



**AD HOC BROADBAND COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes – November 17, 2021**

**Call to Order.** Chair Bostwick called the (virtual hybrid) meeting of the Ad Hoc Broadband Committee to order at 4:00 P.M.

**Committee Members Present via phone:** Supervisors Mawhinney, Beaver, Wilson, Richard Bostwick, Homan, Sweeney, and Davis.

**Committee Members Absent:** None.

**Staff Members Present via Phone:** Randy Terronez, Assistant to County Administrator; James Otterstein, Economic Development Manager; Kayne Cushman, Network Support Administrator; Richard Greenlee, Corporation Counsel; and Jim Sandvig, Director of Information Technology.

**Others Present:** Supervisor Williams, Tim Tollefson, Town of Harmony; AJ Becker, Sonic Spectrum; Russell Berg, Nokomis Networking; Gordy LaChance, City of Janesville Information Technology Manager; Ray Gorsline, City of Beloit Director of Information Technology; and David Watrous, Town of Milton.

**Approval of Agenda.** Supervisor Homan moved approval of the agenda as presented, second by Supervisor Wilson. ADOPTED.

**Approval of Minutes – October 20, 2021**

Supervisor Mawhinney moved approval of the October 20, 2021 minutes as presented, second by Supervisor Davis. ADOPTED.

**Update on Charter Non-RDOF Outlook**

Russell Berg spoke to this and provided an update to the committee.

**Promoting Regional Economic Development (MadREP) Assessment/Inventory Study**

James Otterstein spoke to this. MadREP is collecting upload and download speeds. They are looking for at least 10% participation. James elaborated that speed varies during different times of the day, so they want as much data as possible. As of today, there have been 77 test locations and 97 speed tests. James added that the goal is to get 6,840 participants completing speed tests. Supervisor Wilson let the committee know that this was mentioned at the Arrowhead Library Board meeting.

**Discussion Items**

**Current Market Assessment**

James informed the committee that DPI surveyed the school districts, and this data can be added to our scope with the work that MadREP is currently doing. He added that they looked at affordability and availability.

### **County Needs/Wants**

Russ has been working with the County's IT Department. He has a list of locations within the county that could utilize broadband access or an alternate means of access.

### **Technology Options – Current/Future**

Russ noted there were no additional updates regarding these topics.

### **Partnerships**

#### **Sonic Spectrum Fiber to Home Conceptual Plan**

Russ shared that the next PSC expansion grant is most likely to open December 1.

AJ Becker presented to the committee. He stated that they found underserved and unserved routes. He presented his proposal that highlighted areas that Sonic Spectrum would be able to provide fiber to the home with Rock County's help.

### **Funding Options**

#### **Broadband Forward**

James explained that Broadband Forward! is a certification that the county can obtain via passing an ordinance to streamline the process and support broadband expansion. This can strengthen future state and/or federal broadband funding applications

### **Telecommuting**

James explained that Telecommuter Forward! Community Certification obtained via passing a resolution that supports and commits to promote the availability of telecommuting options. This can strengthen future state and/or federal broadband funding applications

### **Recent Federal Infrastructure Legislation**

Russ explained that the Build Back Better plan was signed yesterday and has \$65 million targeted towards broadband expansion.

### **Other**

None.

### **Intergovernmental Activities**

#### **Towns Association Update – Harmony Town Clerk, Tim Tollefson**

Tim Tollefson will be discussing the efforts of this committee with James and Randy at the Towns Association meeting.

### **Other**

Gordy LaChance, City of Janesville Information Technology Manager and Ray Gorsline, City of Beloit Director of Information Technology, introduced themselves. They discussed their efforts to build community area networks.

### **Discussion on next steps**

Russ will work with AJ Becker to put together a possible proposal. James will reach out to school districts. Russ will continue to monitor for federal infrastructure legislation and look for grants. He will also reach out to Charter Spectrum.

**Set Next Meeting Time and Place**

The next Ad Hoc Broadband Committee meeting, which will be offered in a virtual hybrid format, is set for December 22, 2021 at 8:00 A.M.

**Adjournment.**

Supervisor Homan moved adjournment at 5:48 P.M., second by Supervisor Wilson.  
ADOPTED.

Respectfully submitted,

Haley Hoffman  
Office Coordinator

**NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY COMMITTEE.**