

Dodge County - Broadband Workgroup

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

Minutes

Call to Order

Jeffrey Duchac, Broadband Workgroup Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Workgroup Roll Call

Ed Benter	Jeffrey Duchac	Becky Glewen
David Guckenberger	Nicki Johnson	Joe Marsik
John Nagler	Nate Olson	Annette Thompson

Others Present:

Lori Hill	Russ Kottke	Bill Ehlenbeck
Marie Witzel	Ken Baehler	

Public Comment

Nate Olson introduced workgroup member Nicki Johnson of Mayville Engineering Company.

Review, Consider, Take Action: Broadband Workgroup Minutes

Motion by Joe Marsik, seconded by Annette Thompson to approve the June 12, 2019 minutes. Motion carried.

Update on Broadband Forward Certification

Nate Olson reported on discussions with the Dodge County Manager of Code Administration, per the required changes to meet the Broadband Forward Certification requirements. Such changes would require the creation of an Overlay District in the Dodge County Land Use Code. Nate reviewed this with staff from the PSC Broadband office, it was advised that changing the Land Use Code may not be in Dodge County's best interest. Also, the certification is not required for the PSC Broadband Expansion Grant. The workgroup decided not to go forward with this certification.

Review and Approve the Request for Interest (RFI) Document to be sent to all Service Providers in Dodge County

Justin Reynolds and Nate Olson created a draft Request for Interest (RFI) document for review. The workgroup recommended adding a cover letter and a reply date of July 15, 2019. Motion by Becky Glewen, seconded by Ed Benter to approve the Request for Interest Document with the listed changes to be sent to all internet providers operating in Dodge County. Motion carried.

Review and Approve a Template Letter of Support Document that could be used by any Public and Private Entity that is interested in supporting Dodge County's PSC grant application

Nate Olson presented a draft Template Letter of Support for review. The workgroup discussed the option of adding statistics and two or three examples of someone without service to personalize the letter. David Guckenberger recommended changing "broadband" in the third paragraph to "high speed internet access" to let people know what broadband means. David Guckenberger will draft a resolution to go along with the letter and send to Nate Olson. Motion by Becky Glewen, seconded by John Nagler to approve the Template Letter of Support Document with changes. Motion carried.

Review and Recommend Approval of the Telecommuter Forward Certification Resolution

The workgroup reviewed the Telecommuter Forward Certification Resolution. Motion by John Nager, seconded by Joe Marsik to approve the Telecommuter Forward Certification Resolution and send to the Executive Committee for their next meeting. Motion carried.

Review and Discuss the Dodge County Broadband Workgroup Action Plan, update if needed

The action items were updated and discussion was held on who to contact in the business community. Workgroup members will contact MBA, Chambers of Commerce, and the SHRM organization.

Discuss methods to provide education opportunities to public and private entities about the Dodge County's Broadband initiative

The workgroup discussed budgeting needs for potential projects and the need for Dodge County to budget for the PSC Broadband Expansion grant. It was further discussed to obtain support for the grant by communities contributing financially to the project (pledge). This financial commitment can be addressed at the Towns Association Meeting, Mayors Consortium, and Village meetings. It was recommended to ask for commitment of \$1,000 per community. The group also discussed the option of sending a survey out with every tax bill to determine broadband needs across the county.

Discuss Jefferson County's Broadband initiative and what the Jefferson County Broadband Committee is currently working on

Jefferson County is working with two companies to apply for PSC Broadband Expansion Grant funding, Bertram and Netwurx. They are currently working on an agreement and potential projects.

Future Meeting Agenda Items

The workgroup discussed items that could be placed on the next agenda: updates from outreach meetings/presentations, review RFI submittals, review and approve Resolution to accompany Letter of Support Document, review outcome of Telecommuter Forward Certification Resolution from County Board Meeting and Executive Committee Meeting, discuss options to survey broadband needs throughout Dodge County, and review/update the Broadband Workgroup Action Plan.

