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**MINUTES**

Name of Organization: **Broadband Task Force**

Date and Time of Meeting: Friday, April 21, 2017 at 9:00 A.M.

Place of Meeting: Nevada State Library and Archives  
100 N. Stewart Street, Conference Room C (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
Carson City, NV 89701

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- I. Call to Order/Roll Call  
Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Vice Chair Kuhn called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

Members Present: Jeff Fontaine, Denise Inda, Britta Kuhn, Kevin Judice, Randy Robison, Scott Gutierrez, Dr. Kim Vidoni, Randy Brown, Todd Radtke, Tom Nieva, James Earl for Shannon Rahming

Members Excused: Caleb Cage

Guests Present: Brent Legg, Connected Nation; Lindsey Harmon, Connect Nevada; Daphne Deleon – Nevada Ready 21; Andrew Clinger – Senior Advisor Nevada Governor's Office

Staff Present: Brian Mitchell, Debra Petrelli

A quorum was declared.

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Approval of the Minutes From the November 21, 2016 Task Force Meeting *(For possible action)*

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Mr. Radtke made a motion to approve the Minutes from November 21, 2016. Dr. Vidoni seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Remarks and Announcements from the Vice Chair

Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Vice Chair Kuhn commented on important dates on the horizon, including her last day of work with the State of Nevada, which is currently undetermined but will be in the month of May, 2017. She will continue to assist the Governor's Office of Science, Innovation and Technology (OSIT) in assisting with Senate Bill 53 (SB53) legislation. She announced that her replacement is Jojo Myers Campos, and she will start as the new Broadband Manager with OSIT on Monday, April 24, 2017.

Vice Chair Kuhn announced that at the end of June 2017, the last Broadband Task Force Report to the Governor is due. It will contain an assessment of what changes have occurred within the state, particularly in terms of overall connectivity in school districts and what improvements have been realized with the new SWITCH lines in western Nevada. The focus will be on changes seen in the state in the last year and a-half, specifically improvements with E-rate funding.

Vice Chair Kuhn updated the task force on SB53, the legislative bill that will allow for fiber-trade. She said SB53 has currently made it out of the Senate and is now moving to the Assembly Government Affairs for the next hearings.

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

Co-Chair Britta Kuhn

Mr. Gutierrez with SWITCH, updated the task force on the "Super Loop," which is the fiber network between Las Vegas and Reno along Interstate 95. He said there are two carriers that are servicing the rural towns on that route; Valley Electric and CC Communications. He talked about on-boarding locations in nine cities along the route between Silver Springs and Las Vegas for improving connectivity.

Mr. Radtke with Nevada Rural Hospital Partners (NRHP), updated the task force on a network service vendor employed by the hospital in Hawthorne who had stopped paying their service provider, and disrupting service to the hospital. He commented that SWITCH stepped up to help after finding out the hospital would

be “turned off” within three days. He said without this fix, the hospital would not have even been able to admit patients. He extended his thanks to Scott Guterrez and SWITCH. There was discussion on other hospitals and school districts that were also affected by the same situation.

Ms. Inda stated that the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) is looking forward to the benefits of SB53 as it moves forward. She added from discussions with this task force, NDOT is now making sure they include conduit on current projects including the SR28 bike path, portions of USA Parkway and other similar projects.

Ms. Lindsay Harmon with Connect Nevada, briefed the Task Force on local development projects Connect Nevada has been working on. She commented on the middle-mile mapping project, and pointed out it has not yet been finalized and has not been released as a public option.

Chair Kuhn said, in reference to how the coordination of the E-rate effort is moving forward, an RFP invitation will be publicized, and she affirmed that Connected Nation/Connect Nevada, who is currently under contract with OSIT, has also been invited to respond to that RFP.

Mr. Andrew Clinger, Senior Advisor to Governor Sandoval, commented he is here to listen to what the task force has to say about the E-rate program and how it is being implanted. He said he has heard of concerns with new organizational structure and what has been proposed. He has been talking with Brian Mitchell, the Director of OSIT, and pointed out the Governor’s main concern is getting schools connected and finding the most efficient way to get access to E-rate funding.

The task force discussed getting rural anchor institutions connected. There were concerns about contract labor doing this work and whether it can provide the stability and sustainability required, as well as past efforts on the work put into mapping were discussed, and keeping those maps up to date. It was agreed this task force has come a long way and nobody wants to see the forward momentum stop.

- VI. Update and discussion on Education WAN/Broadband Grant, Improvements in School Connectivity
  - Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair
  - Lindsey Harmon, Connect Nevada

Chair Kuhn updated the task force on the appropriation for the Education WAN/Broadband grant. She said there was a request for funding of approximately \$2.4 million, because there was a need and demand for improvements in school districts. She pointed out this task force led the drive to get school districts to apply for this grant.

