreements with Jaguar to do the maintenance. The state runs the network. We issued bonds, county capital improvement bonds and also some 800 MHz money.

Rick King asked if there are any private enterprises using the fiber.

Tim Lovaasen asked who is paying for the bonds, the citizens of the county.

Gary Shelton answered yes.

Tim Lovaasen asked who is taking care of the residents that are unserved or underserved? How do we get to the folks that Danna is talking about and it's not cost effective to go there? How are you going to do that and who is paying?

Gary Shelton indicated that the project was not geared toward local residential customers. It was geared to government and schools. The reason why they put in substantially more fiber and brought in private providers was to build an open network to help them serve the end users. They are trying to provide an infrastructure backbone that can move it forward. They were approached by other private entities, trying to hook into it. Where that will go he does not know. He doesn't think it is the county's role to be the ISP to the end user. Trying to facilitate infrastructure. Can we get there with private providers, yes we can.

Dan McElroy had two questions. Can you isolate the cost of the fiber ring separate from the 800 MHz and is it being paid for from the cost savings or is there a property tax expense?

Gary Shelton indicated that \$3.8 million was there for the fiber backbone and the capital leases. General obligation bonds funded the fiber ring and the bonds are paid for entirely from the savings. The state is providing the equipment. There is no cost to taxpayers.

Dan McElroy asked if this included the Mankato ring.

Craig Taylor said this could truly level the playing field. In the last slide you say remove all the obstacles and barriers. What were those barriers?

Gary Shelton said we don't know all the barriers. What they see are limits to governmental agencies and some of the franchising seems to limit what is out there. There's been no across the board study. The proper approach is to level the playing field by getting rid of the barriers. What they believe is the proper approach is to allow people to compete whether it is public or private.

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Jen Hegna asked what kind of innovation have you seen.

Gary Shelton said they have identified 28 IT projects to move forward. VoIP project that could be done, interconnected with Dakota County to share services. They are sharing some human services. Dakota County does their Medicaid billing. Moving forward with a 311 system. Created a disaster recovery site that is being used by all entities within the group. The reason that the Mankato piece could be put in there is that they only paid 20 % of the cost.

JoAnne Johnson stated that she has worked with Danna over a decade and she has never met a person that can do more with less. In listening to the contrast with Cook and Scott counties, we are talking about getting a Cadillac versus a Ford, but Danna does not even have bus service. JoAnne thanked them both for coming.

Task Force took a 5 minute Break

Rick King turned to Tom Garrison to introduce the next panel.

### **City Perspectives**

- **Steve Mielke, City Administrator, Lakeville**

Tom Garrison indicated that the perspective is from 3 different localities around the state. There is no one size fits all. To save time, he referred the task force members to the bio sheet distributed for each speaker's background. First up is Steve Mielke, City Administrator, Lakeville.

Steve Mielke said that his job is to work on policy and business and economic development issues and share things that he's heard. Refer to PowerPoint: [Lakeville's Approach to Broadband](#)

Tom Garrison introduced the next speaker, Jeff O'Neil

- **Jeff O'Neill, City Administrator, Monticello**

Jeff O'Neil thanked the task force for inviting him back. Refer to PowerPoint: [City of Monticello – FiberNet Monticello](#)

- **Ruthe Batulis, Eagan Tech Task Force**

Ruthe Batulis, President of the Dakota County Chamber of Commerce.

She said she serves the members of Dakota County Regional Chamber of Commerce. Eagan is the 8<sup>th</sup> largest city with 6,000 jobs created between 2000 and 2004, those are knowledge worker jobs. They want to remain a job magnet and need broadband technology in place to grow. Our Eagan technology group met and saw they needed greater speed; they have Blue Cross, Intertech, Thomson Reuters, North West Airlines (now Delta), and community business nodes. They have savvy users. They have consulted with Gartner, mapped their connectivity, and discussed best practices. They

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have hosted tech overviews; they were a field hearing location for the telecommunications committee. They conducted a survey in 2006 and 5,000 respondents said that connections were too slow. In the 2007 survey, 88% had high speed and 75% said redundancy and offsite data storage. In the 2008 survey, 71% said they were interested in the city pursuing upgraded broadband services. That is why they are involved. Residents and businesses have shown increased interest over the years. Businesses want employees to be able to work from home with the same speeds. Businesses feel that safety is an issue without redundancy. They have heard from site selecting experts that locations are not considered data ready if they do not have redundant paths. They have studied reports calling for significant higher bandwidth. You can dispute the statistics or come up with actionable public policy to move forward. To do nothing is not an option. Government and industry working together can achieve better broadband. They urge the task force to set some high standards. Encourage the task force to determine what people need that they don't have. How can your business grow and expand with a world class connection?

