

**ILLINOIS CENTURY NETWORK  
APRIL 20, 2015 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Hardik Bhatt called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM

**Members Present (Springfield):**

Lori Sorenson, Central Management Services	Ann Craig, Illinois State Library
Bonnie Stiles, Illinois State Museum	Todd Jorns, Illinois Community College Board
Brent Engelman, State Board of Education	Michael Dickson

**Members Present (Chicago):**

Hardik Bhatt, Central Management Services	
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**Members on audio bridge:**

Chet Olson	Tom Steele
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**Members Absent**

Vicki DeWitt	Alan Phillips, Illinois Board of Higher Education
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**Staff and guests**

Essam El-Biek, Central Management Services	Tom Oseland, Central Management Services
Robin Woodsome, Central Management Services	Carla Poani, AT&T
Valerie Bolinger, Central Management Services	Michelle Medley, Central Management Services
Kathleen Bloomberg, Illinois State Library	

**Announcements and Remarks**

Hardik Bhatt provided his top three high level priorities to transform the State of Illinois.

1. Service Improvement through technologies
2. Improvement of technology transformation
3. Innovation opportunities

Hardik asked the Policy Committee to look beyond how we currently serve our customers.

1. How can we monetize the ICN?
2. How can we improve services?
3. How can we increase our customer base?

**Minutes**

Hardik Bhatt introduced the first item on the agenda, approval of the minutes from the January 20, 2015 meeting. A motion was made by Bonnie Stiles to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mike Dickson. The motion carried.

**E-rate**

Tom Oseland reported that the 2014 funding year is nearing conclusion. Claim forms have been submitted for the first six months, July thru December, to recoup invoicing discounts given to ICN customers based on their approved E-rate funding. This activity has resulted in a total of \$143,900 received. In addition, four school districts have claimed funding reimbursements for part of the year through the "BEAR" reimbursement process. These claims totaled \$23,505 and have been refunded to the school districts. There remains an outstanding amount of \$743,760 in approved funding that has not yet been disbursed. This funding will be claimed, in part, by schools that have been paying invoices for ICN services in full and will utilize the "BEAR" process to request reimbursements based on approved E-rate funding.

The 2015 E-rate application filing window opened on January 14, 2015. It was originally scheduled to close on March 26th but was extended by 3 weeks to April 16th. This extension was granted by the FCC after numerous requests were made by E-rate program participants. Many applicants were struggling with the new application process and forms and it was taking much longer to complete the application.

A total of 116 applications have been submitted for the 2015 funding year that list ICN as a service provider. These applications represent a total of \$1,249,568 in eligible ICN services. After the applicant discount percentage is applied, a total of \$821,578 has been requested for funding approval. USAC has not yet issued any funding commitment decisions.

Robin Woodsome reported that ICN Field Operations and RTC offices responded to approximately 900 Form-470 bid requests. Responses started very late this year (January) as staff were waiting on approval of the new rates. New rates were approved and announced in March; therefore, staff revised some of the earlier bid responses from January. The extended deadline allowed staff time to reach out to additional schools and libraries.

Lori commented that next year's customer count is expected to decrease due to the elimination of the state subsidy. However, based on submitted E-rate applications, the numbers are higher than anticipated. RTC staff worked closely with the schools and libraries to understand how the combination of E-rate funds and the lower rates will lessen the impact of the lost state subsidy.

Essam provided an update from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). A public workshop on E-rate funded fiber build projects is scheduled for May 20, 2015. The December 2014 Second E-rate Modernization Order provided schools and libraries with additional flexibility and options for purchasing affordable high-speed broadband connectivity and promoted fiber builds. The workshop will serve as a mechanism for feedback from participants and the public.

Essam reported that staff is working on a statewide master contract/request for proposal for category 2 internal connections equipment and services. Category 2 allows schools and libraries to receive equipment (for example, routers, switches, wireless access points, i.e. all the equipment they may need in a school or library to support broadband). The contract will make it easier for schools and libraries to order their equipment via the E-rate process. ICN customers will have the ability to select a vendor from the master contract and submit their E-rate 471 form to receive funding. The goal is to simplify the process for schools and libraries thus encouraging more organizations to apply for category 2 E-rate funding.

#### **Advanced Engineering Task Force Membership**

Lori reported on this item. The Advanced Engineering Taskforce (AET) works with ICN staff to develop network operations policies, services and rate recommendations, and plan for new technology. Participation in the AET continues to be strong and includes a balance of constituent categories, size and geography. The membership matrix on page 11 reflects current AET membership.

The AET will be seeking reappointments for nine members whose terms will expire in June 2015. The new three year terms would extend through 2018. This is an informational item and will be brought as an action item to the Policy Committee meeting on July 20, 2015.

#### **Other Items**

Hardik commented on the request for proposals that was recently published for wholesale broadband consulting services. Feel free to share with people and businesses you may know who would be interested. Lori will send the link to everyone.

**Adjourn**

Hardik moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Anne Craig and seconded by Bonnie Styles. Motion passed and meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

The next meeting will be July 20, 2015 at the Community College Board in Springfield, the JRTC in Chicago or via audio.