Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition
Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2018

Attendance:
On Phone: Becky Lourey, Nemadji Research; Staci Headly, R5DC; Brian Krambeer, MI Energy.

On-Site: Nancy Hoffman, Chisago County; Vince Robinson, Lincoln County; Heidi Steinmetz, Kanabec County; Emily Murray, AMC; Joe Buttweiler, CTC; Katie Kienbaum, ISLR; Jordan Zeller ECRDC; Thom Peterson, MN Farmers Union; Jay Trustee, SW RDC; Bill Coleman, CTA; Patrick Murray, Cooperative Network; Kent Sulem, MMUA; Steve Giorgi, RAMS; Danna MacKenzie, DEED OBD; Jenny Hazelton, Winthrop EDA; Joe Gould, MN Alliance With Youth/MN Youth Council; Mark Erickson, RS Fiber Cooperative; Brian Martinson, Southern MN Beet Sugar Cooperative; Ryan Findell, Pine County; Mary Ann Van Cura, Digital Inclusion Advocate; JoAnne Johnson, MN Public Broadband Alliance; Judy Erickson, Conversation Strategies; Nathan Zacharias, Conservation Strategies; and Anne Kilzer, AMC/MAPCED.

Nancy Hoffman called the meeting to order. Attendees introduced themselves and discussed recent broadband updates within their organizations.

Steve Giorgi made a motion to approve the minutes from the October meeting, second by Joe Buttweiler. Motion approved.

Administrative Update
The Coalition signed a contract with Conservation Strategies. Vince updated the group regarding the AMC Contract and discussed the AMC sexual harassment policy as contained in the AMC Personnel Policy. Joe Buttweiler made the motion to adopt the AMC sexual harassment policy, second by Mark Erickson. Motion approved. The Executive Committee will work to finalize the contract with AMC.

Vince Robinson opened the floor for nominations for Coalition Chair. Steve Giorgi nominated Nancy Hoffman to serve as the Chair of the Coalition, second by Bill Coleman. Vince Robinson suggested we close nominations and cast an anonymous white ballot for Nancy Hoffman. Bill Coleman made the motion to cast an anonymous white ballot for Nancy Hoffman, second by Joe Buttweiler. Motion approved.

Marketing/Communications Update
Heidi discussed the new logo for the Coalition. Dan Larson recently issued a press release on behalf of the Coalition. Heidi is looking for a list of upcoming events where we can advertise the Coalition.

Fundraising Update
Heidi discussed the updated membership list that was included in the meeting materials and the newly revised membership form that is on the website. Heidi will update the form to include that membership is for 2019. Discussion to have membership run from the start of the calendar year.

Steve Giorgi suggested that it might be beneficial to have a cover letter summarizing the Coalition. Thom Peterson mentioned that there are several agriculture groups that are interested in membership. He is working on putting together a meeting with them.

Bill Coleman updated the Coalition that we are over halfway towards the fundraising goal, including the $20,000 grant the Coalition received from the Blandin Foundation. We are working to get more counties involved as well as the banking and agriculture community. Also, trying to find a better way to get into the medical community. While we still have a long way to go, there are many targets out there in play that are promising.

Discussion to review the full list and send an email out to the full membership list including the new membership form.

Vince discussed reaching out to individual communities within the counties that are members and encourage them to join. Vince discussed participating in statewide organization conferences and meetings. Do we have the budget to do this and staff power? Bill mentioned concerns with staffing in this regard. Email partners to let us know if there is an event coming up where we could have our information available.

Legislative Committee Update
Judy highlighted the legislative committee recommendations after the committee met last week. The recommendations, are as follows:

1. Base Funding for the Border-to-Border Broadband Fund
2. Continue to Support the Office of Broadband Development
3. Continuation of the Task Force
4. Broadband Policy Bill
   a. Specific modifications to the challenge process
   b. Remove or increase $5 million cap on projects
5. Policy Items to Defend
   a. Commitment to state speed goals using scalable technology
   b. Continue the inclusion of the word "wireline" in statute
   c. Maintain neutrality on technology eligible for grants

The group discussed the above recommendations and the opportunity to share our recommendations with the Walz transition team.

There was a discussion relating to the policy items contained in the recommendations, specifically adding language to change the 1:1 match. This would allow for unserved areas to be able to receive a higher percentage of grant funding. Should it be added to the application on a sliding scale in conjunction with the scoring process? Are there any political implications to changing this? Judy suggested that the direction on this item should be to continue to have discussions on the 1:1 match requirement. The plan would be to get the policy bill introduced in February, not right away during session like the funding bill. There was also discussion of adding this language as a carve-out – both the positives and negatives to doing that. Decision was to include this in the policy priorities.

The five recommendations would serve as the legislative priorities for the year. Mark Erickson made the motion to adopt the legislative priorities for the year, second by Brian Krambeer. Motion approved.

Judy highlighted the action steps for the legislative committee. Letter to Walz team is a priority, plan to focus it on the first three priorities.

Day at the Capitol:
The room we used last year is booked in February and March. We reserved a room in the Capitol for the next full Coalition meeting on January 30. Request the Governor and committee chairs to attend the meeting? Hold a press conference in conjunction with the meeting?

January 30
Capitol Room 316
Soft Lobby Day

April 3
Capitol Vault
Full Lobby Day

<u>Next Meeting Date</u>
January 30, 2019

Meeting adjourned.