Set Next Meeting Date

Tuesday, August 6, 2019 - 1:00 p.m. - Administration Building (Rooms 1H/1I)

Adjourn

Motion by Joe Marsik, seconded by John Nagler to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Reynolds, Secretary



Bertram Communications

920-994-2388 mark.dodge@bertramcommunications.com 300 Industrial Drive, Random Lake WI 53075

Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department
127 East Oak Street
Juneau, WI 53039

As a response to a Request for Interest (RFI) sent out by Dodge County, on July 1, 2019, It is the intent of Bertram Communications to collaborate with Netwurx LLC and Dodge County on a joint approach to improving the internet service to rural underserved areas of Dodge County via a PSC grant application.

Currently both organizations provide high speed internet as specified by the FCC (25mbps download and 3mbps upload) service to Dodge County. Bertram and Netwurx are both previous grant recipients. Bertram has been fortunate to have applied for and received multiple large grants. The knowledge gained, successful formats used, funding matching and other requirement of the grant process would be made available to Dodge County in an effort to create a formidable grant application. Both organizations bring years of internet service provider (ISP) and wireless internet service provider (WISP) experience. Additionally Bertram Communications owns and operates a successful ISP and WISP software company and owns and operates carrier class wireless transport manufacturing company.

It is our belief that the collaboration of the three entities will help the probability of creating a successful application in a very competitive PSC grant application program.

Sincerely,

Mark Dodge, Tim Wright of Bertram Communications



Netwurx Response to Dodge County Request for Interest (RFI)

Purpose:

This document is our response from Netwurx Internet to the Request for Interest (RFI) that we received from Nate Olson by email on July 1, 2019.

In the RFI there were two items in which a response was requested:

A: First, reach out to all service providers in Dodge County and create a group of providers that are interested in collaborating with Dodge County and other providers to apply for the pending PSC Broadband Expansion Grant.

B: Second, reach out to all service providers in Dodge County and learn of other options service providers can assist with that do not involve PSC Broadband Expansion Grant

Responses:

A: Netwurx Internet is interested in collaborating with Dodge County, Bertram Wireless and other providers in completing the required process in regard to, the PSC Broadband Expansion Grant.

- Netwurx Internet has successfully collaborated with local township resulting in a submitted application being granted by the PSC of Wisconsin.
- A Netwurx resource volunteered time and developed the application at no cost to the township.

B: Other Options Netwurx Could Assist

- Netwurx Internet is currently working with other governing bodies in providing broadband solutions to rural areas and areas of commerce outside of a grant type solution.
 - Netwurx collaborated to identify areas lacking in broadband (high speed) internet
 - Provided the governing body with detailed plan and costs to provide the areas with service
 - Netwurx, without being part of the original budget or funding, adding funding to the project.
- Netwurx Internet is constantly in communications with owners of property where fixed wireless equipment could be mounted in order to benefit as many rural customers as possible.
- Netwurx has also collaborated with the Dodge County Fair Associated in ensuring broadband (high speed internet) is available for its day-to-day operations and events, where other service providers did not meet their needs.
- The rate at which we can expand in these areas is directly related to whether or not funds are made available or if Netwurx alone funds the project.
- One important item of interest to all should be how to cover areas that are difficult due to terrain and/or low population density.
 - This is where government funding and/or grants can play a significant role in providing internet coverage to these unique areas in a quicker timeframe.

Contact Information:

Ken Baehler
Director of Business Development
414-831-4849
ken@corp.netwurx.net

Dave Roller
C.T.O - Chief Technology Officer
414-831-3475
dave@corp.netwurx.net



N115W19150 Edison Dr
Germantown WI 53022

Nate,

First off, thank you very much for the opportunity to work with Dodge County on this project. Ethoplex is a homegrown local Wisconsin Business located in Germantown. We are a business and residential fixed wireless internet service provider. Broadbandnow.com just named us the **#1 Fastest Fixed Wireless Provider in Wisconsin** and the Top 10 Fastest Internet Providers in Wisconsin.

