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Name of Organization: Broadband Task Force

Date and Time of Meeting: November 21, 2016
9:00 AM

Place of Meeting: State Capitol Building, Annex
The Guinn room, 2nd Floor
101 N. Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

This meeting will be video conferenced to the following location:

Grant Sawyer State Office Building
555 East Washington Avenue
Suite 4406
Las Vegas, NV 89101

MINUTES

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Ms. Kuhn called the meeting to order at 9:03 am.

Members Present: Caleb Cage, Jeff Fontaine, Denise Inda, Britta Kuhn, Randy Robison, Scott Gutierrez, Daphne Deleon for Dr. Kim Vidoni, Randy Brown, Tom Neiva.

Members Excused: Kevin Judice, Todd Radtke, Shannon Rahming

Guests Present: Brent Legg, Lou Holland, Lindsey Harmon, Brian Lieder

Staff Present: Debra Petrelli

A quorum was declared.

- II. Public Comment** (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item.)

There was no public comment.

- III. Approval of the Minutes From the October 20, 2016 Task Force Meeting**
(For possible action)

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

It was pointed out to change the Department of Education (DOE) to Department of Transportation (DOT) on page 4 of the October 20, 2016 minutes. Ms. Inda made a motion to approve the minutes, as amended. Mr. Cage seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- IV. Remarks and Announcements from the Vice Chair**

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Chair Kuhn said with regards to the education component, Ms. Daphne DeLeon on behalf of Dr. Kim Vidoni, would provide a presentation on the Nevada Ready 21 program.

- V. Announcements from Task Force Members and/or Connected Nation**

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Mr. Caleb announced he was happy to be back with the Task Force after extensive traveling in the last month.

- VI. Report from Department of Education – Impact of Broadband in Education; Update on the Nevada Ready 21 Plan**

Daphne DeLeon, Department of Education

Vice Chair Kuhn introduced Daphne DeLeon, a previous Task Force Member who is currently with Department of Education. Ms. DeLeon presented a slide presentation on Nevada Ready 21 (NR21) “*Impact in the Classroom and Beyond.*” She said Senate Bill 515 (SB515) funded the NR21 program. She explained NR21 ensures 24-hour access to a laptop for Nevada middle and high school students with the initial phase targeting middle schools. In addition to providing digital learning devices for each student, the program delivers comprehensive professional development training and support for teachers and administrators as well as improving broadband internet access in schools throughout the state. There are 19,000 Chromebooks in students’ hands and

1,000 Chromebooks in teachers' hands throughout the state. NR21 is premised on three types of support strategy; the first strategy engages and supports teachers by having multi-tier support, the second strategy funds a digital coach at each of the sites, available every day for teachers and students. The third strategy utilizes Chromebooks to use in the initial phase, first round, and provides a robust network, WAN, a minimum of 100kbps/student and WLAN with every instructional space covered, including multipurpose rooms, media labs and libraries. She added the vendor created heat-mapping at different schools to get an idea of coverage and explained it is a graphical representation that gages wireless coverage within a building.

Ms. DeLeon discussed the first of three impacts established by NR21, "Learning Equity" and pointed out how English-Language Learner (ELL) students and teachers often cannot communicate. She explained how digital coaches asked how they could provide equity and access to the learning experience of these students. By using the Google Translate plug-in on the student's Chromebook, access to learning was immediate. She said this resonates in some schools more than others depending on the student diversity. She discussed the next impact using the Chromebook is "inspiring learning." She said this impacts wireless coverage and not just in structural space but also in those spaces where students spend their free time as well as moving from classroom to classroom, because learning and education does not stop in the classroom. She said the last impact is "Learning Beyond the Classroom", which ultimately gives students an instantaneous connection to a world of information and learning they can use to resolve problems 24 hours a day, seven days a week. She pointed out there are six more months in this cohort and believes there will be more and more consistency of impact on students and teachers. She added there are plans for the second cohort in the next biennium to continue to fund schools and find ways to make the program better and possibly more flexible for all school districts.