Tom Garrison opened the panel for questions

Peg Werner said that as a task force what we are trying to do is get different views. What has struck her about today is that for our report and business chapter she knew that broadband is an economic development tool. The comments today are that the lack of it will keep businesses from coming so the lack of it is detrimental to economic development. That is what she took away.

Jack Geller had two questions. For Jeff O'Neil, some view a city referendum as a barrier and we have talked about getting rid of barriers. You used the referendum as a mandate or green light. Where do you stand on having a municipal referendum before a municipal decision? For Steve Mielke, you talked about pushing broadband out to home based businesses but the project that you talked about was around an industrial park and air park which has nothing to do with home-based businesses.

Jeff O'Neill said that the 65% vote required seemed to be a barrier or insurmountable, but it did not turn out that way. He thinks there is some reason to have a vote but 50% is probably more reasonable. That again is for the telephone switch of the triple play. Having less of a barrier and that threat of a popular vote will influence existing providers to do a better job.

Steve Mielke agreed that it was a departure from the BTTTF report and we should look at the whole community as a model. You would be going from no fiber and looking at the areas that seem most right and those of the highest return, and if that seems feasible to go to the community.

Rick King said he is looking at a list that has fiber to the home, popular range from under a \$1,000 to \$10,000 if during the process have you done due diligence with any of those.

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Jeff O'Neil said that in the feasibility study they looked at the survey data and compared take rates in comparison to their response to that data versus those responses to the data. If it worked in that area, it did a take rate comparison on real life situations.

Tim Lovaasen said that revenue bonds are not like general obligation bonds.

Jeff O'Neil responded that if there is a default in the payment of the revenue bonds, then the coverage goes with the bond holder themselves. It was stated that the city itself was not responsible.

Tim Lovaasen said that what you're telling me is that if the city goes out and does this, but it does not turn out, there is no impact?

Jeff O'Neil responded that there is an impact, it affects the cities bond rating, but that does not last forever. That threat was part of the disclosure.

Tom Garrison noted the difference between general obligation bonds versus revenue bonds. With revenue bonds, money is collected through investors and there is no obligation. General obligation bonds have the full faith and credit and the city has to take funds and this one required a vote as well. Water system, sewer system are general obligation bond funded.

Question: Monticello had some of the highest communication costs. What can that be attributed to.

Jeff O'Neill said that they had one provider offering services for many years.

Dan McElroy asked if it was in your local dialing area size. Had there been a referendum in the local dialing area?

Jeff O'Neill indicated that there had been in the past.

Rick King said he would like to make one observation. We should ask panelists to consider policy matters from their perspective and ask them to give us a page of their advice from their perspective. He would like to see this done going forward.

Tom Garrison said he sent out a short instruction list for what they asked the panelists to address. Tom will send the list to others.

The task force took a 5 minute break.

Rick King indicated that we will do half of our outside perspective panel and then break for lunch and do the second speaker after lunch.

## **Outside Perspectives**

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- **Geoff Daily, a DC-based technology journalist, and author of the broadband blog [App-Rising.com](http://App-Rising.com)**

Geoff Daily indicated that in the interest of full disclosure, his blog is supported by all ends of the spectrum.

Geoff indicated that he was very happy to be here. He's a Minnesotan by birth from Plymouth, MN. The opportunity we have here is to put Minnesota at the leading end of the states. He is a technology journalist by trade and has a broad reach and understanding regarding the use of the networks. His blog is sponsored by AT&T and Lafayette Systems, so neutral. He is not saying what one company wants and trying to find a middle ground. He believes that there is a middle ground. Co-chair of Broadband coalition. He lives in DC but is a Minnesotan through and through. To frame his remarks, first to define Ultra High Speed Broadband. He asked the task force to raise their hands if we can get everything that we need with at least 1 Mbps per home? At least 10Mbps? At least 100 Mbps? At least 1 Gbps? Higher than that?

How he defines broadband is that the base level is 1 Mbps. High speed is 10 Mbps and with that you can do everything on the Internet today. Ultra is 100 Mbps and above, that's how he thinks about it. Remember, broadband is infrastructure and you build infrastructure for what you need 5, 10, 15 years down the road not what you need today. He believes that we will need 100 MB in five years or less. He admits that we do not need 100 Mbps to the home today. They don't know what to do with 100 Mbps today.