More than 15 Years ago Keefe John started Ethoplex to combat the digital divide in rural communities. Not only can we reach underserved areas, we do it with speeds that are faster than fiber! See, microwaves travel at the speed of light, so like fiber, which actually uses light, you can transmit data literally at light speed. What sets microwave wireless apart from fiber-optics is the fact that with fiber you are still restricted by being in a cable. That cable is not in a straight line, it twists and turns, goes under the road, and is routed into the customers telephony closet. Every slight bend in that cable, which could have originated from miles away, makes the light refract. It's like bouncing a flashlight from mirror to mirror and hoping there is enough light left over at the end. With microwave wireless internet, there is no refraction, you simply point a radio that's located at the customer's facility to one of our towers. Another thing that makes us so superior over cable in the ground is that it can take decades and millions of dollars to upgrade the antiquated system, where we can upgrade our network for a fraction of the cost and very quickly.

Ethoplex would like to formally express positive interest in collaboration with Dodge County to help bring high speed broadband internet to business, homes, and organizations. We have extensive experience with perusing grants including Wisconsin PSC Broadband Grants. We have a willing track record and won a PSC Broadband Grant in the Town of Oconomowoc and another one for Washington County.

Ethoplex is also very creative when it comes to expansion of our broadband service. We have done everything from servicing municipal internet needs for free in exchange for water tower space to bartering with farmers to utilize their silo as an access point. What makes us different from other wireless ISPs is our ability to provide much higher internet speeds for an economical price. Our customer service is also second to none. We provide 24/7/365 support to our clients while most rural ISPs only provide business hours support.

The incumbent providers in Dodge County have had decades to bring reliable, fast broadband—but they chose not to. It is time for the county to go a new direction with a new provider—Ethoplex.

We are confident that we can bring not only PSC but other grant funding to Dodge County.

Please know that is Ethoplex is eager and waiting to help in any way that we can to help provide high speed internet to Dodge County.

Keefe John
CEO
Ethoplex
Direct: 262.345.5200

Ethoplex Business Internet
<http://www.ethoplex.com/>
Signal Residential Internet
<http://www.signalisp.com/>



800.236.8434
packerlandbroadband.com

105 Kent Street
PO Box 885
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

FAX 906.774.6638

Broadband Workgroup of Dodge County
127 East Oak Street
Juneau, WI 53039

Workgroup Team,

We appreciate the invitation to the recent RFI. As you are aware, we've expressed past interest in some collaboration with your efforts. A statement of our intentions for the two objectives outlined within the RFP below:

Objective #1: We are interested in potentially participating in a PSC Broadband Expansion Grant. We'd want to first understand the needs and see how we can leverage our existing infrastructure to support the efforts. We have experience with the PSC program, especially partnering with County Governments, and have access to capital to invest in worthy efforts.

Objective #2: Again, we are interested in discussions in how we can continue to invest in providing connections in rural areas. We'd like to understand more on your discovery efforts, so that we can identify how we might help in any role. We have experience with a variety of access technologies, to connect homes and business with robust connections at economical prices.

Our organization has a propensity to collaborate with the public sector and other service providers to deliver desired outcomes. We look forward to participating in the continued discovery.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'RCH'.

R. Cory Heigl
Vice President
PACKERLAND BROADBAND
A CCI Systems, Inc Company
(906) 776-2634 - Office
(906) 282-3682 - Mobile

Olson, Nathan

From: Russell Schlager <russ.schlager@hiercomm.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 14, 2019 12:41 PM
To: Olson, Nathan
Subject: Request for Interest

