

AGENDA
THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2025 – 11:00 A.M.
BROADBAND TASKFORCE FOR BEAD PLANNING GRANT
301 WASHINGTON STREET, COURTHOUSE BUILDING “A” ROOM #3041
OCONTO WI 54153
www.co.oconto.wi.us

This is an open meeting of the Broadband Taskforce for BEAD Planning Grant. Notice of this meeting was given to the public at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting, by forwarding the complete agenda to the newspapers and to all news media who have requested the same as well as by posting. Copies of the complete agenda were available for inspection at the Office of the County Clerk and from the County’s website calendar: www.co.oconto.wi.us

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Statement of Taskforce Vision:** *All residents and businesses in Oconto County will have equitable access to affordable internet with a minimum of 100 Mbps down / 20 Mbps up speeds.*
- 3. Oconto County Mission and Vision**
- 4. Approval of Agenda**
 - 4.1. Change of Sequence**
 - 4.2. Removal of Items**
- 5. Approval of Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2024 (Enc.)**
- 6. Communications**
- 7. Update on Project Units and Grant Funding**
- 8. Discuss and Review Local Endorsements**
- 9. Discussion and Action ISP Applications and Endorsement Resolution (Enc.)**
- 10. Identify Future Agenda Items**
- 11. Announcements/General Information (No action to be taken)**
- 12. Next Meeting Date**
- 13. Adjournment**

Any person wishing to attend the meeting who requires special accommodation because of a disability should contact the Oconto County Clerk’s office at 920-834-6800 at least 24 hours before the meeting begins so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Persons who are members of another governmental body, but who are not members of this committee, may attend this meeting. Their attendance could result in a quorum of another governmental body being present. Such a quorum is unintended and they are not meeting to exercise the authority, duties, or responsibilities of any other governmental body.

Courthouse Building “A” is located at the corner of Washington Street and Arbutus Avenue

c: Committee(FTP); County Administrator, Finance Director, Corporation Counsel, Media (via email); County Website; Central File, Official Posting Location (Physical Copy)

kp/Date Posted: 12/17/2024

MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2024 – 9:00 A.M.
BROADBAND TASKFORCE FOR BEAD PLANNING GRANT
COUNTY BOARD ROOM #3041 COURTHOUSE BUILDING “A”
301 WASHINGTON STREET, OCONTO, WI 54153-1699
www.co.oconto.wi.us
(Draft minutes, not approved by Committee)

COMMITTEE PRESENT: David Behrend, County Board Supervisor; Dennis Kroll, Town of Chase; Jayme Sellen, TEDCOR Executive Director; Mike Beyer, Town of Maple Valley; and Peter Wills. Oconto Falls Administrator; and David Van Zeeland, County Board Appointment

COMMITTEE ABSENT: Brandon Dhuey, County Board Supervisor; and David Lally, Suring School District

OTHERS PRESENT: Rich Heath, County Administrator; Al Sleeter, County Board Chair; Dale Mohr, UW-Extension Community Educator; and Dave Poffinbarger, LIS Admin/LIO/GIS Coordinator

14. Call to Order

Chair Behrend called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

15. Statement of Vision: *All residents and businesses in Oconto County will have equitable access to affordable internet with a minimum of 100 Mbps down / 20 Mbps up speeds.*

16. Approval of Agenda

16.1. **Change of Sequence** – None.

16.2. **Removal of Items** – None.

Motion by Van Zeeland/Wills to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was voted on and carried.

17. Approval of Minutes of November 18, 2024 Meeting

Motion by Kroll/Beyer to approve the minutes from November 18, 2024 as presented. The motion was voted on and carried.

18. Communications

- Rich Heath, County Administrator, stated that he forwarded to each of the committee members an email from Barb Koldos last week from New North listing a number of links with updates on the BEAD program.

19. Update on Project Units and Grant Funding

Sellen informed the committee that there was not a GIS layer published for the project units and there appears to be few changes from what the county has proposed as its priority areas. It has been challenging since the rules are constantly changing. There is a proposed cap on spending per mile. Dave Behrend noted that costs will vary based on the type of topographical features that are in each location. Sellen added that Internet Service Providers (ISPs) should be doing their due diligence when bidding on each location, and the PSC will be awarding grants based on the lowest cost bid that they receive for each location. This process is like the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) program where Spectrum was the only approved ISP. Grants are now open, and ISPs will be bidding on each project unit. The county's endorsement will be beneficial as part of the ISP's application that will be submitted to the Public Service Commission (PSC) with their letters of intent. Dennis Kroll added that the local grant match from the county will lower each ISP's cost and that will be of benefit when the PSC selects ISP for each project unit. Sellen noted that this first round is only for installation of fiber and future grant applications will be for fixed wireless or a system like Starlink.

20. Discuss and Review Local Resolutions

Behrends wanted clarification on if only one ISP bids on an area and the county and local municipality does not feel it does a good job. Sellen added that the PSC wants the state of Wisconsin covered, and it is important that the county and local municipality endorses the ISP in which they feel most comfortable working with on this project. Local municipalities vote to endorse an ISP, write a letter, and submit it with their board minutes to the ISP. Beyer asked if money is being held back for future rounds of funding? Sellen explained that funding is available for all four rounds and the type of internet infrastructure is required, but in the end the service to homeowners needs to be affordable.

8. Discuss and Recommend Local Grant Funding Options

Sellen reviewed a draft resolution endorsing Nsight for the committee to discuss and approve. Ideally, this resolution would be applicable for this and the three future rounds of funding. With a no collusion

clause, the meeting with ISPs should be in closed session where details such as funding, areas to be served, timeframe, etc. are discussed. Each agreement can be prepared and executed based on those discussions. Beyer stated that the words “up to” should be added before 1 Gbps in Line 31. The committee members agreed with the revision. Sellen noted that Line 16 can be changed for each ISP. Sellen explained that she gave all of the ISPs the deadline of January 6, 2025 to request an endorsement from Oconto County. Given that date, the committee scheduled their next meeting for January 9, 2025 at 11:00 am., so the endorsement resolutions will be an agenda item for the January 16, 2025 Administration Committee.

Motion by Sellen/Wills to approve the resolution to endorse Nsight as an ISP with the change noted in Line 31. The motion was voted on and carried.

9. Update on Local Grant Funding Process

Heath stated that the enclosed resolution requesting \$360,000 from the county's General Fund was presented to the Administration Committee on December 12, 2024. It was approved and will be on the December 19, 2024 County Board agenda. Members of this committee should be prepared to answer any questions that other members of the County Board may have on the money or program. Heath asked about accountability to ensure that each project is being completed as outlined in the agreement. Sellen added that the PSC requires reports to be submitted every six months into the ERS system to review progress and requests from the ISPs for reimbursement. The county could also get those copies to be reviewed by the committee. In addition, a map could be prepared and updated as fiber is extended within the Project Units and approved by the PSC. These could be agenda items for the committee members to review on an ongoing basis.

10. Committee Appointments for 2025

Heath reviewed the list of individuals who would like to continue serving on the committee, along with the addition of Supervisor Van Zelland who agreed to serve. Other individuals are encouraged to join the committee.

11. Identify Future Agenda Items

- Update on approval of Project Units by the PSC
- Approving endorsements of ISPs

12. Announcements/General Information (No action to be taken)

Nothing to Present

13. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is January 9, 2025 at 11:00 am. in the County Board room.

14. Adjournment

Motion by Beyer/Van Zeeland to adjourn the meeting at 9:51 a.m. The motion was voted on and carried.