Ms. Kuhn asked how many Nevada Ready 21 schools are in Nevada. Ms. DeLeon replied there are 23 in Nevada. They are in Carson City, Clark, Churchill, Elko, Lander, White Pine, along with three charter schools in Clark County. Ms. Kuhn asked whether NR21 had received feedback from teachers that students that demonstrated each is better engaged in the education process. Ms. DeLeon replied they are in the process. A survey has gone to students, teachers and parents in each of the schools to determine which of the 21st century skills were the most important for K-12 education. She pointed out there was near unanimity that four specific skills were the most important. They are known as the "Four C's": critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. The current challenge is building the "Four Cs" into K-12 education. Mr. Fontaine commented one advantage to the program is students can check their grades in real time. Ms. Kuhn asked what issues appear to be in the future for this program, specifically with regards to delivering broadband to certain areas and plans for expansion. Ms. DeLeon replied these

are issues being looking at in the next cohort. She pointed out, currently the WAN connection is 100 kbps per student. She said on the national level that will increase and with an increase there will be challenges. It will premise on the first cohort and where we see transformation into 21st century classrooms. She added we currently provide digital coaches on site as well as four staff dedicated 100% to provide professional development to all of the coaches. She pointed out the program will continue to require district leadership. Funding is always an issue and as the program moves forward, the next cycle will be much more competitive. Mr. Fontaine asked whether the current status of this project is still a pilot project, what the prospects are for expansion and whether it is a one-time funded program. Ms. DeLeon responded that NR21 is a six-year plan and only the first phase is currently funded. She added the plan is in the budget moving forward for continued funding. Mr. Legg asked what the budgeted refresh rate is for the Chromebooks, because typically, tablet devices are good in the marketplace for approximately three school years before they need to be refreshed. Ms. DeLeon replied there is not a budgeted timeframe, sustainability is an issue, and it does create a challenge within the program. She added it will not be a fully state funded program every year. Mr. Legg commented once a classroom goes through the process of moving over to a Chromebook, the pedagogy in that classroom changes around the use of that device. He added this is a huge budget expense for a school district to take on especially if they are going to refresh those devices every few years. The Nevada Ready 21 program is so important because it provides demonstrations around the state of what is possible in transforming teaching and learning into the 21st century. Mr. Fontaine asked how middle schools currently in the NR21 program were selected to participate in the Chromebook program. Ms. DeLeon responded through a request for application along with a list of criteria they had to meet. All school districts that submitted a request and met the criteria were awarded the program, even some on conditional basis. Ms. Harmon added one condition that was a potential barrier to school districts was having on-staff a full-time employee serving as digital coach. Ms. DeLeon pointed out because it was so difficult for some school districts to find that resource, Nevada Ready 21 is currently funding the digital coach at all 23 sites.

VII. Update on Department of Education, WAN/Broadband Grant and Connect Nevada

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Department of Education

Lindsey Harmon, Executive Director of Connect Nevada

Vice Chair Kuhn said in regards to the WAN Grant, the Task Force should look at the national benchmark and find ways to make it work for Nevada. She informed the Task Force that \$2 million dollars was set aside last legislative session for the WAN/Broadband Grants to help schools build-out and improve their WAN connections. She added the initial hope was to use those funds to help bump up the reimbursement under E-rate, as well. She

explained that in the course of putting out these grant applications, not as many applied as was hoped for. She said in round one, only one school district applied for this funding. In the second round, two school districts applied. She said the question remains how to get more schools to apply. Ms. Harmon said it was determined school districts were more focused on Nevada Ready 21 funds or Information Technology (IT) departments were not equipped with the expertise required to apply. She said in the second round of funding we engaged providers hoping they would bring in some expertise. She said the issue was school districts who wanted to leverage E-rate funding were not given enough time to spend funds from the WAN Access Grant in time to know whether they would get E-rate money to match. She said Elko had applied the first round. Mineral and Pershing Counties applied the second round, which shows us that it is impacting rural communities. She said moving forward, the decision was reached to decrease the match for school districts from one-to-one, to a 10% match. She added the 10% match can come from a provider, if requested. Vice Chair Kuhn commented there was much more receptivity to this grant once it was clarified that recipients did not have to tie it into E-rate Funding.