Why do we need capacity? It comes down to video. Two way interactive is moving. In home doctor's visit, in home tutor. Today the broadband we have cannot support HD video. And HD is not the limit, ultra HD is 16 times the resolution of HD where 120 Mbps is needed in an ultra HD world. Need to understand that what is happening with the development of screens where we are going to be able to print screens like paper and if you want that you will need the HD.

Japan has said in the past year ultra HD will be their broadcast and within the next 5 to 10 years all will want ultra HD. There is going to be a need for this capacity. Remember it is not only downstream but upload speed. Do we want to be like a country that is import only or do we want to export too. The only way that happens is with equal upload/download speeds and we need networks to handle simultaneous usage. Reliability, what happens when everyone turns on a camera that is connected, will the network fall apart? They need to be evolved and when you raised your hands, once he went past 100 Mbps hands started dropping fast. It's all video and do we need more. He'd like to have whatever infrastructure we have in place we can scale. He is a believer that we need fiber; that is the end game goal. Long term it is a full fiber nation. We need everyone to understand it is the gold standard or the best. Every other technology has limitations, fiber does not. Right now in the lab, 50Mbps is the fastest they are getting with DSL. Fiber you can hold all the Internet traffic, it can evolve and all you do is swap out the hardware.

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Think about it in another way. The Internet is a bunch of fiber connected and broadband is the access to this fiber network. With fiber you are just bringing the full power of the Internet to your front door. Believe that fiber is the infrastructure to the future. Another way to think about it, to get 100 Mbps it is DOCIS 3.0 cable or fiber. Wireless cannot do it. DSL can't do it. Without fiber you won't have competition, you will have a DOCSIS 3.0 monopoly. If you have fiber, there is so much bandwidth that you can have competition for services over the fiber pipe because it has so much room. Donny Smith of Jaguar has the only open access network in the country.

Where does wireless fit? In the near term it is competitive. But you need to think of it as complementary and not competitive. Think of the analogy of wireless as an extension cord. You wouldn't power your house with an extension cord but they are complementary, very useful and we want both. A believer that we can't be technology neutral. Look at all the money invested in BPL. It has uses but not realistic in delivery. We can't wait around for technology. It's like saying, let's not have cars because some day we are going to have flying cars. DSL can't deliver what we ultimately want.

The ultimate goal is DOCIS 3.0 to every house, fiber to every house and wireless everywhere. That is where we should be going. That is his vision. If we can get there, we will be better off than other countries. Having two wirelines will be better. Other countries do not have options.

Moving to assessing the task at hand, there are two main points: get united and get aggressive. He went to Blair Levin's presentation on broadband and economic stimulus. Because we had no national broadband strategy, we could not get any more money in the federal economic stimulus plan. We may have had more money for broadband if the industry were united. We need to be aggressive because the rest of the world is not waiting. The most aggressive goal he has heard is 100 Mbps by 2015. Korea just came out last week saying they are getting 1 Gbps by 2012. Korea is putting out the goal and aggressively moving forward. They are putting money there. It doesn't happen by magic. You do not get the benefits right away; it takes awhile to build and then to see the benefits.

Every day we don't set a goal we are further behind. We need to think aggressively. It is a complicated issue because we have short term and long term goals. Long term is to bring ultra high speed broadband everywhere. You can't snap your fingers to get it. If someone had the check it would still take 5 years to build it out. But at the same time we have to be careful not to set ourselves up and say some areas deserve more than others. We can't afford to leave anyone behind. We have seen what has happened with that in the past when a town was bypassed by the interstate highway system or the railroad. It is not ok to say you are just going to disappear.

Short term there is a balancing act to get everyone online. There is value to getting everyone online at some level. How are we spending the stimulus money? First you have to realize that the money won't go far. Everyone wants it for their community. There will likely be more federal money coming. Some would argue that Minnesota should miss out because they are being proactive on broadband. He would argue that Minnesota should get more because we are aggressive. We have the broadband task force, the mapping project. You should reward those that are moving forward. If you can



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come together and say a project is worthwhile regardless of who does it, you are better off. Whatever you recommend and pick it will influence the money that you get in the future. These are all pieces of a larger puzzle. Establish pilots and public awareness campaigns to increase demand. The other great thing is that if we have about 50% penetration, but can bump that up to 70%, you are making the pie bigger. He highly encourages that. We also need more data and better mapping. Go in and get a baseline and see the savings that can be realized; track market demand to show we have this many customers. We need to know how we are using broadband today. Need more granular maps and knows there are issues on the maps. He saw that Jaguar isn't on the map. Take a nuanced approach that is tech aware. Get everyone to point. No one company is doing it. All should have the opportunity to upgrade their network. If you are a new provider, fast track partial loan. We really do need everyone that is ready and willing able to deploy. If the municipal goes out and fails, the network is still there and if you fail I can come in and buy it cheap. There is a lot to do but the benefits are endless. We can improve if goals are clear and we are united in our message. He said that he can be a resource for the task force and would be happy to assist in any way.

