

BCN Advisory Council
Regular Meeting, March 22, 2007
Minutes

DRAFT

Date: March 22, 2007

Attendees: Joan Wade, Connie Bandt, Barry Golden, Sara Schroeder, Jamie Poindexter, Gordy Hanson, Matt Rains, Elena Pokot, Attending via Bridge: Tim Schell, Randy Coorough

Room 320, Pyle Center

TEACH Update

Discussion:

Gordy Hanson of DOA / TEACH was invited to give us an update on TEACH and E-Rate related funding for BCN customers.

Gordy graciously provided a document to summarize many parts of the discussion, which can be found with this document.

In addition, the following points were noted:

- Use of BCN has been higher than anticipated, which has resulted in more demand for TEACH funds than had been originally anticipated, necessitating the transition to “Tier 2” E-rate funding.
- However, this “Tier 2” funding is only available for K-12 and Libraries, not for colleges. Currently requests for bandwidth are placed into the E-rate request for the following year. This pays for approximately 48% of the cost for such requests for bandwidth increases. They have seen 35 or so such requests so far.

There was discussion regarding contacting the legislature regarding funding for technology for K-12 in general. The response was that while TEACH is still a “programmatically shell” for such activity on the books, there have been no reports of such contact, and that the perception is that the existing technology funding is, at best, maintaining the current status quo rather than advancing the use and role of technology in K-12 education.

(Note: TEACH reports that thusfar only CESA directors have mentioned interest in seeing if existing TEACH legislation can be used to address this need for increased funding for technology for K-12 in general.)

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In addition there was also discussion regarding the noted growth in use and funding requirements. It was noted that the legislation being proposed by the DOA TEACH group is an attempt to expand the amount of subsidy funds available to TEACH customers without increasing taxes. This proposal is to take any “remainder” TEACH E-rate funds and apply them to future BCN bandwidth increases at the First Tier level of subsidies. Currently all TEACH E-rate funds are statutorily earmarked to pay off the state's portion of TEACH Wiring Loan program obligations. These obligations cost the state approximately \$5M annually but should begin to decrease as these bonds are paid off. It is this “remainder” that we are requesting to repurpose to the TEACH Telecommunications Access program.

The group deliberated if there should be an assessment of how bandwidth is being applied within BCN by TEACH funded institutions. It was noted that perhaps some bandwidth could be adjusted downward in some locations, saving funds.

The DOA and TEACH representatives noted there have been discussions with WBAA / AT&T to obtain statistics.

- Some BCN circuits funded by TEACH have not been active at all.
- DOA and AT&T will measure usage, and TEACH will contact customers of unused or highly under-utilized facilities.
- Some sixteen video sites have not been used in the last 12 months.
- The group will also eventually contact the Colleges, as well.

Finally, it was also observed that WADEN is also looking at economic alternatives to the “standard” 1X4 video, such as video over their data circuits.

BCN Web Site / Mailing List

Discussion:

Jay Jaeger, as Secretary, is looking for a place to maintain a mailing list and to post agendas and minutes. Jay also queried regarding the demand for a more collaborative environment. The consensus was that while it would be useful to have something where emails among the group could, for example, be archived, that there was relatively little need for a full collaborative “discussion group” kind of facility.

Current DOA URL: <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/badgernet>

It was noted that the current DOA publishing scheme is somewhat cumbersome, requiring documents be translated to PDF, and staged by DOA staff. The contact for publication was identified as Carol Mothershead of DOA.

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Jay Jaeger asked whether the Sharepoint facility that Tim Schell had graciously allowed us to pilot last year was an option. The general response was that this facility was perhaps not ideally suited to our needs, and might require more effort than we would prefer to ask for.

The group listed several needs that a solution should provide, including:

- A document repository for agendas, minutes and related documents.
- A mailing / distribution archive
- A contact list
- An email listserv
- A page contain links to useful information

It was noted that since the web site is public, agendas (including posting of past agendas) will not include WisLine bridge information, to avoid abuse of the Advisory Committee teleconference.

A couple of options discussed included the UW Extension email listserv and the Moodle instructional facility, hosted by WiscNet. It was observed that Moodle has a facility that supports an “auto push” email on document publication.

Jay indicated that he would work with Jamie Poindexter to set up the listserv and evaluate its capabilities against our requirements and report to the group between now and the next meeting.

BCN Update

Discussion:

Connie Bandt provided an update on BCN activities. Connie announced that Michelle Carter, while remaining at AT&T, is no longer the BCN Network Administrator, and that a search is in progress to replace her. In the interim Sara Schroeder, the Account Manager for BCN, is also acting as Network Administrator.

There were no observations of any complaints, and generally the consensus was that the network is operating well.

Statistics:

- Repair Tickets 670
- Of those, 358 were opened proactively by the NMC (Network Management Center)

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- Average time to repair: 3 hours, for February, 2007
- WBAA plans to start tracking fiber cuts, service “bounces”
- Connie stated that Ben Banks of DOA reports that overall utilization in the core and aggregation sites “looks good”
- Service Orders: 35 – 40 per month

Connie also indicated that DOA is “finishing” the SLAs with AT&T.

Jamie Poindexter informed the group that the UW Extension ICS and SDOA are drafting a handout on HPLL (high performance low latency) video. This is expected to include contact information for ICS and BCN, and will be posted on the ICS web site.

Please see the document being sent along with this one, entitled: “BadgerNet Converged Network WAN Services that support Customer Managed Video Applications”

State Agency BCN User’s Group Meeting

Discussion.

The next State Agency BCN group meeting will be:

April 11
Department of Military Affairs
2400 Wright Street

Topics expected to be included:

- BCN Video Scheduling presentation (vendor managed video)
- Order Completion Notification process

It was suggested that State agencies interested in vendor-managed video might contact John Shanda of the Department of Corrections.

State Agency Access to BCN devices.

Discussion.

Jay Jaeger indicated that DOT staff had met with DOA staff last week, and that there has been some misunderstanding regarding the level of access desired.

DOT had been concerned regarding access to any devices that may be filtering packets, during troubleshooting operations.

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DOA indicated that unlike access to the BCN switches at the sites, read-only access to the 2811 routers, which are the only devices that are filtering packets, can be routinely provided.

Future Meetings

The group affirmed the dates for future meetings as follows (all meetings from 3PM to 5PM)

June 28, 2007
September 27, 2007
December 13, 2007

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Jaeger
Secretary