Mr. Robison commented on the timelines for the grant. Even 60 days is an inadequate time frame for school districts to create and put together a technology assessment and design. He suggested the Task Force do something to augment those timelines – give them as much time as possible to identify a project, solution and proposal. The Task Force agreed. Vice Chair Kuhn said moving forward, she would like feedback from providers for a realistic timeline they would require to put a program together for school districts. Mr. Legg said if the legislature chooses to renew funding for the WAN grant, we will have a better chance of aligning funding with the E-rate program which will leverage additional funds and a timeline for the next biennium. He pointed out with a better understanding of these variables and if given another opportunity for the next round of funding, there is room to significantly improve this process.

Ms. Harmon reported to the Task Force a Highway Consortium was formed to look at issues with capacity along the Highway 50 Route and potentially leverage Zayo, the new provider, along that route. She said WestNet, another provider, has also come into that location as well and has deployed several new towers and infrastructure in Ely. Connect Nevada has been gathering community surveys looking at who the major anchor tenants are, how much they pay, how much they want, where their capacity gap is in an effort to aggregate demand and incentivize a provider to serve the communities. Zayo, who was originally doing a long-haul route is now potentially considering wholesale for those communities along Highway 50. She added that there is a new project to provide service in Gerlach, and address capacity issues. She said it is reported that SR28 in the Tahoe basin has potential partners that can financially contribute to that project with NDOT

making a potential fiber ring around a portion of Lake Tahoe and Connected Nation and OSIT will continue to work on this.

VIII. Discussion on State Broadband Plan (For possible action)

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Vice Chair Kuhn said after gathering research on other states' strategic plans, it was found that typically plans were broken down into regions or counties, focusing on one particular area. She asked whether the Task Force agreed they should target the plan more to a particular region or on a county basis. Ms. Harmon said this is opposite of what has been done in the past wherein it rolled counties all into one state plan. She said it depends on which direction the Task Force wants to go. Policy-oriented would be more on the state level, whereas technology problem solving would be more regional or county oriented. She recommended a regional level based on long-haul routes. Mr. Legg said the planning process needs to include a technical component focused regionally and a state policy component that is managed at the state level. Mr. Brown said coverage is not an issue, capacity is the issue. The Task Force discussed issues regarding local communities in terms of installing cellular towers. Vice Chair Kuhn suggested the Task Force convene a small working group to begin accumulating the outline and basic elements for the Strategic Plan and requested members to be volunteers to participate.

Mr. Legg commented he recently attended a Schools, Hospitals, Libraries, Broadband (SHLB) coalition working group in Washington focusing on ideas for the incoming Trump administration and congress in ways that broadband could be included in the new infrastructure development policy. He added the SHLB coalition expects that broadband will be a component of the next administration infrastructure bill. He said what happens at the federal level will ultimately dictate what goes into our strategic plan.

The Task Force discussed state policy versus individual technical assistance. It was agreed that the state will need to develop methods and mechanisms to help drive investment in infrastructure.

Mr. Robison commented that as the working group for the strategic plan comes together and in advancement of the Task Force's January meeting, it would be helpful if approximately two weeks prior to that meeting, each member receive a summary of the working group's finding showing where we currently are so feedback can be ready for the January meeting.

IX. Consider Agenda Items for the Next Meeting

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Vice Chair Kuhn asked the Task Force for input for agenda items next meeting.

- X. Next Meeting Date** is tentatively set for January 19, 2017. The meeting will be video conferenced between the Guinn Room, Capitol Annex in Carson City (subject to availability) and the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, Room 4412 in Las Vegas.

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Vice Chair Kuhn suggested the Task Force conduct the next meeting on January 19, 2017.

- XI. Public Comment** (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item.)

There was no public comment in Carson City or Las Vegas.

- XII. Adjournment**

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Vice Chair Kuhn adjourned the meeting at 10:35 am.