



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
ROWAN COUNTY RURAL BROADBAND TASK FORCE  
MAY 16, 2018-8:00 AM  
ROWAN AGRICULTURAL CENTER, ROOM A

Coop Ext Director Amy-Lynn Albertson, Rowan County IT Network Manager Justin Crabtree, Commissioner Judy Klusman, IT Administrative Secretary Jane Moore, Rowan Salisbury School IT Candace Salmon-Hosey and Clark Poole, Citizen Lee Simmons and EMS Chief Chris Soliz were present.

Justin Crabtree, Rowan County IT Network Manager, advised members of Task Force that Chairman Randy Cress is not able to be at meeting today. He advised that if there are technical questions he will answer the questions.

Candace Hosey asked about the minutes from the last meeting. Jane Moore gave a review and advised what the action items were and also the task force charge.

Mrs. Hosey also asked how long the timeline is for this task force. Commissioner Klusman advised that it is 6 months to a year. The group will determine how big the scope is going to be. Ms. Hosey asks if we are here to analyze and report findings but not implement anything. Commissioner Klusman agreed that there needs to be RFPs.

Lee Simmons states that the large companies will use the FCC. They have to serve education, government and schools first. Consumers are #99 and they will serve the consumers when they can get around to it. That is how AT&T and other large Carriers are going to operate. Candace states that we can't dwell on what's going to happen since the Commissioners have approved this task force and we must move forward. You have to get their attention or they will ignore you stated Mr. Simmons.

Ms. Hosey agrees with Mr. Simmons and states that as County Commissioners' have created this task force we can not dwell on the what if or if they are not going to work with us. We have to move forward to complete the charge of the task force. There is a company called Contera that worked with Iredell Statesville Schools but we might not want to do that because fiber is expensive and it can take up to 20 years to get their investment back and if there is not enough interest they will not be able to move forward. However, we have to produce something at the end of this.

Mr. Soliz states that is where we lay out our expectations. Big guys, you are welcome but if you can not do what we need in a timely manner, we will find someone that will. We have to make a playbook that approaches from both angles.

Commissioner Klusman states that she has talked to 2 smaller carriers (Open Broadband and Hot Wire) that are interested. We must focus on what we expect and let the carriers know that if they are not willing to do what is expected, we will find a carrier that will. As Commissioners we hear from people all the time, when will we get service.

Ms. Hosey states that we have had a RFP for about 2 and a half to three years that was created using erate for services for the School System. We can use this as a template for the RFP for the county. We had recorded the sessions, held meetings, had question and answers prior to the entities coming in and meeting with our team. They had to answer a series of questions. It was multiple steps in culminating with the provider. We can use some of that process and even if we don't use it as it was, we can modify it to our needs and the goal of the task force.

Ms. Soliz suggested that we read over the questions on the survey and make changes as we see are needed. All agreed and Mr. Soliz read the questions and the following suggestions were made:

Can your residence location appear on the Sample County Demand Map?

Yes or No

This has clarification and will stay as shown.

Q1. Do you currently have internet access at home?

Change to yes or no.

Q2. How do you access the internet at home?

Mr. Poole suggests that under Digital Subscriber have AT& T or Windstream instead of as shown. Suggestion was also made to change Fiber-Optic to Fibrant.

Commissioner Klusman questioned who is getting the survey and how will it go out. Replies of tax bills, mailing and utility bills. Also stated since it will go out to residents of the city have Fibrant. People who don't have Internet access will receive a paper survey. We can send out digitally to stakeholders in school system if after checking with School System Attorney it is approved. Question was asked can Fibrant send out to their customers. Ms. Albertson can send out to her email list. There was a suggestion made to place survey at libraries. All agreed that surveys should be placed at libraries.

Q3. How satisfied are you with your current internet access?

Change to satisfied or unsatisfied.

Q4. What is the main reason you do not currently have internet access in your home?

Mr. Poole states that this should be the broad question. Ms. Hosey states that if a lot say they can't afford it that would justify a RFP. Therefore, Q4 will remain as is.