Nate,

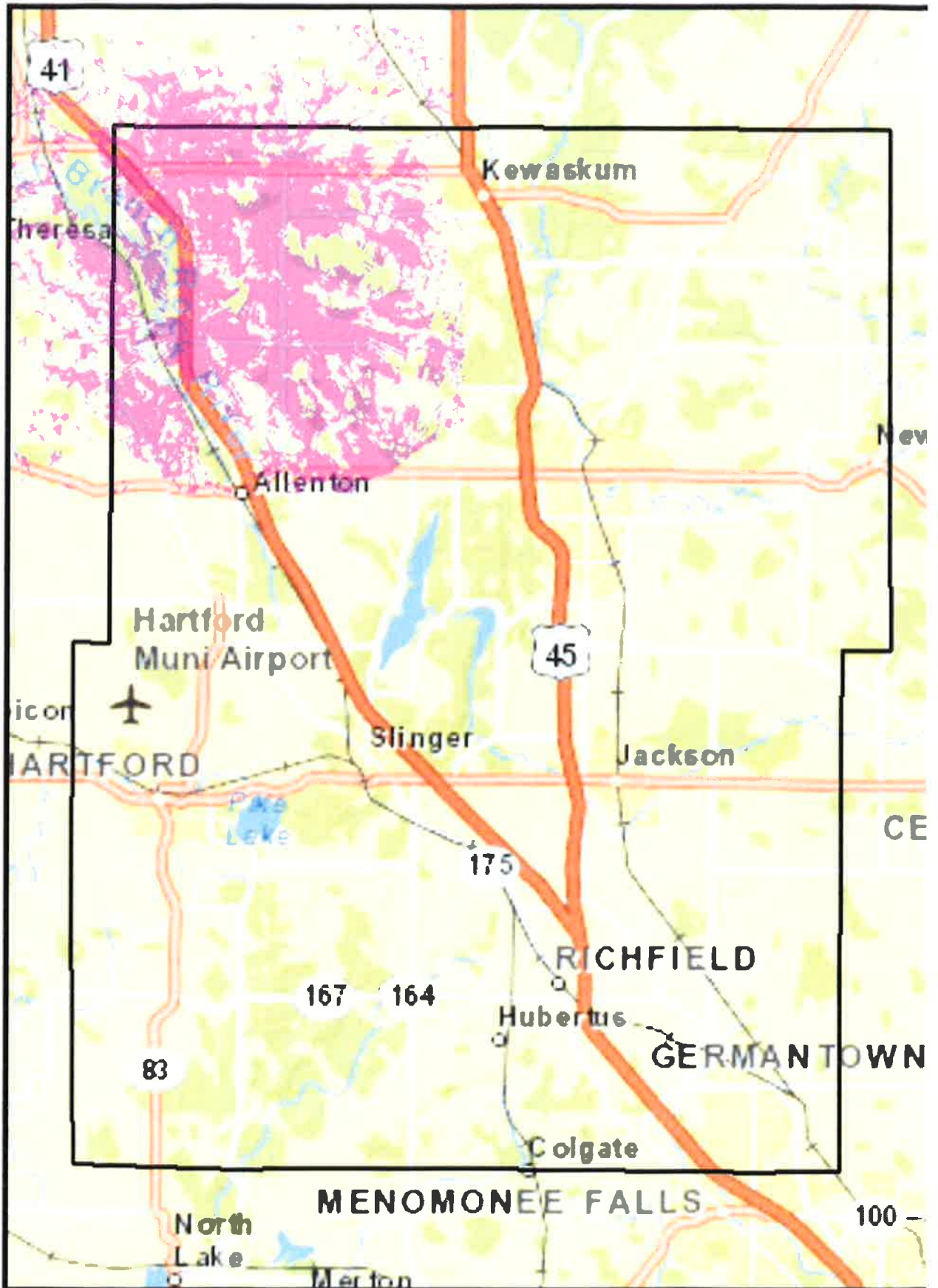
Thank you for sending HierComm Networks LLC your Request for Interest for future Broadband expansion in Dodge County.

A brief background on our company.

Founded in 2005 in Hartland, Wisconsin **HierComm Networks, LLC** is a locally owned and operated wireless high speed internet service provider and the network operation arm of HierComm, Inc. Our mission is to help homes, businesses, and communities to realize the benefits of broadband wireless internet. **HierComm's Smart-Relay™ Network Architecture**, with access points closer to the user provides our service areas with higher performance, near universal coverage, superior reliability and greater capacity than tower-only based networks.

Our focus has always been rural and low population density regions. Current service areas include; **Town of Wayne and portions of; Allenton, Kewaskum, Kohlsville & West Bend** and Kenosha County. We have approximately 400 customers. Our close proximity to Dodge County means our current signal reaches portions of Dodge County and our future expansion plans include more of Dodge County.

