

TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING
Northwest Commission Offices
01/20/06 @ noon
Oil City, PA

The meeting was called to order at 12:15 pm by Clarion County Commissioner Donna Hartle. Those in attendance were as follows:

Gary Hutchison	Alan Fuller	Dan Glotz
Donna Hartle	Tony Hallett	Abe Hobson
Basil Huffman	Farley Wright	Robert Nurss
Robyn Kenemuth	Mary Bula via phone	W. Randy Rice
Linda King via phone	Chris Beichner	Sam Plumer

Infrastructure Updates:

Venango County – There will be two separate infrastructures put into place. The first one to be completed will be the fixed infrastructure and the second will be the wireless infrastructure.

The fixed infrastructure has been pre-engineered (actually driven and measured). The route begins in Oil City and encompasses ninety miles.

The wireless infrastructure will have seven towers. Five towers currently exist. The remaining two towers need to be built.

The projected cost for the fixed infrastructure is \$4.5 million. The cost is broken down into two sections as follows:

1. \$3 million to build the fixed infrastructure
2. \$1.5 million to include the school districts

The engineering portion time frame will be three months.

Clarion County – A Broadband Summit was held in Clarion County on Thursday, January 19, 2006 at Clarion University to bring community, business, and political leaders together for an informative presentation on what broadband is and the importance of having it available to everyone.

The goal for Phase I will be to identify target areas in Clarion County, map those target areas, and create an information database from the targeted areas.

Forest County – At this point, there was nothing new to report. There is concern regarding the partnership that was aggregated notwithstanding the recent tactics of the larger companies which are now reducing their monthly rates for broadband service.

Erie, Crawford, Warren Counties – Rob Nurss has been working in these counties for construction of a fiber ring, fixed network. Industrial parks, hospitals, school districts, manufacturing companies, public safety and county governments will need to be mapped.

Mercer County – The Northwest Commission will be meeting with the Farrell Area School District on January 30th to discuss a broadband project for their school. This might lead to a bigger project in Mercer County.

Lawrence County – Chris Beichner has been asked to speak at a Rotary Club Meeting regarding broadband in New Castle. He hopes this will lead to interest in a broadband project for that county.

eCOMMONwealth Support/Letters/Funding: The \$600,000 received two years ago will run out as of June 2006 for the eCOMMONwealth Program. Therefore, additional funding will need to be obtained to continue the program. It was requested that the members write letters of support for the program and send them to Senator Mary Jo White. Chris Beichner will email the members points that should be included in said letters.

Education Updates: Mary Bula of The Center for e-Business & Advanced IT informed the members that out of 5,000 informational broadband brochures that have been printed, approximately 2,600 have been mailed.

The brochures along with the White Paper and the one-hour Broadband Training Video are all accessible at www.ebizitPA.org free of charge.

MTAP Training - Rob Nurss reported that 265 Technology Surveys were mailed out to all of the northwest region's municipalities and 91 have been completed and returned. The next step will be entering the information into a database and then providing free training based on the municipalities current needs.

PUC Hearing & Act 183 Updates: Funding for aggregation and education are available through two separate funding sources: E-RATE for federal funding and E-FUND for state funding.

Next TAG Meetings: The following are scheduled dates for future TAG Meetings:

March 17, 2006 @ noon
May 19, 2006 @ noon
July 21, 2006 @ noon
September 15, 2006 @ noon
November 17, 2006 @ noon

All meetings will be held at the commission's offices.

New Business: None to report.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robyn Kenemuth

Robyn L. Kenemuth
Northwest Commission
Administrative Assistant