Break for lunch 12:45 – 1:10

Outside Perspective Continues

Tom Garrison introduced the final speaker from VA Tech University. In the interest of full disclosure, Tom noted that Design Nine is a consultant to the city of Eagan.

- **Andrew Cohill, President & CEO of Design Nine, Blacksburg, VA**

Andrew Cohill – President of Design Nine, Blacksburg, VA – Reference PowerPoint: [Broadband and Communities Jobs, Economic Development, and Infrastructure](#)

Tom Garrison made the panel available for questions.

Jack Geller stated that in some way or other both of you made a case for equity in broadband access in rural and urban areas and he is assuming that meant speed as well so that rural isn't left behind. And Andrew also made the analogy of broadband being like a road. If we use that analogy, we do have roads everywhere, but not all roads are equal. Some roads are autobahns and some are still gravel. Are you advocating that the autobahns need to be everywhere even where you have a gravel road now.

Andrew Cohill responded that the good news is that fiber is a lot less expensive than a road and we should build fiber to everyone.

Geoff Daily added that the great thing about fiber is that you can build and don't need to worry about adding lanes later. He would also argue that the rural areas may need the speed more. They are on then on the exact same playing field and we would encourage more people to move there.

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Jack Geller noted that in this state we have about 5 million people with close to 900,000 people living outside the boundaries of a city or town. That is where access is most dire. He is intrigued with the idea that we can serve those people with the same speed.

Andrew Cohill said that we are doing it today. Donny Smith of Jaguar has fiber in an 8 home town. It isn't going to be easy. We want to get everyone on line today. In terms of long term goal, we want to get everyone speed.

Brent Christensen asked how many people outside the town have fiber.

Geoff Daily said he is unsure of the details. At some point you have to ask where do you draw the line because you can't make a viable business model on going to only unserved areas. When building networks, you have to balance with more and less dense areas.

Andrew Cohill said that Geoff is making a good point. It's demand aggregation. It's a little counterintuitive. It's less financially risky to say we are going to build fiber everywhere than to do it in little islands. You have more customers buying more services.

Geoff Daily said there are some advantages in rural areas as you don't have to dig up something already developed. Some business people prefer to serve rural areas because you get greater take rates

Brent Christensen asked what is the definition of everywhere.

Geoff Daily said you want it to every last home and every last structure that has a person living in it.

Dick Sjogren said that Andrew Cohill talked about the case for rural fiber. He said you want to have the local governments be the anchor tenants. But an earlier speaker said counties and cities should build their own networks. If cities build out themselves, how are you going to make a business out of serving those 900,000. It's a much tougher business if you only serve the individuals in the community. Isn't that going against the public good, government skimming off the cream?

Andrew Cohill said that you've raised a good point and a problem we run into all the time. Some of the communities that built government-only networks are beginning to convert to add businesses. Some local education networks are not the best as it increases costs for everyone because you have multiple networks. What you want is to build a single high performance network that everyone uses. You are absolutely right. Fortunately a lot of governments are figuring that out.

Geoff Daily responded building off of Andrew's comments. With respect to government grants, people say that they will take it and spend it. He has heard of a rural health care that goes out and builds its own network when someone else says, why don't you take the assets that already exist and get them talking to each other. Geoff also said that Andrew made the point that broadband does not just mean Internet access. He is

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working with Lafayette, LA which is building its own network. Everyone will have free access to 100 Mbps symmetrical access to communicate with their neighbors, within their community. Only 20% of the traffic was external, 80% of the traffic is internal to the community. One of the services enabled is a new way of doing PEG access. Anyone in the community can plug in a camera and run a video camera and deliver video to every other home. We've talked about the Internet linking you to the global community, but it may be more important to reinforcing the bond within communities.

Mike O'Connor just wanted to make the comment that it's been a great day listening to these panelists.

Geoff Daily said thank you for the time to come here and speak.

Rick King noted on behalf of everyone, we appreciate your wisdom. We will keep you posted on what we are doing.

