

BUFFALO COUNTY MINUTES

Committee of the Board: Broadband Subcommittee

Date of the Meeting: Wednesday May 5, 2021

Chair Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. at the Buffalo County Courthouse County Board Room in Alma, Wisconsin, and TEAMS.

Board Members Present: Mr. Max Weiss, Mr. David Danzinger (TEAMS), Mr. Brad Schmidtknecht, Ms. Gina Tomlinson, Ms. Christy Berger, Ms. Tina Anibas.

Others Present for All or Parts of the Meeting: Mr. Steve Schiffli, Mary Jo LaBain, Sam Odegard, Sarah Odegard

Public Comments regarding Agenda Items: Mary Jo LaBain, Sam Odegard, and Sarah Odegard spoke to the need for broadband services in the Town of Mondovi. The lack of quality service requires them to purchase sub-standard service from multiple vendors to receive marginal services. The lack of service prevents the residents from attending online school for children and adults, prevents effective use of online medical services, and restricts business. A letter from Tom Fedie, Mondovi Realtor, was presented.

Review/Discussion/Action – Minutes of the Previous Meeting: A motion was made, by Mr. Danzinger to approve the minutes of March 11, 2021 meeting, seconded by Mr. Schmidtknecht. Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Town of Cross Broadband Update – Mr. Schiffli briefed the committee that he has had two meetings on the Town of Cross Project in preparation for the May Finance meeting. Ms. Tomlinson from CTC updated the committee on their role in the project and the recent public meeting in Cross where the public was decisively in favor of the project.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Town of Mondovi, Broadband Update- Mr. Schmidtknecht briefed the committee that on the status of the project. Ms. Berger of NTEC provided a project overview and cost estimates. A discussion was held on project costs, public meeting, and funding. A motion was made by Mr. Danzinger and seconded by Mr. Schmidtknecht to bring to the economic development committee support for the Mondovi project.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Broadband PSC Funding Update – we are waiting for 2021-22 award release notification. Ms. Tomlinson briefed the committee on the American Rescue Plan Funding. Steve indicated he has discussed earmarking those funds for future broadband projects with Ms. Hansen.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Broadband Industry Update – Mr. Schiffli advised he is coordinating for Starlink for the May County Board meeting.

Review/Discussion/ ~ Chairperson Report – Mr. Schmidtknecht reported for Mr. Jost, who was not able to attend the meeting but expressed that the committee should gain understanding of the TDS Fiber project in the Town of Alma. Inquiries should be made to see if anything can be done to support maximizing the length of the fiber line in the Town of Alma.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Next Meeting Date and Time. TBD.

Motion by Mr. Danzinger to adjourn. Motion carried. 6:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen S. Schiffli, Economic Development Manager