ILLINOIS CENTURY NETWORK
JANUARY 12, 2016 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Hardik Bhatt called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Members Present (Springfield):

Lori Sorenson, Central Management Services	Todd Jorns, Illinois Community College Board
Erich Schroeder, Illinois State Museum	Michael Dickson
Kathleen Bloomberg, Illinois State Library	

Members on Audio Bridge:

Chet Olson	Tom Steele
Hardik Bhatt, Central Management Services	

Members Absent:

Vicki DeWitt	Brent Engelman, State Board of Education
Eric Lichtenberger, Illinois Board of Higher Education	

Staff and Guests:

Essam El-Beik, Central Management Services	Tom Oseland, Central Management Services
Robin Woodsome, Central Management Services	Judy Hessler, Central Management Services
Valerie Bolinger, Central Management Services	Frank Walters, Central Management Services
John Leonard, Central Management Services	Keith Formell, Cook County Sheriff's Office
Bill Buchanan, MTC	

Announcements and Remarks
Hardik Bhatt welcomed board members and guests.

Minutes – October 19, 2015
Hardik introduced the first item on the agenda, approval of the minutes from the October 19, 2015 meeting. A motion was made by Mike Dickson to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Todd Jorns. The motion carried.

E-rate Update
Tom Oseland provided this report and referred members to page 8 of the meeting packet. The 2014 E-rate funding year claims are about complete. A total of $265,069.42 has been claimed via the applicant reimbursement, or "BEAR", process. ICN reimbursement claims via the Service Provider Invoice ("SPI") total $320,889.60. A total of 368 applications submitted for the 2015 E-rate funding year listed ICN as service provider. A total of 352 of these applications have been approved to receive funding support. Approved applications represent a total of approximately $3.8 million in ICN services supported by almost $2.3 million in E-rate funds. Tom stated that we will exceed last year's activity by a significant amount.

The 2016 funding year application cycle will begin later this month. Applicants are currently filing their initial form via the new E-rate Productivity Center portal. ICN/RTC staff is responding to quote requests via the Form 470. USAC recently announced that the filing window for the actual E-rate applications, FCC Form 471, will open "no earlier than January 20, 2016, and will close no close no earlier than March 21, 2016".

Tom informed members that USAC announced that there will be an additional $1.9 billion in roll-over funds available for the 2016 funding year. This is in addition to the normal funding cap of $3.9 billion.

Essam El-Beik reported that the RFP for Category 2 (internal connections) deadline was January 11th. We are currently reviewing and processing the responses. Lori Sorenson reminded members that the RFP has been implemented as a vehicle/tool for schools and libraries to purchase products/services through a state contract and encourage them to take advantage of the expanded funding that is available through E-rate.

Robin Woodsome reiterated that ICN/RTC staff is busy responding to Form 470 bid requests. To date, staff has responded to 132 requests. January and February will be extremely busy.

K-12 Broadband Initiative
Essam reported that staff is working with Education Superhighway (ESH), a not-for-profit organization funded by philanthropic organizations to develop and assist schools on receiving high speed broadband access. ESH will provide a state/school connectivity report at the end of February. Following the report, ESH will assist the state in developing a plan of action. Lori conveyed that Beth Purvis, from the Governor's office is the sponsor of this initiative. The team also includes members from the State Board of Education and Learning Technology Centers.

Smarter Illinois
Hardik Bhatt commented that he has worked on several local and global Smart City projects and would consider the United States a super set of a Smart City. We are in a position that allows us to leverage concepts that have been designed for both Smart Cities and Smart Countries. We can become a Smarter Illinois by applying various solutions targeted for transportation, public safety and much more. By using the ICN backbone, we can improve the overall efficiency of government, create jobs and economic growth and assist Illinois citizens to obtain government services more easily. Smarter Illinois will enable and support the clustering of Illinois cities by using broadband technology for shared services. The ICN will be used to connect the cities.

Essam reported that he has been tasked with the creation of a high level plan that focuses on the foundational aspects of Smarter Cities. He will identify the applications and components required to implement and establish the necessary infrastructure. For the 75 day period (11/16/2015 – 01/31/2016) ICN has been researching potential Smarter Illinois projects and the associated strategy and a plan and resources required for implementation. In the subsequent 75 day period (02/01/2016 – 04/15/2016), we will select projects for implementation, flesh out the details, issue any necessary RFP's and initiate the selected Smarter Illinois projects. Discussions have taken place and continue to take place with University researchers, commercial companies and non-profit associations. The discussions are for information gathering, identifying areas of potential collaboration and identifying grant applications that ICN can support. For the first 75 day period ending January 31, 2016, a high level proposal document will be provided.

Fiber Builds
Essam reported that we have identified Illinois schools and libraries that are potential candidates for ICN fiber builds. The build of the fiber optic circuit would be managed by the ICN and subsidized by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) through E-rate. Our E-rate bids responses will include a proposal for a fiber build only in cases where it makes sense. The key E-rate rules relevant to the ICN fiber build program are: (1) the FCC has suspended the requirement to amortize over at least three years construction projects that cost over $500,000 and (2)the FCC allows the school or library to pay their portion of the construction cost in installments over up to 4 years. We will respond to approximately 40 customers with Internet service that includes a fiber build quote. After the closing of the E-rate form 471 window, we will know how many fiber build projects we have been awarded.

Discussion

Hardik opened the floor for discussion and new ideas.

Lori commented that the ICN is working on various strategies to move back into a fiscal balance. After the State funding was reduced, we started operating in a deficit mode. Some strategies have been discussed with staff the Advanced Engineering Task Force (AET) and will be presented at the next meeting in April.

Kathleen Blomberg asked how the membership numbers are compared to last year. Lori stated that since the ARRA project, membership numbers have continued to decrease due to other opportunities that are available to customers at a lower cost. Further discussion held regarding marketplace comparison pricing and ICN value-add services. A brief discussion was held regarding a sunset date for customers using T1 circuits.

Adjourn

Hardik moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Mike Dickson and seconded by Tom Steele. Motion passed and meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m. The next meeting will be April 12, 2016 at the Illinois State Library in Springfield, the JRTC in Chicago or via audio.