### **Discuss and Progress on the Task Force Values**

Rick King indicated that he would like to make a comment and then give people an opinion. First, for all of us here and listening earlier today and in response to the letters read into the record, Rick said he thinks people have slightly misunderstood the task force's connection with the Connected Nation broadband mapping study. Connected Nation was hired by an act of the legislature, a different act than the one that created the task force. We both report to the department of commerce, we are unrelated. The task force is interested in their data. But much like any of the other data points, the data created by Connected Nation is just one of a bunch of them. Some of the public is misunderstanding the connection with them; Connected Nation gave their feedback to the Senate, House, and us. We asked questions and we'll probably see them again when the maps are finalized. But that is our connection with them. Some of us have questions about their methodology and that was raised. It is a good thing to go out and figure out what we have as they are doing. But their work is not directed by this group. Keep that in mind as we go forward. What they are doing is just another piece of data being taken in by this group.

Rick King said that the second part of his thoughts is on the criteria for the shovel ready projects. These are his opinions and thoughts but the will of the group is important. First the shovel ready list, you all have the latest and in the last meeting we decided that we did not want to send it anywhere as it is already in those places since it is a matter of public record. Rick is sure that no one's consideration is that Minnesota won't submit any projects, but that was not the reality of what we were talking about. He thinks about the list and what we were asked by the legislative leaders and then looked at the criteria. The draft criteria on the list are very similar to what we are eventually going to be writing for the report. He is wondering and thinking that this criteria list has everything to do with what we want to recommend and don't think that we can't sort and finalize in a short amount of time. He is suggesting that the criteria is a bigger issue than getting it ready for the end of this meeting. He also has second thoughts about our position on the shovel ready list. The only thing people haven't gotten is our criteria because we have not done that and that we didn't vet or prioritize. The only thing they have is the list so

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that didn't really go the way we wanted it to. Does it make sense to prepare a cover letter and submit to the three entities because they have the list except for the cover letter and they have reminded Rick that they still would like it. The fact, in essence, is that they already have it. The will of the group stands, but he thinks we should submit it with the right cover. Laying that out there and would like some thoughts or reconsideration, we did not vote, but did a show of hands. Everyone speak up as you wish.

Joanne Johnson indicated that she takes exception because we do not have the full list. A lot of people kept their list here at the last meeting after we decided not to submit a list. So you need to make that caveat that there will be more submissions to the list if we choose to put it forward. I don't have a problem then if we do a cover letter with all of the additions and note that we only collected them, we didn't rank or score or write them.

Rick King agreed that JoAnne was right that some people held back their list.

Brent Christensen said that at the very least we need to put forward the categories that we ranked them by (referenced color sheet in packet). It's too bad it got out, understand how it got out and we should still go ahead.

Peg Werner indicated that if we included the categories the task force must make it very clear that those would have been the criteria if we had evaluated them but we didn't. As someone who voted last time that we send the list, she votes that we send them the list.

Rick King noted that this is the criteria list and we have not passed the projects through the list.

Dick Sjoberg said that before we get too far along we have to have some definitions. What is unserved? How do we decide what is unserved. If they don't have 1Gbps are they unserved or if they have 56K are they served? We need to go through the whole list of criteria and have definitions or it is meaningless.

Vijay Sethi asked for clarification, are we are talking about sending the criteria and the ranking.

JoAnne Johnson said she thought we were talking about sending just the list with a cover letter and that we are not ranking.

Rick King said that he was suggesting the list be sent in which is what we were going to do until we decided not to. And JoAnne made the point that the current list is not complete. Brent is talking about the list of criteria and not the ranking. There are a couple of questions which we can deal with.

Vijay Sethi said that within the criteria, unserved was the highest priority. If we are talking about the criteria, are we going to sending the list of prioritization?

Mary Ellen Wells said that as she worked through these types of processes, this is step one and it really isn't ready; it needs more definition and clarity. It needs more careful

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thought of what we mean in order to move forward. She would see holding the criteria so we don't get ahead of ourselves. If we have to we can produce a list and share, but we are far from having clarity. It is unfortunate that the timing is what it is.

Mike O'Connor remarked that in terms of the unvetted list, he is in complete agreement of putting a cover letter on that makes it clear and submitting it. We asked everyone for input for the list, we'll get the list and put a cover letter on. But it seems before we can do criteria, we have to do our whole deliverable, rural versus underserved, definition, all that from the bottom up to have the policy underpinning.

Brent Christensen doesn't disagree with that. He's all for a list that we do not vet but any list that we submit looks like it is vetted. We can't help that it got out.