VII. Discussion on Local Guide for Communities *(for possible action)*.  
Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Chair Kuhn presented a comprehensive guide to serve as a resource tool for local communities just starting the implementation of state policy the Governor has set forth in the “Dig-Once” policy (Dig Once: Using Public Rights-of-Way to Bridge the Digital Divide). She distributed the document “Outline - Guide to Developing Local Broadband Strategies.” She added this is a working document and requested feedback and input from the task force.

VIII. Discussion on State Plans for 2018 E-rate, Nevada Connect Kids Initiative *(for possible action)*  
Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Chair Kuhn further discussed the challenges of hiring out contract labor versus hiring in-house state employees. Mr. Mitchell, Director of OSIT, shared some insight on the topic. He reassured everyone that OSIT’s commitment is to bring broadband to communities across Nevada; rural, urban and everything in between. He said OSIT is very committed to connecting not just schools, but also libraries, hospitals, clinics and other community anchor institutions in communities as a whole. He added a lot of thought has been put into how OSIT wants to move forward and how OSIT really wants to make this effort work and the value of everyone’s input. He pointed out the current contract is with Connected Nation/Connect Nevada and they were contracted to perform certain tasks. He said the State is now moving in a different direction, specifically the state is planning to move from mapping to doing more with E-rate and connecting schools. He said the initiatives and efforts to reach out to Nevada communities will not change and the continued plan is having a big presence throughout the state, especially in rural Nevada.

He said a Request for Applications (RFA) has not yet been sent out, but when it is done, anyone is welcome to apply. He added E-rate is a great resource out there that can be used to leverage, not only to connect schools, but to also use that funding as a means to connect the broader community. By connecting schools, it lowers the cost in connecting the rest of the community.

There was discussion on the loss of institutional knowledge and potentially losing Connected Nation through the RFP process. Mr. Mitchell commented that unfortunately contractors, as well as state employees, are not permanent. Institutional knowledge is key to any business or operation; people move and there is always the potential of loss of institutional knowledge. He added that Connected Nation has been invited to apply in the RFP process.

There was further discussion on the consortium idea used in Utah by their broadband task force to obtain E-rate funding and how they have been able to get much higher funding than Nevada.

There was discussion whether there will be a continued role for the task force to help provide strategic direction to the OSIT office. Mr. Mitchell responded he looks to the task force to answer that question, as this task force owes one more report to the Governor before the executive order creating this task force expires. He said, as a group, if you feel there is continued value to the State of Nevada for this task force to continue, it is up to you to make that recommendation in the Governor's report. He said OSIT would like all of the partnership and help it can get and if the Governor does not see fit to continue the task force, via executive order, OSIT would still like to reach out to each of you individually for your expertise.

Mr. Fontaine said regarding the articulation of the strategy of going forward and building off of E-rate as a way to expand broadband in Nevada, and asked whether there is material that can be sent out to counties for them to have a better understanding. Mr. Mitchell responded absolutely, and will share that information with him.

Dr. Vidoni, representing K-12 education, asked for clarification on the Governor's Connect Kids Initiative. Mr. Mitchell responded the State is taking a greater role in ensuring Nevada gets its fair share of E-rate funding by organizing and taking responsibility for getting more E-rate funding for the State. As a show of commitment to that, Governor Sandoval has pledged \$2 million that was previously in the Department of Education's budget and reallocating that funding to OSIT specifically for the purpose of state-match for E-rate.

IX. Discussion on School Connectivity *(for possible action)*.  
Daphne DeLeon

Ms. DeLeon said the Program Director for Nevada Ready 21 is looking at opening up their application for cohort-2 this summer and fall, which includes an increased connectivity over what was requested in cohort-1. She said schools are very interested currently in direct help, as they will be required to meet that minimum connectivity by the time Nevada Ready 21 awards and deploys at the end of the 2017-2018 school year. She said Nevada Ready 21 will plan on cohort-3 shortly thereafter. Chair Kuhn requested that Ms. DeLeon put together a list of which counties are not meeting the current requirements.

X. Final Report to the Governor and Status of Task Force *(for possible action)*  
Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Chair Kuhn said the final report to the Governor with status of the Broadband Task Force is due on June 30, 2017. It will address the changes and improvements realized in the last year, focusing on changes in connectivity and address the creation of middle mile mapping, as well as SB53. It will also contain guidelines of effective changes at the local level, address E-rate, and outline initiatives and

recommendations moving forward with ongoing issues. She said she has an outline she will send to the each member of the task force for feedback.

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.)*

Lindsay Harmon with Connect Nevada, said in speaking to the point of institutional knowledge, will continue to meet with task force members, as well as with local community leaders she has worked with so as not to lose the momentum of local projects.

XII. **Adjournment**  
Britta Kuhn, Vice Chair

Chair Kuhn adjourned the meeting at 11:25 A.M

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