Q5. Please identify the digital devices that you could access the internet with from your residence?

Mr. Poole suggests combing some categories such as desktop & Laptop, etc. Add check all that apply.

Q6. Please indicate your desired internet speed for your home.

Mr. Poole suggests doing away with basic and add that description to Typical and have intermediate and premium also listed. We can combine some of the verbiage in the categories we are deleting.

Basic will be combination of basic and typical.

Intermediate will be Enhanced definition.

Premium will be definition of Premium and Advanced

Also leave Do not Know.

Q7. What is the maximum you are willing to pay for an Internet Connection?

Mr. Soliz asked if we wanted to keep answers like shown or give 3 options.

Mr. Poole stated that in looking at \$10 increments he would be willing to pay \$60.00 to \$69.99 but \$50 to \$59.99 sounds better because it is one line up. Task Force members advised what they have for their service and how much they are paying. Ms. Hosey stated that this does not give a skewed response because you might want to pay \$10.00 a month but can't get the Premium Package for that price. The question is very illusive. Ms. Hosey suggests deleting this question and everyone agrees that it should be deleted but replaced with "Do you live in an urban or rural neighborhood?"

Q8. Please indicate the age range of primary users of internet service at your home.

Mr. Poole requests that we merge and possibly have K-12 or K-22 years old. Commissioner Klusman asks what is the purpose of this question. If you are age 22 you are possibly at college receiving high speed internet. Mr. Poole states that Adults – Age 26 – 45 are probably willing to spend more for their Internet. Age 66 and over is probably for email and would not need faster Internet Service. Remove this question also.

Q9. Would a member or members of this residence take online classes if sufficient high speed internet service were available and affordable?

Mr. Simmons states that this question is giving useless information. Mr. Poole says that if we did away with this Question and Question 8, it would knock the survey down to 7 questions. Ms. Hosey states we could have on forms if not digital that if you would like to provide any other information please go to this link. Mr. Soliz states he would like to give option of completing on paper or going to a link for online completion. Ms. Hosey asks if we are doing a self addressed postage paid return survey. All agreed it should be

self addressed postage paid card. This survey is about Internet and not if they want to go to college and take online courses. All agreed that Q8 and Q9 should be removed from the survey and it would definitely fit on a post card.

Mr. Soliz states that we will be keeping the following questions on the survey:

Can your residence location appear on the Sample County Demand Map?

Q1. Do you currently have internet access at home?

Q2. How do you access the internet at home?

Q3. How satisfied are you with your current internet access:

Unsatisfied or satisfied would be only answers.

Q4. What is the main reason you do not currently have internet access in your Home?

Q5. Please identify the digital devices that you could access the internet with at your residence?

Q6. Please indicate your desired internet speed for your home.

Q7. Do you live in an urban or rural area?

If you have general comments go to this link.

Ms. Hosey states that she feels good about this and feels we have made headway on the survey. Others agreed.

Mr. Soliz states that the other issue would be to read the NC Broadband Office Playbook.

Mr. Poole states that we were discussing sending out survey with tax bills so it would need to be ready for the July tax bill mailing. Commissioner Klusman states that she has talked with Kelvin at the Tax Office and it is a July timeframe. Mr. Poole also states that we will need to have someone working on the Postcard and who will pay for the printing and postage. Commissioner Klusman answered if the Commission wants this they will have to pay for the expenses and she will check on all of that.

Mr. Poole asked that we request list of the over 100 Internet Providers from Mr Knox and Jane Moore advised that she can request that again from Mr. Knox.

Commissioner Klusman asked if there are counties ahead of Rowan County and what are they doing so we can learn what they have done. No one knew but it was stated that Stanley County is behind Rowan County.

Third Wednesday was clarified as the future meeting date. Next meeting will be on June 20<sup>th</sup> at 8 AM @ Rowan Agricultural Center in Room A. Rowan Agricultural Center will not be available for the July meeting so July meeting will be on July 18<sup>h</sup> @ 8AM and Clarke will start reservations for the July meeting at Salisbury Schools Office.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane H Moore