Jack Geller indicated that he agrees with Mike. There is a larger issue here. There seems to be a misperception and it's growing about the task force. We did not develop a mapping project. There is data and why would we not take data. The list is kind of the same way. It's a mission creep, there's nothing in the legislation for this task force that we do a list. Early on we said, well ok why don't we just be an aggregator. Now maybe we ought to establish criteria. The mission creep continues. At some point, we have to draw the line and say, that isn't what our charge is. If we keep going down this road, we aren't going to get our real work done. Let's take this list, let's make it as complete as we can and let the state and federal government vet the list. We do not have to be more than the aggregator.

JoAnne Johnson said she was going to speak to the same thing as Jack. She does think that this is another case where we are making things complicated. The legislators asked us to create the list and send it over. As far as creation goes, the task force was created by the legislature. If they ask us now to create a list and send it over, we should just create the list and send it over. There is no need to take it farther because the federal language indicates that the feds will make the decisions. We are just talking around in a big circle. If there comes a time when the state has an opportunity to get involved, we look at it then.

Tom Garrison echoed the comments that have been made and moves to reopen the website and complete the aggregation of the list within the next two weeks and then submit to the legislature. Made a motion. Seconded.

Rick King said we have a motion and a second. We closed the web site to soliciting suggestions so he thinks the motion should be corrected to not reopen the website. We should direct what we already have and compile. Tom Garrison agreed. Tom wanted to know if the list of items from the League of Minnesota Cities that was presented in front of the legislature was on the list.

Rick King said we will ask the compiler to be Diane and she will take shovel ready project items from any of us. If it comes to one of the members and the member sends it on, it becomes part of the list.

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Dan McElroy said he is supportive of the motion. He would like to include in the cover letter that the Act does not yet include a role for the states and quote the act. In the current language, the NTIA and RUS will make the decisions. Make it clear in the cover letter that this isn't a bonding bill.

Rick King indicated that the chair would seek several people's advice for the language of the cover letter. Thank you for volunteering.

John Gibbs stated that the Commissioner raised part of what was going through his mind. It probably does behoove us to pay attention to what the legislature did and what is in the law. Some legislators asked us for a list. So there is a difference between what passed as law and what a few legislators have asked us for. He does not think there is a parallel to why we are here and why we were asked for the list. The list is outside this task force's responsibility. It holds the bar higher. If the rationale is we are doing this because the list is out there so we should send it. That is no rationale, if the list is out there, why would we have to send it on?

Peg Werner responded so we can tell them that it is not vetted by us that is why we send it on.

John Gibbs replied that we are sending this to a group that we know is not making any decisions. Instead, the federal agencies are making the decisions. So we are sending the list to these legislators for whatever use they have for it, but are not sending it to the federal government. John stated that he does not support the motion but would like to follow up when it passes for some clear and common understanding of where this is being sent and not sent.

Rick King said that there are two committee administrators and the chairs of those committees who have asked for the list. In addition, there is a person in the Governor's office who has requested the list. So those are the people that would get the list.

John Gibbs asked for clarification that the list would not be going to any federal agencies.

Rick King said it is not his intention nor is it part of the motion to send it to the federal government.

John Gibbs said he thinks this will all be mightily confusing.

Rick King said that the list was requested by the two committee chairs. Subsequent to that, the Governor's office asked for a meeting. None of them care about the federal agencies and who disburses the money is not relevant to their request.

JoAnne Johnson called the question.

JoAnn Hanson asked what is the purpose of the list. Is it just an entire compilation?

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Rick King replied that it is a compilation as we know it. They saw us as one of the groups that might be best able to collect and address it.

Tom Garrison said that the question has been called.

Rick King asked if we are ready to vote.

There was a brief discussion of procedures with the question having been called.

Rick King asked how many people still have a comment.

Steve Cawley said he is not comfortable with sending the list. It is outside the scope of our charge and confuses what we are doing here. It's risky to send as it may have some unintended consequences for our job down the road so he is not supportive of sending the list.

Rick King said he has the original motion which he will summarize. The motion is to within two weeks compile any other pieces of the shovel ready projects that we don't have yet or were in the hands of task force members. Put that list together and a cover letter indicating we have not vetted, prioritized, etc. and reiterate that our reading of the law is that the decisions will be made by federal agencies. We will submit that to the two committee members and the Governor's office. We just need an up or down vote. Show of hands.

All in favor: 11 voting yes. Opposed: 9 voting no.

Rick King noted that the motion carries. We will execute the plan and carefully craft the cover letter that will go with the list. Let's take a ten minute break.

A short break was taken.

**2:15 to 3:00 Task Force Action Items and Plans for Upcoming Meetings**  
**(reference planning calendar)**

Rick King turned the meeting over to Peg Werner to discuss the outstate meetings for this summer.

