

Lincoln County Broadband Commission Meeting
6:30 PM, Thursday, February 22, 2024
Room 255/257/260, Lincoln County Service Center
801 N. Sales Street Merrill, WI 54452
Join by Phone: (US) +1 862-283-0266 PIN: 419571710
Meeting Link: <https://meet.google.com/vvz-szuh-ipi>

AGENDA

Attendance: Sherry Hulett, Ken Wickham, Bill Bialecki, Pat Voermans, Renee Krueger, Andy Faust, Gordon Sennett, Heidi O'Hare, Sue Dierkson

Virtual: Jennifer Bishop, Lisa White, Earl Welker, Jerome Ziegelbauer, Julie Allen, Laurie Olhoff, Travis Spoehr, Elsa Duranceau

1. Call to Order: 6:30PM
2. Introductions
3. Approve January Minutes. Pat Voermans motions to approve. Bill Bialecki seconded. Motion carried.
4. Status/Updates of Lincoln County Broadband Efforts
 - a. LCEDC Summit Update: Ken Wickham and Andy Faust will present our final plan, process, and what's next on March 14 around 2:00PM
 - b. Central WI Days: Elsa Duranceau had a chance to connect with other EDC Directors re: their broadband experiences. Met with Maryanne Lippert who graciously offered to meet with us. We encourage other commission members to join us for this initial conversation.
 - c. We need more members as part of the Core Crew.
 - d. Tomahawk Library Survey:
 - i. Many patrons use to download info and save personal data and use printers. This info suggests affordability and accessibility issues.
 - ii. Heidi would like to see outside wi-fi capacity increased using a solar powered bench with charging plug-ins.
 - e. BEAD Challenge Process Update: No Update
 - f. Outreach Opportunities:
 - i. Home, Sport, Travel, & Health Expo – Elsa will reach out to WJJQ to get a booth.
<https://www.wjjq.com/pg/home-sport-travel-show>

- ii. Oneida Co Expo: <https://business.rhinelanderschamber.com/events/details/up-north-community-expo-03-07-2024-14164>
- 5. Broadband Plan Final Draft Review:
 - a. Slideshow
 - b. Affordability Program
 - i. Affordable Connectivity Program – projected to end soon
 - ii. Lifeline – PSC program
 - iii. Some internet service providers have their own programs
 - iv. PSC – Internet Discount Finder <https://apps.psc.wi.gov/InternetDiscountFinder>
 - c. Broadband Goals – Chapter 7 (pg 51)
 - i. Find Funding
 - ii. Develop relationship with ISPs
 - iii. Keep goals general
 - d. Funding: Private Sector, Fed & State Programs, Tax incentive credits, bond financing, grants from foundations.
 - e. Recommendations: Engage providers, public, and non-profits (gather and disseminate information). Gather letters of support from anchor institutions.
 - f. We need to know ISP build plans so we can advocate for areas that aren't included. Ask ISPs for updates as well as attending our meetings.
 - g. Glenn Fishbine (OptiDesign) will provide input if we have projects happening.
- 6. Internet Speed Testing Update: 13.2% participation rate! Anyone can continue to take the speed test. We won't have access to the information after April 1, 2024.
- 7. Next Meeting Time/Date
 - a. March 28, 2024 – 6:30PM – 7:30PM
- 8. Adjourn: 7:35PM