

Broadband Commission Meeting Notes
April 18, 2023

Update on Cirrinity Projects:

1. Kent Road Tower; Boring is wrapped up; direct bury fiber soon (hopefully by end of April) and then the Elcho and Kent Road Tower Project will be complete (Award date was 2022 amount of award \$544,850 total project cost 1,100,00 County contributed 25% cost)
2. Village of White Lake and Town of Wolf River build out (this was done through the townships) got delayed due to some locating issues with frontier and some weather but should be wrapping up by middle of May. The town of Wolf river focused on Dark Lake and sub divisions that included the Town Hall of Wolf River (co separate County dollars were invested into that project)
3. All material is ordered for the town of Polar, Rolling and Norwood buildout and locates are beginning. The locators and project coordinator will alert township of activity.
4. Cirrinity has hired an engineering firm to identify locations of interest for Cirrinity and they will share that info out to us. June 8th is the next Town Hall meeting and Scott will update the towns.
5. Scott had a meeting with the PSC and the word on the street is that announcements should be made for the 2023 PSC grant (Western Part of County project) by end of April first part of May.
6. Phase 2 if the project is awarded; Cirrinity has identified a tower they currently own in the town of Eldron; having an Engineering firm look to give a quote to move to Town of Summit; details still being worked out but would be great if they can keep tower under 250 ft due to FFA and permit and costs! Cirrinity stated that fixed wireless is not an option for them to use on the tower due to the trees and other elements but would work with Town on possibility of use from Cell Com or other cell providers.

Subrecipient Agreement of Federal or State Monies

The procurement documentation recently e-mailed is the requirement to check to see if vendors are disqualified on the Sams website. Single source provider is an exception to bidding; however, documentation regarding

why they are a single source provider should be secured before awarding a contract.

The federal requirement for a single audit is \$750,000. Most rural towns would not reach this threshold and subsequently are likely not audited.

Should we develop a subrecipient agreement for ISP that are willing to do the work if federal funds are involved?

Single Source provider:

The current LOCAL Internet Service Provider in Langlade County is Cirrinity LLC. Because of the extensive work that has been done by Cirrinity, much of the current fiber lines are owned by them. When the pandemic hit, Cirrinity implemented many strategies in public places to offer the residents without adequate broadband capabilities wifi hot spots in order to continue to do business and meet school obligations. When the Governor announced in October of 2020 that additional dollars would be available to help bridge the gap for broadband; the taskforce continued to strategize on ways to get better broadband. The only provider that reached out to the Taskforce during this time was Cirrinity even though other providers were invited to speak at numerous meetings. There were numerous conversations with the Sheriff's department and the Langlade County GIS department regarding the need to build out the Public Safety Communications Infrastructure. The Taskforce asked Cirrinity to provide information regarding where their current fiber routes were. It was identified that Cirrinity already owned fiber located at both the Elcho and Kent Towers which were key locations in order to continue on the simulcast project that was so important to our emergency management. The Taskforce then asked Cirrinity for a proposal which was received on 05/06/2021. After many other conversations with the County Administrator, the County Corp. Counsel and the PSC from May through July 2021, it was determined that Cirrinity would be a sole source vendor as it would be impossible to get a sealed bid or proposal to connect to their already existing fiber therefore the procurement process would not be necessary. Cirrinity agreed to apply for the PSC grant and submitted application on July 22, 2021 and it was a successful grant. The Broadband Commission has identified priorities and goals and continues to look at ways to improve broadband capabilities here in Langlade County. The ARPA dollars that were awarded specifically stated that broadband was an important area to utilize the funds. The 2022 Langlade County budget was also built to include ARPA dollars towards the broadband buildout. As stated above, Cirrinity is our one and only local provider that has partnered with the Commission to help implement that work and we hope to continue to build out the existing fiber connections to meet the priorities and goals of the Commission.

The dates of conversations/emails are from October 2020 through July 2021.

A subrecipient agreement, commonly known as a subaward, is a portion of an award that is distributed to a third party (subrecipient) by the recipient of the original award to conduct a portion of the project work that is a collaborative or a substantive contribution to the project.

BEAD Funding update

- 1. Langlade County submitted application for the BEAD Planning Grant. The amount that was allocated for Langlade County \$18,337.40.**

This grant can be used for Labor; Contract, Consultant fees, Training, Travel, other for example supplies, food, event space, postage, printing, outreach materials.

A total budget must connect to the activities in the scope of work and will be approved by the Commission in the grant agreement. June 19th is first deliverable to PSC; which with Commission's work already done we are in good shape: We have already have a commission; identified broadband vision and goals and identified our barriers and opportunities that is required for first report. The only other item that is needed is budget for use of funds.

Speed Test promotion and data collection: Grow North will once again be the recipient of the license to use the speed test data: WEDC awarded a grant to NCRPC in order to continue utilizing GEO Partners and the software to collect speed test data. Marketing will be done by NCRP

- 2. Other BEAD Funding Info; Met with the Cara the NTIA (national telecommunications and information administration) who is in charge of the BEAD Funding. Time line; see chart; providers will be announced before locations the 2025 construction begins.**

Connect Communities Grant

- 3. Due June 20th; Follow up of projects with Cirrinity and others looking to apply. Cirrinity is looking into some projects based on the engineer study and will let us know.**

Northcentral Regional Planning Commission Proposal

Hometown Fiber Information

Meeting Date; June 13th: should have data to provide the BEAD Funding Budget and announcement of Western Project