Peg Werner referred to her handouts. The pieces on the top are those that have been decided: in June we will be in Grand Rapids, in July Mankato and in August in Fergus Falls. She would like to make the dates firm. The subgroup put out a schedule of what they think and are asking all of you to hear about what you'd like to see. There is a list of things they'd like to talk about. The logistical questions are at the bottom. They are interested in the number of people that will come the night before so they can reserve a block of hotel rooms. Also, how many people will come so they can reserve a large enough meeting space.

Jack Geller indicated that he is pumped that we are going out there. Peg, Brent, JoAnne and he had a brief discussion at lunch and decided a few things. One concern that they

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have with the rough agenda is having a reception the night before and who do you invite. Are we sending out signals by that? So they are kind of leaning to just saying that there is going to be some local sponsor and that local entity can choose to host an event the night before or not. The task force members would be guests. We can let the local folks make the decision and if they are not keen on a reception the night before, then we can start the meeting off in the morning. Some public notification would have to be in place as it is an open meeting and will be an official meeting of the task force. So the regular requirements would be in place. Other than that, the three of us felt comfortable sitting down and creating a format of what the meetings would be like so that they would be more similar than dissimilar. Two primary reasons for being in Greater Minnesota: to share the work of the task force and second, to listen to the community, their feedback, concerns. So, the four of them are going to sit down and try to create the format in what the day will be like in order to make it similar and try to get a local sponsor. If there is a reception the night before, they thought the local sponsor ought to do the invite list.

Peg Werner went over the proposed agenda. Coffee hour would be an opportunity but if you didn't want to arrive until 9:00 that would be ok. For the first morning session, Brent had an idea.

Brent Christensen said that what he had in mind was that we're there to listen to the community and tell them what is going on. We could start out with Rick getting up and doing a brief overview on what is going on, knowing that some of our audience is likely to be local elected officials, and expanding the amount of time that we have for public input. What he would suggest is if this looks like we are heading in the right direction, the subgroup can continue working on this and come back with a full proposal.

Dan McElroy indicated that he was hoping to have a panel which indicates what broadband looks like in that area. So it would be a little more of a presentation than questions. Brent Christensen indicated that he likes the idea.

Peg Werner said that we are then looking at the 9:00 to 10:00 hour and a panel of local people and then discussion or Q&A from the audience.

Karen Smith said that she was not sure what the purpose was of setting up the rural meetings. To her, so far we've had speakers that represented rural and metro Minnesota and businesses. She would like to make sure it flows with what we need to accomplish. We don't want to make exceptions just because we are in that community if it does not relate. If we want to do something local, we should keep it short. She is not sure what the reason is for being there other than to have a meeting that they can attend in person.

Jack Geller had a twofold response. The reason initially is to recognize that we have a fair number that are on the task force and are driving in every time and it is much easier to metro people to come and engage so how about some equity. If you want to view as a token, giving people in rural Minnesota a more accessible opportunity to attend a meeting. We picked a handful of locations. He agrees it cannot completely dominate the activity as we are going to be busy.



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**Approved Meeting Minutes**  
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**9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**



Peg Werner said that we need to think of these locations as areas, not towns. It is important to get our message out to elected local officials. One other thing that they talked about is bring in North Dakota people to see what they are doing.

Tom Garrison said if you think of our report being due in November and we need to take votes and decide and the writing, as we look at the schedule. We could just do the work that we have on paper. It is beneficial to let outstate areas hear our discussions and debate on contentious issues. His last comment is that there are a number of folks that are experts in rural broadband that could be brought in.

Rick King said that he has gone back and forth on whether we have a regular agenda or not. We are going to need a chunk of the meeting to do the report work. We will totally allocate all of the September and October meetings for that. Some will be debate work and some will be writing work. But we are going to have to be doing some of that work over the summer. The question is, with going on the road, what sort of special flavor do we give to the meetings? Having a little more events takes away from the regular meeting. Important that we take the group around in that it gives us credibility in regards to this being a statewide report. But we can certainly have a regular meeting that can be preceded by something earlier that some or all of us can attend.

Brent Christensen said that the only thing we really need to know now is the logistics, the dates. If we take Dan's and Rick's comments, we need to know how many people are going to come in beforehand so we can secure the rooms. We don't have to know the meeting agenda today.

Rick King said that we have the three places and now we have assigned a location to a date. I'd like to nail that down today. Anyone that wants to feed comments can get those to Peg, JoAnne, Jack or Brent. Rick also mentioned that Blandin has offered help if we want to do a program. Any other instructions that we want to give to the group or should they just come back?