Hiercomm Networks Washington County Wireless Coverage Region



Legend
Washington Co. Coverage



First, we are interested in collaborating with Dodge County and other providers to apply for the pending PSC Broadband Expansion Grant.

Second, while not heavily capitalized at this time, HierComm Networks could develop plans and invest to expand internet coverage in Dodge County.

Sincerely,

Russell Schlager
President
HierComm, Inc.
Hiercomm Networks LLC.
215 South Century Avenue * Suite 320
Waukegan, WI 53597
office: 262-347-3096
mobile: 608-772-9055



AT&T Wisconsin
Dextra Hadnot
722 No. Broadway, Floor 13
Milwaukee, WI 53202

T: 414.223.5821
F: 414.283.0876
dh3714@att.com

Sent Via Email

July 19, 2019

Mr. Nate Olson
Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department
127 East Oak Street
Juneau, WI 53039

RE: Broadband Working Group Request for Interest

Dear Mr. Olson:

I am writing in response to the Dodge County Broadband Workgroup's Request for Interest dated July 1, 2019. Wisconsin Bell, Inc., d/b/a AT&T Wisconsin applauds the workgroup's efforts to identify ways to extend broadband coverage to more citizens within Dodge County. AT&T shares this goal, and although AT&T has offered broadband service to many of its customers in the more populated areas of Dodge County such as Beaver Dam, Columbus, Horicon, Juneau, Mayville, Watertown, and Waupun for many years, AT&T has spent the last several years expanding broadband coverage to many more citizens in Dodge County.

In August 2015 AT&T accepted approximately \$9M per year for a 6-year funding period, or a total of about \$54M, in support from the federal universal service Connect America Fund II (CAF II) program administered by the FCC, in exchange for certain public interest obligations that include extending and/or maintaining broadband service to 24,513 locations in Wisconsin by December 31, 2020. The federal support came with certain requirements.

- Price cap carriers, such as AT&T, must offer at least one broadband plan with speeds of at least 10 Mbps downstream/1 Mbps upstream (10/1), and with a maximum latency of 100 ms roundtrip, to the required number of locations within six years.
 - 40% of locations by the end of 2017
 - 60% by the end of 2018
 - 80% by the end of 2019
 - 100% by the end of 2020
- The FCC annually updates the monthly usage allowance and pricing requirements that apply to each CAF II recipient's required broadband plan. For 2019, the plan must include a monthly usage allowance of at least 215 GB at a maximum price of \$72.65/month. FCC annually updates CAF monthly minimum usage requirements.)

AT&T not only met but exceeded these buildout milestones established by the FCC in 2017 and 2018. AT&T is well on its way to meeting the 2019 milestone of 80%. AT&T is primarily offering a fixed wireless broadband service in areas where it is receiving CAF II support. As part of its construction plans, AT&T has equipped seventeen cellular towers in, or very close to Dodge County in order to support the deployment of fixed wireless service.



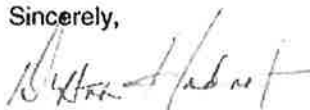
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In accordance with requirements adopted by the FCC, AT&T reports on its CAF II buildout status each year to the federal universal service administrator, Universal Service Administration Company (USAC), who then makes this data available to the public. Included with this letter is an image of the map depicting the additional broadband coverage from AT&T in Dodge County. The map is available at the following web site, <https://data.usac.org/publicreports/caf-map/>

AT&T also appreciates the Broadband Workgroup's offer to partner with providers on the pursuit of state broadband grants. AT&T has applied for state broadband grants in a previous round and will evaluate whether to apply once the Public Service Commission identifies the final rules for the next round of grants. Although AT&T is not in a position to assess at this time whether it will pursue state broadband support, AT&T is very interested to discuss ways in which it may partner with Dodge County to make citizens aware of the increased broadband deployment as part of the CAF II project.

If you have any questions or are interested in partnering with AT&T, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dextra Hadnot", written in a cursive style.

Dextra Hadnot
Director, External Affairs

AT&T CAF II Available Living Units