JoAnne Johnson noted to Karen that a lot of this discussion happened while you were out because of your surgery. As we get closer to the report deadline we all agreed that we may need to meet more than once a month. This committee has a good handle on this.

Rick King asked if there was anything else that the task force wanted the subgroup to do.

Tom Garrison asked for an e-mail to the group about the details on the dates being locked in and getting to the questions at the bottom of the email so that individuals can respond about needing a room, etc.

Rick King indicated that it is going to be important if we decide we are going to do something the night before we need a count because if there is a quorum of the task force we will have to notice as a meeting.

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Jack Geller asked if we are in Mankato and the Mankato Chamber of Commerce is going to host so it isn't the task force's event, does it apply.

Rick King said we should just advertise it. The main thing is if there is something the night before we are going to need a good head count.

Steve Cawley said that it is his understanding that we are not doing video for these meetings.

Rick King responded that is correct. The local people might decide that they want to do a local broadcast but that would be a local decision. Rick asked the subgroup if they had enough feedback.

Peg Werner said that if people have questions or comments especially regarding the time needed for a regular meeting to send those in.

Steve Cawley indicated that it is important for us to run a normal meeting and get things done.

Rick King turned to planning for upcoming meetings and indicated that for the March meeting, the health care panel is shaping up well.

Mary Ellen Wells wanted to know if there is a way for the health care panel to go earlier because of panelist members' time constraints.

Rick King indicated we would have the health care panel at 10:00 and asked if the speaker from DEED could be at 12:30.

Dan McElroy indicated that he would not be the speaker. It will be Bob Isaacson.

Rick King said we will put the values discussion on there but it won't be in a position to be finalized. Rick asked if we have nailed down a speaker from the CWA.

Tim Lovaasen note the things that he's handed out and what was available at Sen. Klobuchar's December roundtable and indicated that he is not sure how much more someone could add.

Rick King said that we will take off the agenda and will also drop the Gates Foundation. We will discuss some more of the chapters. Rick noted that we have moved the April meeting to the 24<sup>th</sup> and we will be here at Inver Hills. Mike O'Connor, Steve Cawley and John Stanoch are organizing the High Tech & Business User Panel. Dick Sjoberg will check with the One Economy speaker and see if that works out for April. We have left the May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting open. There was some discussion about whether we have gotten what we need for panels or if we need a panel on users, consumers, or an update on international stuff. The April panel will be more of the business user. Do we want a panel of more consumer users? The May meeting would be our opportunity. What is the will of the group on a consumer type panel?

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Dan McElroy asked what would the purpose be. We could ask the attorney general's office of consumer affairs to see if there are abuses but that gets away from our core mission. He is struggling to know what we would learn.

JoAnne Johnson indicated she would like to hold off on that. She thinks that paying attention to comments from the blogs like Mike's urban users group and Bill Coleman's new Minnesota coalition would give us the information we need without having to pull together a panel.

Tom Garrison said that off of the task force Web site we do want to hear from consumers and what their needs and experiences are. We do want to hear and could put a link off the web site. If there is anything that requires a speaker, we can see.

Jack Geller said that someone coming in front of the task force and saying how they use it versus having some data about how they use the Internet, the data is more compelling. PEW does good research. Rural Policy Institute does, but not sure if they are doing anything this year. If we have some really good data that can give us the trajectory of consumer behavior that would be very valuable. Having someone give their opinion is not very helpful.

Rick King said that we will give some thought to the consumer panel and not make that decision today. He thinks a good chunk of the May meeting is the knotty things we need to get to in the report. Rick also said that he isn't sure if we explicitly said this, but to be clear, we are not doing anything with the criteria list. We will build off of that list when we pick up the values discussion. He asked if there were any other points that anyone on the task force wanted to bring up.

Chris Swanson asked if we were doing video recordings of these meetings and are we doing that for the meetings in Greater Minnesota?

Mike O'Connor said that there are video recordings of these and a link on the web site to the last two.

Rick King asked if we have the May site.

Anne Losby indicated that we don't have video scheduled for May and we still have the Eagan fire station reserved.

Rick King asked to see if we can get this venue for May. If we want video recorded in June, July and August, then we will want to ask our hosts to pick that up. Let's have the subgroup discuss.

Tom Garrison said that MACTA has all of the local providers in the state as members and can enlist their aid.

Rick King asked if there were any other items. He said that good data came in today. He thanked the task force for their active participation. Motion to adjourn. Approved.

Meeting adjourned at 3:12 p.m.